

In Other Words

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Second edition

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CHAPTER 4

Grammatical equivalence

Even the simplest, most basic requirement we make of translation cannot be met without difficulty: one cannot always match the content of a message in language A by an expression with exactly the same content in language B, because what can be expressed and what must be expressed is a property of a specific language in much the same way as *how* it can be expressed.

(Winter 1961:98)

language ... gives structure to experience, and helps to determine our way of looking at things, so that it requires some intellectual effort to see them in any other way than that which our language suggests to us.

(Halliday 1970:143)

In Chapters 2 and 3 we saw that the lexical resources of a language exercise considerable influence on what can be said in that language as well as how it can be said. The lexical structure of a language, its stock of words and expressions and its established patterns of collocation, provides its speakers with ready-made ways of analysing and reporting experience. We do find new ways of reporting experience when necessary, but on the whole, we tend to rely heavily on existing lexical resources in order to communicate successfully and easily with other members of our language community.

Lexical resources are not the only factor that influences the way in which we analyse and report experience. Another powerful factor which determines the kind of distinctions we regularly make in reporting experience is the grammatical system of our language. In the course of reporting events, every language makes a different selection from a large set of possible distinctions in terms of notions such as time, number, gender, shape, visibility, person, proximity, animacy and so on. There is no uniform or objective way of reporting events in all their detail, exactly as they happen in the real world; the structure of each language highlights, and to a large extent preselects, certain areas which are deemed to be fundamental to the reporting of any experience.

Grammar is the set of rules which determine the way in which units such as words and phrases can be combined in a language and the kind of information which has to be made regularly explicit in utterances. A language can, of course, express any kind of information its speakers need to express, but the grammatical system of

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a given language will determine the ease with which certain notions such as time reference or gender can be made explicit. Centuries ago, the Greeks and Romans assumed that notional categories such as time, number and gender existed in the real world and must therefore be common to all languages. All languages, they thought, must express these 'basic' aspects of experience on a regular basis. With greater exposure to other languages, it later became apparent that these so-called 'basic' categories are not in fact universal, and that languages differ widely in the range of notions they choose to make explicit on a regular basis. In this chapter, we will take a brief look at the variety of grammatical categories which may or may not be expressed in different languages and the way this area of language structure affects decisions in the course of translation. But before we do so, it may be helpful to outline some of the main differences between lexical and grammatical categories.

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(Winter 1961:92)

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4.1 GRAMMATICAL VS LEXICAL CATEGORIES

the grammatical pattern of a language (as opposed to its lexical stock) determines those aspects of each experience that must be expressed in the given language.

(Jakobson 1959:235-236)

Grammar is organized along two main dimensions: **morphology** and **syntax**. **Morphology** covers the structure of words, the way in which the form of a word changes to indicate specific contrasts in the grammatical **system**.¹ For instance, most nouns in English have two forms, a singular form and a plural form: *man/men, child/children, car/cars*. English can therefore be said to have a grammatical category of number. The morphological structure of a language determines the basic information which must be expressed in that language. **Syntax** covers the grammatical structure of groups, clauses and sentences: the linear sequences of classes of words such as noun, verb, adverb and adjective, and functional elements such as subject, predicator and object, which are allowed in a given language.² The syntactic structure of a language imposes certain restrictions on the way messages may be organized in that language.

Choices in language can be expressed grammatically or lexically, depending on the type and range of linguistic resources available in a given language. Choices made from closed systems, such as the number system (singular/plural) or the pronoun system in English, are grammatical; those made from open-ended sets of items or expressions are lexical. Grammatical choices are normally expressed morphologically, as in the case of the singular/plural contrast in English. They may also be expressed syntactically, for instance by manipulating the order of elements in a clause to indicate certain relations between them or to signal the function of the clause (cf. the difference between the order of elements in a statement and a

question in English: *She had forgotten about the party./Had she forgotten about the party?*.

The most important difference between grammatical and lexical choices, as far as translation is concerned, is that **grammatical choices are largely obligatory**, while **lexical choices are largely optional**. Languages which have morphological resources for expressing a certain category such as number, tense or gender have to express these categories regularly; those which do not have morphological resources for expressing the same categories do not have to express them except when they are felt to be relevant. Because a **grammatical choice is drawn from a closed set of options**, it is (a) **obligatory**, and (b) **rules out other choices from the same system by default**. The fact that number is a grammatical category in English means that an English speaker or writer who uses a noun such as *student* or *child* has to choose between singular and plural. Apart from a few nouns which allow a choice of singular or plural concord (e.g. *The committee is/are considering the question*), the choice of singular in English rules out the possibility of plural reference by default, and vice versa. The same is not true in Chinese or Japanese, where number is a lexical rather than a grammatical category (see 4.2.1 below). A Chinese or Japanese speaker or writer does not have to choose between singular and plural, unless the context demands that this information be made explicit. Where necessary, number is indicated in these languages by means of adding a word such as 'several' or a numeral such as 'one' or 'five' to the noun, rather than by changing the form of the noun itself.

Grammatical structure also differs from lexical structure in that it is more resistant to change. It is much easier to introduce a new word, expression or collocation into a language than to introduce a new grammatical category, system or sequence. The grammatical structure of a language does, of course, change, but this does not happen overnight. Grammatical change occurs over a much longer time scale than lexical change. On the whole, the grammatical structure of a language remains fairly constant throughout the lifetime of an individual, whereas one encounters new words, expressions and collocations on a daily basis. Grammatical rules are also more resistant to manipulation by speakers. A deviant grammatical structure may occasionally be accepted in very restricted contexts, for instance in order to maintain rhyme or metre in poetry. A very small number of text types, such as poems, advertisements and jokes, will occasionally manipulate or flout the grammatical rules of the language to create special effect. The well-known poet e. e. cummings does precisely that; he achieves special effect by using unusual grammatical configurations, as he does in his poem 'a pretty a day', which starts as follows:

a pretty a day
(and every fades)
is here and away
(but born are maids
to flower an hour
in all, all)

Likewise, mod...
Baby', the fo...
provides an ex...

Does y...
7 mil...

On the whole,...
in most conte...
straitjacket, f...
follow that of...

4.2 THE ACROSS

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Likewise, modelled on Louis Jordan's 1944 song 'Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby', the following advertisement by Access, a former credit card company, provides an example of a similar type of manipulation in non-literary contexts:

Does you does or does you don't take access?
7 million outlets worldwide does.

On the whole, however, deviant grammatical configurations are simply not acceptable in most contexts. This means that, in translation, grammar often has the effect of a straitjacket, forcing the translator along a certain course which may or may not follow that of the source text as closely as the translator would like it to.

4.2 THE DIVERSITY OF GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES ACROSS LANGUAGES

It is difficult to find a notional category which is regularly and uniformly expressed in all languages. Even categories such as time and number, which many of us take as reflecting basic aspects of experience, are only optionally indicated in some Asian languages such as Chinese and Vietnamese. On the other hand, a number of American Indian languages such as Yana and Navaho have grammatical categories which in many other languages would hardly ever be expressed even by lexical means. These languages, for instance, have a category of 'shape', which means that an object must be classified according to whether it is long, round or sheet-like (Sapir and Swadesh 1964). Some languages, such as Amuesha of Peru, regularly indicate whether a person is dead or alive by adding a suffix to the name of any person referred to after his or her death (Larson 1984). The absence of the suffix indicates that the person concerned is alive, in much the same way as the absence of a plural suffix such as -s in English indicates a choice of singular as opposed to plural reference.³ Languages therefore differ widely in the way they are equipped to handle various notions and express different aspects of experience, possibly because they differ in the degree of importance or relevance that they attach to such aspects of experience. Time is regarded as a crucial aspect of experience in English, so that it is virtually impossible to discuss any event in English without locating it in the past, present or future. In Aztec, the notion of deference is regarded as crucial. Consequently, according to Nida, 'it is impossible to say anything to anyone without indicating the relative degree of respect to which the speaker and hearer are entitled in the community' (1964:95). Korean and Japanese similarly draw on a complex system of honorifics to signal the relative status of participants in an interaction.

Differences in the grammatical structures of the source and target languages often result in some change in the information content of the message during the process of translation. This change may take the form of adding to the target text information which is not expressed in the source text. This can happen when the target language has a grammatical category which the source language lacks. In translating from English or French into an American Indian language such as Yana

or Navaho, one would have to add information concerning the shape of any objects mentioned in the text. Likewise, in translating into Amuesha, one would have to indicate whether any person mentioned in the text is dead or alive. Details which are ignored in the source text but which have to be specified in the target language can pose a serious dilemma for the translator if they cannot be reasonably inferred from the context.

The change in the information content of the message may be in the form of omitting information specified in the source text. If the target language lacks a grammatical category which exists in the source language, the information expressed by that category may have to be ignored. Jakobson suggests that 'no lack of grammatical device in the language translated into makes impossible a literal translation of the entire conceptual information contained in the original' (1959:235). This is true in theory, but in practice the lack of a grammatical device can make the translation of 'the entire conceptual information' very difficult indeed. First, the lack of a grammatical category in a given language suggests that the indication of information associated with that category is regarded as optional. The frequency of occurrence of such optional information tends to be low, and a translation which repeatedly indicates information that is normally left unspecified in the target language is bound to sound unnatural. Second, because such information would have to be expressed lexically, it is likely to assume more importance in the target text than it does in the source text. The fact that lexical choices are optional gives them more weight than grammatical choices.

The following discussion of some major categories, with examples, is intended to illustrate the kinds of difficulty that translators often encounter because of differences in the grammatical structures of source and target languages.

4.2.1 Number

The idea of countability is probably universal in the sense that it is readily accessible to all human beings and is expressed in the lexical structure of all languages. However, not all languages have a grammatical category of number, and those that do do not necessarily view countability in the same terms. As explained above, English recognizes a distinction between one and more than one (singular and plural). This distinction has to be expressed morphologically, by adding a suffix to a noun or by changing its form in some other way to indicate whether it refers to one or more than one: *student/students, fox/foxes, man/men, child/children*. Some languages, such as Japanese, Chinese and Vietnamese, prefer to express the same notion lexically or, more often, not at all. The form of a noun in these languages does not normally indicate whether it is singular or plural. For example, *my book* and *my books* are both *wō-de-shu* in Chinese (Tan 1980).

Unlike Japanese, Chinese and Vietnamese, most languages have a grammatical category of number, similar but not necessarily identical to that of English. Arabic, Inuit and some Slavonic languages formally distinguish between one, two and more than two. These languages have a dual form in addition to singular and

plural forms. In many languages there is no grammatical category; others regularly express the concept of number but do not have more than two forms to distinguish between singular and plural (Robins 1964), while others have problems in translating between them.

A translator has to decide whether to use the language with no grammatical category or the relevant information from the source text. The following examples are taken from languages such as English, French and German. Items 1–3 are ruled out either by the source text or by the target text, while item 4 is the first example in which accompanying context is important.

China's

Target text:

中国的

China's

'Protection-zone'
It is not marked
from this title.

The following
Trade (Freeman)

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– have
and int
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Target te

アメ
の運び
を作成

shape of any object one would have to be. Details which are not in the target language can reasonably be inferred from it. It may be in the form of a noun if the source language lacks a grammatical category expressed by 'no lack of grammar' (a literal translation of 1959:235). This is what makes the translation difficult. First, the lack of a category of information on frequency of occurrence which repeatedly indicates that the language is bound to be expressed than it does in the more weight than

A translator working from a language which has number distinctions into a language with no category of number has two main options: he or she can (a) omit the relevant information relating to number, or (b) encode this information lexically. The following examples illustrate how information relating to number is often left out in languages such as Chinese and Japanese. The source language in both examples is English. Items in angle brackets are not specified in the target text but they are not ruled out either since Chinese and Japanese do not have a category of number. The first example is from *China's Panda Reserves* (World Wide Fund for Nature text which accompanied a slide show):

China's Panda Reserves.

Target text (Chinese):

中国的熊猫保护区

China's Panda Protection-zone<s>.

'Protection-zone' is a literal rendering of the accepted Chinese translation of *reserve*. It is not marked for number. The reader of the Chinese text has no way of knowing, from this title, whether China has one or more than one panda reserve.

The following example is from *The Fix: The Inside Story of the World Drug Trade* (Freemantle 1985:142):

Enforcement officials – particularly the front-line US Customs Service – have produced a series of recognisable profiles in order to identify and intercept drug runners. It is a system that works particularly well with the Yakuza because of the bizarre but rigid code of ethics by which the Japanese Mafia conducts itself, quite different from any other criminal society in the world. It concerns fingers, or rather the lack of them. And tattoos.

Target text (Japanese):

アメリカの取締当局は、とくに合衆国税關局の第一線は、麻薬の運び屋（ランナー）を識別、摘発するために一種の手配台帳を作成してきた。日本のヤクザを対象とした場合に、ことのほ

か有効なシステムである。日本のマフィアが自らに課している不気味だが峻厳なヤクザ道の捷は、世界のいかなる犯罪社会のそれとも異なっているからだ。それは指と、つまり指の欠損に関連する。さらに刺青とも。

... This concerns **finger***s*, or rather the lack of **finger***s*. And **tattoo***s*.

Here again the highlighted nouns are not marked for number in any way, and the Japanese reader can only guess whether the writer is talking about one or several fingers and tattoos. This apparent lack of interest in the difference between one and more than one is no more surprising than the lack of interest in duality in English and most European languages. Chinese and Japanese speakers are not too concerned with establishing in each case whether there is one or more than one of a given referent, just as English speakers are not particularly interested in establishing whether there are two or more than two persons or objects.

It may sometimes be necessary or desirable in certain contexts to specify plurality or duality in languages which do not normally specify such information because they do not have a category of number or a dual form. In this case, the translator may decide to encode the relevant information lexically, as in the following examples. The first example is from *Palace and Politics in Prewar Japan* (Titus 1974:17); the source text is English:

The heads of the ministries created in 1869 were not directly responsible for 'advising and assisting' (*hohitsu*) the emperor, though they were to become so in 1889.

Target text (Japanese):

明治二年につくられた諸省の長は、天皇「輔弼」の直接責任者ではない。そうなったのは明治二二年なのである。

The head*s* of **various** ministry*ies* created in Meiji 2nd are not directly responsible for 'hohitsu' the emperor.

A Japanese word meaning 'various' is added in the translation to indicate that reference is made to more than one ministry and, by implication, more than one head of ministry.

The second example is from an unpublished document about arbitration procedures in Cairo. The source text is Arabic.

عندما يراد تعيين ثلاثة ممثلي، يختار كل طرف ممثلاً واحداً، ويختار الممثليون المعينان على هذا التحول الممثلي الثالث وهو الذي يتولى رئاسة هيئة التحكيم.

When the appointment of three arbitrators is required, each party chooses one arbitrator, and the arbitrators-dual appointed-dual in this way choose the third arbitrator and it is he who takes on the presidency of the arbitration authority.

ger<ss>. And English target text:

When the appointment of three arbitrators is required, each party selects one arbitrator, and the **two arbitrators** thus appointed select the third arbitrator who then heads the Arbitration Committee.

Where it is felt to be important, information on number can therefore be encoded lexically. However, as with any grammatical category, a translator working from a language with a category of number into one without such a category must be careful not to overspecify this type of information in the target text. Unless the context specifically demands it, regular reference to information normally left unspecified in a given language will only make the translation awkward and unnatural because it will not reflect normal ways of reporting experience in the target language.

4.2.2 Gender

Gender is a grammatical distinction according to which a noun or pronoun is classified as either masculine or feminine in some languages.⁴ The distinction applies to nouns which refer to animate beings as well as those which refer to inanimate objects. For example, French distinguishes between masculine and feminine gender in nouns such as *fils/fille* ('son'/'daughter') and *chat/chatte* ('male cat'/'female cat'). In addition, nouns such as *magazine* ('magazine') and *construction* ('construction') are also classified as masculine and feminine respectively. Determiners,⁵ adjectives, and sometimes verbs (as in the case of Arabic and Swahili), usually agree with the noun in gender as well as in number.

English does not have a grammatical category of gender as such; English nouns are not regularly inflected to distinguish between feminine and masculine. The gender distinction nevertheless exists in some semantic areas and in the **person** system. Different nouns are sometimes used to refer to female and male members of the same species: *cow/bull*, *sow/boar*, *doe/stag*, *mare/stallion*, *ewe/ram*. A small number of nouns which refer to professions have masculine and feminine forms, with the suffix -ess indicating feminine gender. Examples include *actor/actress*, *manager/manageress*, *host/hostess* and *steward/stewardess*. These, however, do not always reflect straightforward gender distinctions as in the case of other European languages; some carry specific connotations. For instance, the distinction between *author* and *authoress* may carry more expressive than propositional meaning: *authoress* tends to have derogatory overtones, with *author* being the unmarked form for both sexes.⁶ In addition to gender distinctions in specific semantic areas, English also has a category of **person** (see 4.2.3 below) which distinguishes

in the third-person singular between masculine, feminine and inanimate (*he/she/it*). This distinction does not apply to the third-person plural (*they*). Russian and German make similar gender distinctions in the third-person singular pronouns and, like English, do not apply these distinctions to the third-person plural. On the other hand, languages like French and Italian maintain the gender distinction in the third-person plural: for example, *ils* vs *elles* in French. In some languages, such as Arabic, gender distinctions apply to second- as well as third-person pronouns. In addition to gender distinctions in the third-person singular and plural, Arabic has different forms for 'you', depending on whether the person or persons addressed is/are male or female. Other languages such as Chinese and Indonesian do not have gender distinctions in their person systems at all.

In most languages that have a gender category, the masculine term is usually the 'dominant' or 'unmarked' term. In French, *elles* is used only when all persons or things referred to are feminine; if one or more persons or things in a group are masculine the form used is *ils*, even if the feminine referents outnumber the masculine ones. Similarly, if the sex of a referent is not known, the masculine rather than the feminine form is used. In effect, this means that the use of feminine forms provides more specific information than the use of masculine forms can be said to provide; it rules out the possibility of masculine reference, whereas the use of masculine forms does not rule out the possibility of feminine reference.

There is now a conscious attempt to replace the unmarked masculine form *he* in English with forms such as *s/he*, *he or she* and *him or her*. This is particularly true of academic writing. But even among the general public, overtly masculine nouns such as *chairman*, *spokesman* and *businessman* are consciously and systematically being replaced by more neutral ones such as *chairperson* and *spokesperson*, or by specifically feminine nouns such as *businesswoman* when the referent is clearly feminine. Viaggio (1996:189) reports an incident in a debate on linguistic sexism at the United Nations where the delegates variously addressed the British female presiding officer as *Madam Chairman*, *Madam Chairperson*, *Madam Chairwoman* and *Madam Chairlady*. When one of the delegates finally addressed her as *Madam Chair*, she responded 'I'd rather you called me a man than a piece of furniture'. Viaggio (*ibid.*) offers several possible strategies for dealing with this type of gender-based humour in the context of simultaneous interpreting, including retaining the key English nouns as loan words, and possibly adding an explanation. In Spanish, the result would be:

Llámeme **man** pero no **chair**, que no soy un meuble.

Call me **man** but not **chair**: I'm no piece of furniture.

Gender-based humour and wordplay aside, another challenge comes from a growing trend to use the feminine form as the unmarked form, especially in academic writing. Diane Blakemore, for instance, uses *she* and *her* to mean any person, male or female:

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Interpr

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gender disti
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affects thes
tions are ref
these and th
clearly be m
world, an A
approach to
the syntax
language. In
example, in
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front

Ó Cearaill
office" to "
rather than

Gende
of the nou
'car' or 'sh
English to
cause diff
instance b
la/une ta
themselv
referents
what is im
the categ
genuine;

It is clear that because of the role of the context in all aspects of utterance interpretation, a speaker who intends *her* utterance to be taken in a particular way must expect it to be interpreted in a context that yields that interpretation.

(1987:27; my emphasis)

This ideological stance is somewhat difficult to transfer into languages in which gender distinctions pervade the grammatical system. It is fairly easy to make the switch from *he* to something like *s/he* or *him/her* in English because the change affects these items only. But in a language such as Arabic, where gender distinctions are reflected not only in nouns and pronouns but also in the concord between these and their accompanying verbs and adjectives, the resulting structures would clearly be much more cumbersome than in English. With all the good will in the world, an Arab writer or translator cannot side with this admittedly more enlightened approach to gender without sacrificing the readability of the target text. By contrast, the syntax of other languages offers much more flexible ways of avoiding sexist language. In revising the Irish and English versions of the Constitution of Ireland, for example, in order to eliminate traces of sexist language, the Irish text posed much fewer problems than the English (Ó Cearúil 1999:47):

While the clause 'such resolution shall operate to remove the President from his office' in Article 12.10.7° is gender-proofed in the version published by the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution to 'such resolution shall operate to remove the President from his **or her** office', ... the Irish text needs no gender-proofing, reading '... is é is feidhm don rún sin an tUachtarán a chur as oifig', literally 'such resolution shall operate to remove the President from office'.

Ó Cearúil thus concludes that '[g]ender-proofing the English text from "from his office" to "from office", following the Irish text, would appear to be the better course rather than emending to read "from his or her office"' (*ibid.*:47–48).

Gender distinctions are generally more relevant in translation when the referent of the noun or pronoun is human. Gender distinctions in inanimate objects such as 'car' or 'ship' and in animals such as 'dog' and 'cat' are sometimes manipulated in English to convey expressive meaning, particularly in literature, but they do not often cause difficulties in non-literary translation.⁷ Making the necessary adjustments, for instance by adding the gender dimension in the target text (English *table* : French *la/une table*) is usually straightforward and automatic because the distinctions themselves are largely arbitrary. But gender distinctions in the case of human referents are not arbitrary, and this is why Lyons (1968), for instance, suggests that what is important in communication is the **pronominal function** of gender rather than the category of gender in general. The **pronominal function of gender reflects a genuine, non-arbitrary distinction between male and female**. Although languages

differ in the extent to which they regularly specify the gender of human referents (cf. English *they* and French *ils/elles*), we all readily recognize the distinction and expect it to reflect a genuine aspect of experience.

The following text illustrates the kind of problem that the pronominal function of gender can pose in translation. As in previous examples, the problematic items in the source text are underlined and the items which replace them in the target text are highlighted in bold. Only those strategies used to overcome difficulties arising from gender distinctions will be commented on.

Source text (English: *Kolestral Super* – leaflet accompanying a hair-conditioning product):

Instructions for use:

- Shampoo the hair with a mild WELL-SHAMPOO and lightly towel dry.
- Apply KOLESTRAL-SUPER directly onto the hair and massage gently.
- For maximum effect, cover the hair with a plastic cap or towel.
- KOLESTRAL-SUPER can be left on the hair for 10–20 minutes.
- After the developing time rinse off thoroughly before styling – no shampooing required.
- Style the hair as usual.

Target text (Arabic):

تعليمات وارشادات الاستعمال:

- يُغسل الشعر بشامبو من "ويللا" على أن يكون من نوع الشامبو الملطف، ثم يجفف الشعر بواسطة المنشفة وذلك تجفيفاً بسيطاً ليترك الشعر رطباً.
- يوضع كولسترال سوبر مباشرة على الشعر ويتركه بنعومة وبرقة.
- للحصول على فعالية مطلقة، يُغسل الشعر بواسطة "كاب" أي قبعة بلاستيكية تغطي الشعر، أو بواسطة منشفة.
- يترك كولسترال سوبر مدة 10 دقائق إلى 20 دقيقة.
- بعد انتهاء مدة التفاعل، يجب أن يُشطف (يُفوح) الشعر جيداً وبعمق قبل البدء بالتسريحة المرغوبة، لا حاجة للشامبو في هذه المرحلة النهائية.
- يُسَرَّح الشعر ويُشطف كالعادة وبالأسلوب المرغوب وتكون النتيجة مثالية ورائعة.

Instructions and guide to use:

- The hair is **washed** with 'Wella' shampoo, provided that it is a mild shampoo. Then the hair is **dried** by means of a towel, a simple drying so that the hair is left damp.
- Kolestral-Super is **put** directly on the hair and **massaged** with softness and gentleness.

- For obtaining maximum effectiveness, the hair is **covered** by means of a cap, that is a plastic hat which covers the hair, or by means of a towel.
- Kolestral-Super is left for a period of 10–20 minutes.
- After the end of the reaction period, the hair **should be rinsed** well and in depth before starting on the desired hair-do. No need for shampoo in this final stage.
- The hair is **styled** and **combed** as usual and in the desired fashion and the result is ideal and marvellous.

I mentioned earlier that the gender distinction in Arabic applies to the second as well as third person. An Arabic speaker or writer has to select between 'you, masculine' (*anta*) and 'you, feminine' (*anti*) in the case of the second-person singular. Moreover, this type of information must be signalled in the form of the verb itself: an Arabic verb has different forms depending on whether its subject is, for instance, second-person singular feminine or third-person plural masculine. In fact, pronouns such as 'she' and 'I' are usually redundant in Arabic and are used mainly for emphasis, since all the information they carry is incorporated in the form of the verb.

In translating the imperative verbs in the above text into Arabic, the translator would normally have to choose, as far as gender is concerned, between a masculine and a feminine form for each verb. As is the case in most languages which have a gender category, the masculine form is the unmarked form in Arabic and is therefore normally selected in most advertisements, leaflets and in wording general instructions. However, the *Kolestral Super* text is a leaflet which accompanies a hair conditioner, the sort of product which is predominantly used by women rather than men. In the Arab context, it is likely to be used exclusively by women. This situation would make the use of the masculine form in this instance highly marked. The translator could have used the feminine form of the verb, but he or she possibly felt that it would also have been marked or that it might have unnecessarily excluded potential male users. The gender distinction is avoided by using a totally different structure throughout the whole set of instructions. The use of the **passive voice** (see 4.2.5 below) instead of the imperative form of the verb allows the translator to avoid specifying the subject of the verb altogether.

Although gender is also a grammatical category in French, gender distinctions are only expressed in nouns, articles and adjectives, and in third-person pronouns; they do not affect the form of the verb. The French translation of the *Kolestral Super* leaflet can therefore follow the source text more closely than the Arabic translation. The infinitive form of the verb is used, as is the norm in wording instructions in French. The first few lines of the instruction section are quoted below for illustration:

Laver le cheveux avec un shampooing doux Wella et bien les essorer.

Appliquer KOLESTRAL-SUPER directement sur les cheveux et bien faire pénétrer.

Finally, von Flotow (1991:75) discusses a very interesting example of an English translation by Howard Scott of Louky Bersianik's feminist novel *L'Euguéline*. Referring to a woman who is punished for aborting a baby, Bersianik writes:

Le ou la coupable doit être punie.

Literally: The **masculine or feminine** [je or /a] guilty party must be **punished-feminine**.

As von Flotow explains (*ibid.*), the 'e' at the end of the verb *puni* ('punished') makes it clear that irrespective of whether the guilty party is male or female, it is the woman who is ultimately punished for aborting. Given that English does not mark verbs for gender, this information cannot be signalled in the same way. Scott's creative solution is to add the third-person feminine pronoun *she* and embed it in a semantically incongruous clause that further strengthens Bersianik's critique of the politics of abortion in a male-dominated society:

The guilty one must be punished, **whether she is a man or a woman.**

4.2.3 Person

The category of person relates to the notion of participant roles. In most languages, participant roles are systematically defined through a closed system of pronouns which may be organized along a variety of dimensions.

The most common distinction is that between **first person** (identifying the speaker or a group which includes the speaker: English *I/we*), second person (identifying the person or persons addressed: English *you*), and third person (identifying persons and things other than the speaker and addressee: English *he/she/it/they*). A number of languages spoken in North America have four rather than three distinctions in the category of person. In these languages, the **fourth person** refers to 'a person or thing distinct from one already referred to by a third person form' (Robins 1964:264). Russian similarly uses a form of the pronominal adjectives *svoj* (masculine), *svoja* (feminine), *svojo* (neuter) and *svoi* (plural) to refer to a participant already referred to in the same clause, but in Russian this is not restricted to third-person forms; the participant referred to by the pronominal adjective may be first, second or third person. For instance, in *I'm meeting my teacher*, *my* would be translated by *svoj* or *svoja* (depending on the gender of the following noun). Likewise, in *He's meeting his teacher*, *his* would be translated by the appropriate case form of *svoj/svoja* provided the referent of *his* is the same as the referent of *he*; otherwise the pronoun used is *jego* (Halliday 1964).

In addition to the main distinction based on participant roles, the person system may be organized along a variety of other dimensions. As mentioned earlier, the person system in some languages may have a gender or number dimension which applies to the whole system or to parts of it. Although number is not a grammatical category in Chinese (see 4.2.1 above), the pronoun system in Chinese features a

number distinction (e.g. Wo 'I' vs Wo-men 'we'; Ni 'you' singular vs Ni-men 'you' plural). On the other hand, it does not feature any gender distinctions at all in speech (e.g. Ta 'he/she/it' vs Ta-men 'they'), though it does in writing, where different characters are used for 'he', 'she' and 'it' and their plural forms.⁹ In Japanese, the person system features distinctions in gender as well as social status and level of intimacy (Levinson 1983). Some languages have rather elaborate person systems. Catford (1965) explains that Bahasa Indonesia has a nine-term pronoun system where English has only seven. The gender dimension is absent from Bahasa Indonesia, but two other dimensions are of relevance:

1. the inclusive/exclusive dimension: English we has two translations in Bahasa Indonesia, involving a choice between *kami* and *kita*, depending on whether the addressee is included or excluded;
2. the familiar/non-familiar dimension, which necessitates a choice between, for instance, *aku* and *saja* for English *I*, depending on the relationship pertaining between speaker and hearer.

A large number of modern European languages, not including English, have a formality/politeness dimension in their person system.¹⁰ In such languages, a pronoun other than the second-person singular, usually the second- or third-person plural, is used in interaction with a singular addressee in order to express deference and/or non-familiarity: French *vous* as opposed to *tu*; Italian *lei* (third-person singular) and in certain regions, classes and age groups *voi* (second-person plural) as opposed to *tu*; Spanish *usted* as opposed to *tu*; German *Sie* as opposed to *du*; Greek *esi* as opposed to *esis*; and Russian *vy* as opposed to *ty*. Some languages also have different forms of plural pronoun which are used to express different levels of familiarity or deference in interaction with several addressees.¹¹

All languages have modes of address which can be used to express familiarity or deference in a similar way: compare the difference between *you, mate, dear, darling* and *Mr Smith, Sir, Professor Brown, Mrs Jones, Madam*. The difference between modes of address and pronouns is that the use of pronouns is unavoidable, particularly since pronominal reference is coded in the inflection of verbs in many languages, whereas one can often avoid addressing a person directly (Brown and Gilman 1960/1972).

What all this amounts to, among other things, is that in translating pronouns from English to, say, French, Italian, Greek, Spanish, Russian, German or Bahasa Indonesian, decisions may have to be made along such dimensions as gender, degree of intimacy between participants, or whether reference includes or excludes the addressee. This information may or may not be readily recoverable from the context. Translating in the other direction, from one of the above languages into English, will frequently involve loss of information along the dimensions in question. It is possible in theory to encode all the relevant information in an English translation, for example by using a circumlocution such as 'he and I but not you' for an exclusive 'we', but this kind of detail would be too cumbersome in most contexts.

The following examples illustrate the more problematic situation of having to make decisions in the target language along dimensions which are not explicitly stated in the source text. The examples are taken from a French translation of one of Agatha Christie's thrillers, *Crooked House* (1949/1989). The events of the novel involve a number of key characters who are related to one another in a variety of ways. In the French translation, the nature of each relation has to be reflected in the choice of pronouns that various characters use in addressing each other. The characters in the following dialogue are a young man, Charles, and a young lady, Sophia. They have worked together and have been friends for some time. Charles has just asked Sophia to marry him.

English source text (p. 9):

'Darling – don't you understand? I've tried *not* to say I love you—'
 She stopped me.
 'I do understand Charles. And I like your funny way of doing things ...'

French translation (p. 9):

- Mais **vous** ne **comprenez** donc pas? **Vous** ne **voyez** donc pas que je fais tout ce que je peux pour ne pas **vous** dire que je **vous** aime et ...
 Elle m'interrompit.
- J'ai parfaitement compris, Charles, et **votre** façon comique de présenter les choses m'est très sympathique ...

Note the use of the *vous* form in the French translation, indicating a level of formality and politeness which are not overtly conveyed in the English original. Compare the level of formality in the above dialogue with that in the following extract from another dialogue where Charles is talking to his father, who happens to be the Assistant Commissioner of Scotland Yard:

English source text (p. 16):

'But your police force is fully efficient,' I said. 'A nice Army type tracked her to Mario's. I shall figure in the reports you get.'

French translation (p. 16):

- Mais **ta** police a l'oeil et un de **tes** hommes l'a suivie jusqu'au restaurant. Je serai mentionné dans le rapport qui **te** sera remis.

The selective use of *vous* and *tu* forms in dialogues involving different characters suggests that the French translator had to make conscious decisions about the

nature of the relationships among different characters in the story and about the social standing of these characters as reflected in their adoption of certain conventions to do with approved/non-approved expression of familiarity and/or deference. You may agree or disagree with these decisions; the important thing is that we learn to appreciate the influence that the grammatical system of a language has on the way events are presented in that language. The difficulties that arise from the different demands made by the grammatical systems of different languages in translation should not be underestimated.

The familiarity/deference dimension in the pronoun system is among the most fascinating aspects of grammar and the most problematic in translation. It reflects the tenor of discourse (see Chapter 2) and can convey a whole range of rather subtle meanings. The subtle choices involved in pronoun usage in languages which distinguish between familiar and non-familiar pronouns is further complicated by the fact that this use differs significantly from one social group to another and that it changes all the time in a way that reflects changes in social values and attitudes. Brown and Gilman suggest that the Gujarati and Hindi languages of India have very strict norms of pronoun usage, reflecting asymmetrical relations of power between, for example, husband and wife. And yet, they explain, 'the progressive young Indian exchanges the mutual *T* with his wife' (1960/1972:269).

Pronominal shifts in translation and interpreting can also have ideological implications, for example in terms of strengthening institutional presence and constructing in-group and out-group identities. Some simultaneous interpreters working between English and German in the European Parliament have been shown to introduce the inclusive *we* where it is not used by the speaker, partly by turning passive constructions into active ones, as in the following example (Beaton-Thorne 2010:133):

English speaker:

However, it was agreed last week that a common political response would be desirable and that the possibility of coordinated European action could be explored further.

German interpretation:

Aber letzte Woche haben **wir gesagt**, dass es natürlich wünschenswert wäre, eine gemeinschaftlich politische Antwort zu finden und, dass wir uns überlegen können, wie **wir handeln** wollen.

But last week **we said** that it would of course be desirable to find a common political answer and that **we could think** about how we want to act.

They also tend to replace some instances of *they* with *we*, as in the following example (*ibid.*:133):

English speaker:

Ministers at last week's Council discussed ways in which the member states might be able to offer practical assistance to the US and, in particular, whether they might accept former detainees.

German interpretation:

Die Frage ist natürlich, sind **wir** bereit ehemalige Häftlinge zu übernehmen?

The question is of course, are **we** prepared to take on former detainees?

Cumulatively, these choices tend to strengthen the institutional presence of the European Parliament and to enhance in-group identification with it.

These and similar examples suggest that in addition to developing strategies for dealing with challenges posed by differences in pronominal systems, translators and interpreters must also be alert to the overall impact of their cumulative choices, whether or not these are made in response to local linguistic challenges.

4.2.4 Tense and aspect

Tense and aspect are grammatical categories in a large number of languages. The form of the verb in languages which have these categories usually indicates two main types of information: time relations and aspectual differences. Time relations have to do with locating an event in time. The usual distinction is between past, present and future. Aspectual differences have to do with the temporal distribution of an event, for instance its completion or non-completion, continuation or momentariness.

In some languages, the tense and aspect system, or parts of it, may be highly developed, with several fine distinctions in temporal location or distribution. Bali, for instance, has a rather precise system of time reference. Apart from indicating past, present and future reference, each past or future reference is marked to show whether the event in question is immediately connected to the present, is separated from it by a period of time but taking place on the same day, or is separated from the present by at least one night. Wishram, an American Indian language, makes no fewer than four distinctions in reference to past events alone, each distinction expressing a certain degree of remoteness from the moment of speaking (Sapir and Swadesh 1964). In some languages, it is obligatory to specify more unusual types of temporal and aspectual relations. For instance, in the Villa Alta dialect of Zapotec (Mexico), it is necessary to distinguish between events which take place for the first time with respect to particular participants and those which are repetitions (Nida 1959).

Some languages, such as Chinese, Malay and Yurok, have no formal category of tense or aspect. The form of the verb in these languages does not change to express temporal or aspectual distinctions. If necessary, time reference can be indi-

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cated by means of various particles and adverbials. The following examples show how time relations are typically signalled in Chinese when the context demands that such information be made explicit:

ta xian-zai zai bei-jing gong-zuo (lit.: 'he now in Peking work', i.e. 'he is working in Peking')

ta dang-shi zai bei-jing gong-zuo (lit.: 'he at that time in Peking work', i.e. 'he was working in Peking')

(from Tan 1980:111)

Because tense and aspect are not grammatical categories in Chinese, their specification is largely optional. Context is relied on much more often than in English or Bali to establish time reference. If the adverbials in the above examples were not included in the clause, one would have to rely entirely on the context to establish the time of the event. The following examples from China's Panda Reserves illustrate (a) the use of adverbials to indicate time reference where necessary and feasible in a Chinese translation, and (b) the omission of time reference altogether where it can be inferred from the context or where the information is not judged to be important.

Example A

This attractive black and white mammal has widespread human appeal and has become a symbol for conservation efforts both within China and internationally as the symbol of The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Target text (Chinese):

这一吸引人的黑白哺乳动物为人们所广泛地喜爱。作为世界自然基金会 (WWF) 的标记，熊猫已经成为中国和国际性自然保护努力的象征。

This attractive black-white mammal widely liked by people and **already become** a symbol of conservation efforts ...

The adverbial *yi-jing*, meaning 'already', is added to the equivalent of *become* to give the effect of the present perfect in English *has become*.

Example B

Species like this mountain rhododendron were collected by 19th century botanists and then transported back to Europe for horticultural collections.

Target text (Chinese):

像这一山杜鹃花等种类为十九世纪的植物学家所集采，然后运回欧洲作为园林收藏品。

Species like this mountain rhododendron **collect<ed>** by 19th century botanists and then **transport<ed>** back to Europe for horticultural collections.

The connotations of pastness in the above extract can be inferred from the context, because of the reference to nineteenth-century botanists. There is therefore no need to signal the past overtly in the Chinese text.

Although the main use of the grammatical categories of tense and aspect is to indicate time and aspectual relations, they do not necessarily perform the same function in all languages. For instance, the main function of the tense system in Hopi is to signal modal meanings such as certainty, uncertainty, possibility and obligation. Hockett (1958) describes Hopi as having three main 'tenses': the first is used to express timeless truths, as in 'The sun is round'; the second is used in connection with events which are either known or presumed to be known, as in 'Paris is the capital of France'; and the third is used for events which are in the realm of uncertainty, as in 'They will arrive tomorrow'.

Tense and aspect distinctions may also take on additional, more subtle meanings in discourse. In a brief discussion of the use of tense in English and Brazilian academic abstracts, Johns (1991) points out that some verbs refer to what is stated in the academic paper itself (these he calls **indicative verbs**), while other verbs refer to what was actually done in the research on which the paper reports (these he calls **informative verbs**).¹² Johns suggests that in both English and Brazilian academic papers, the indicative/informative distinction correlates with the choice of tense: the present tense is used for indicative and the past tense for informative statements. Verbs such as *present*, *mention*, *propose* and *refer to*, which relate to what the writer is doing in the paper itself, are usually in the present tense, while verbs such as *determine*, *record*, *select* and *detect*, which have to do with actual research, are usually in the past tense. This regular correlation influences the way we interpret statements in academic papers. As Johns points out, 'the fact that the results of an experiment are analyzed reports the contents of the paper, but that they were analyzed reports one of the procedures undertaken in the research' (1991:5).

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Johns (personal communication) also suggests that in English science and engineering academic abstracts, the present perfect is specifically used to refer to the work of other scientists. For example, *It is proposed that ...* suggests that the writer of the abstract is doing the proposing, but *It has been proposed that ...* suggests that the proposing is done by someone other than the writer. This signalling system is apparently more or less the same in Brazilian Portuguese. However, Johns found that translated Brazilian abstracts tend to follow textbook rules of grammar which favour 'consistent' use of tense and aspect. Many translators, for instance, use the present perfect or the simple past throughout the abstract in order to achieve 'consistency', thereby disrupting the natural signalling system of the target language.

Signalling systems such as those outlined above can be significantly different in the source and target languages, even when the basic tense and aspect systems are very similar. Japanese has a grammatical category of tense which is not too dissimilar to that of English. The suffixes -ru and -ta are regularly added to verbs to indicate non-past and past reference respectively.¹³ However, this does not mean that every past tense in an English text can be translated into Japanese with a -ta form or that every present or future tense can be translated using a -ru form. A translator has to bear in mind the additional meanings that these forms can assume in a Japanese text. In the following example, the past tense in the English text is rendered by a non-past form in the Japanese translation because the non-past is often used in Japanese to express personal judgement.

Source text (*Palace and Politics in Prewar Japan*, Titus 1974:17):

The heads of the ministries created in 1869 were not directly responsible for 'advising and assisting' (*hohitsu*) the emperor, though they were to become so in 1889.

Target text (Japanese):

明治二年につくられた諸省の長は、天皇「輔弼」の直接責任者ではない。そうなったのは明治二年なのである。

The head(s) of the various ministry(ies) which were created in Meiji 2nd **are** not directly responsible for 'hohitsu' the emperor. It was in Meiji 22nd that it became so.

In this instance, the use of the non-past suggests that the statement made about the role of the heads of the ministries prior to 1889 is based on the author's personal assessment of the situation, as opposed to the statement concerning their role from 1889 onwards, which, presumably, is supported by hard facts. (Meiji 2nd and Meiji 22nd refer to the equivalents of 1869 and 1889 respectively in the Japanese calendar.)

4.2.5 Voice

A Chinese translator ... uses a preposition *bei* 'by' whenever he sees a passive voice in the original verb, forgetting that Chinese verbs have no voice. ... Once this sort of thing is done often enough, it gets to be written in originals, even where no translation is involved. ... Such 'translatese' is still unpalatable to most people and no one talks in that way yet, but it is already common in scientific writing, in newspapers, and in schools.

(Chao 1970; in Li and Thompson 1981:496)

The use of the passive voice is extremely common in many varieties of written English and can pose various problems in translation, depending on the availability of similar structures, or structures with similar functions, in the target language. Because of its widespread use in technical and scientific English in particular, it has had a strong influence on similar registers in other languages through translation. The tendency to translate English passive structures literally into a variety of target languages which either have no passive voice as such or which would normally use it with less frequency is often criticized by linguists and by those involved in training translators.

Voice is a grammatical category which defines the relationship between a verb and its subject. In active clauses, the subject is the agent responsible for performing the action. In passive clauses, the subject is the affected entity, and the agent may or may not be specified, depending on the structures available in each language.

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| Active: | (a) Nigel Mansell opened the Mansell Hall in 1986. |
| Passive: | (b) The Mansell Hall was opened in 1986. |
| | (c) The Mansell Hall was opened by Nigel Mansell in 1986. |

Note that the form of the verb changes in a passive structure to indicate that its subject is the affected entity rather than the agent. Chao's comment above about Chinese verbs having no voice refers to the fact that the form of the verb in Chinese does not change to indicate its relationship with the subject of the clause.

The structure illustrated in (c), where the agent is specified in a passive clause, is much less frequent than the structure illustrated in (b), where the agent is left unspecified. This is because the main function of the passive in most languages is to allow the construction of 'agentless' clauses.¹⁴ In some languages, such as Turkish, this seems to be its only function (Lyons 1968). In other languages, the use of the passive is obligatory in certain contexts; for instance, the passive has to be used in Yana, an American Indian language, when the agent is a third person acting upon a first or second person (Sapir and Swadesh 1964).

Most languages have a variety of mechanisms for constructing 'agentless' clauses; for instance, the French statement *On parle anglais* and the German *Man spricht Englisch* leave the agent unspecified by using a 'dummy' subject, *on* and *man* respectively. They can be translated into English either by using a similar

'dummy' subject or by using the

Language the same frequency. The same is true of much more languages with some register writing in English give the impression made in the text to such an impression of conventionality pervasive among speakers and

Some languages contexts. In these cultures being that 'in someone instead of something such as "the"

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'dummy' subject, *They speak English*, where they does not refer to a specific agent, or by using the passive voice, *English is spoken* (Lyons 1968).

Languages which have a category of voice do not always use the passive with the same frequency. German uses the passive much less frequently than English. The same is true of Russian and French, where reflexive structures¹⁵ are relied on much more heavily to fulfil similar functions. The frequency of use of the passive in languages which have a category of voice usually expresses a stylistic choice and, in some registers, may be a question of pure convention. Scientific and technical writing in English, for instance, relies heavily on passive structures. This is done to give the impression of objectivity and to distance the writer from the statements made in the text.¹⁶ It has, however, come to represent the 'norm' in technical writing to such an extent that, even if a writer was not particularly interested in giving an impression of objectivity, he or she might find it difficult to break away from the convention of using predominantly passive structures in technical writing. The more pervasive a structure becomes in a given context, the more difficult it becomes for speakers and writers to select other structures or to depict events differently.

Some languages use the passive more frequently than English in everyday contexts. In Tzotzil of Mexico, passive structures are the norm, with active structures being used very rarely (Beekman and Callow 1974). Nida similarly explains that 'in some Nilotic languages the passive forms of verbs are so preferred that instead of saying "he went to town", it is much more normal to employ an expression such as "the town was gone to by him"' (1975:136).

Rendering a passive structure by an active structure, or conversely an active structure by a passive structure in translation can have implications for the amount of information given in the clause, the linear arrangement of semantic elements such as agent and affected entity, and the focus of the message.¹⁷ However, one must weigh this potential change in content and focus against the benefits of rendering a smooth, natural translation in contexts where the use of the passive might, for instance, be stylistically less acceptable than the use of the active or an alternative structure in the target language. The conference circular (in English and Russian) and the back-translated version of the Russian text that follow are quoted at length to illustrate that, in some contexts, professional translators may decide to replace passive structures in the source text with stylistically more acceptable alternative structures, such as the active and reflexive in the case of Russian. The relevant structures are highlighted in the English and back-translated Russian texts for ease of comparison.

Source Text (Euralex Conference Circular, 1987):

CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers are invited for the
EURALEX Third International Congress
 4-9 September 1988
 Budapest, Hungary.

Papers are invited on all aspects of lexicography, theoretical and practical, diachronic and synchronic. The main fields of interest reflected in the Congress programme will be:

general (monolingual or bilingual), computational
terminological and specialized translation
lexicography.

Papers relating to the lesser-known languages will be particularly welcome.

The format of the Congress will embrace plenary sessions, symposia, section meetings, workshop sessions, project reports and demonstrations of computational and other work; there will also be ample time for discussion.

Individual presentations should be timed to last 20 minutes, with a discussion period to follow.

Abstracts (approximately 1,000 words) in any of the Congress languages, English, French, German or Russian, should be sent to the Lecture Programme Organizer, Dr. Tamas Magay, at the above address by 15 November 1987. A response will be sent before the end of February 1988. Any other correspondence should be addressed to the Congress organizer, Ms Judit Zigany.

It is confidently expected that a volume of collected papers from this Congress will subsequently be published by Akademiai Kiado in Budapest.

This Congress will, like its predecessors at Exeter and Zurich, be a meeting place for lexicographers, academics and publishers. It will also offer a unique opportunity for participants from the East and from the West to strengthen professional and personal contacts and thus to lay the foundations of further exchanges and cooperation in the future.

We look forward to seeing you at BUDALEX '88.

Russian translation

Первый широкуляр

Приглашаем принять участие на
Третьем международном конгрессе EURALEX
в Будапеште (ВНР)
4-9 сентября 1988 г.

Тематика конгресса охватывает все важнейшие аспекты лексикографии. Особое внимание мы намереваемся обратить на следующие области лексикографической науки:

общая (одно- и двухязычная) лексикография,
компьютерная лексикография,
терминологическая и специальная лексикография.

Мы намереваемся отдельно обсудить вопросы соотношения так называемых «малых», т.е. менее распространенных и «больших», т.е. более распространенных языков.

В рамках конгресса мы намереваемся проводить пленарные заседания, симпозиумы, «рабочие» заседания, а также обсудить аннотации проектов. Кроме того состоятся заседания секций конгресса и демонстрации использования компьютерной техники в лексикографии.

Предусмотренная длительность индивидуальных докладов составляет 20 минут, не учитывая дополнительных выступлений и дискуссий.

Краткие киноплакты рефератов (с объемом до 1000 слов или до 100 строк) просим до 15 ноября 1987 г. на любом из официальных языков конгресса, т.е. на русском, английском, немецком или французском языках, высыпать по вышеуказанному адресу главному координатору конгресса Юдит Зиггань или научному организатору конгресса д-ру Тамашу Магану. Последующую корреспонденцию просим адресовать гл. редактору Юдит Зиггань.

Издательство Академии наук ВНР намеревается издать в форме сборника весь научный материал конгресса.

Надеемся, что этот конгресс, как и его предшественники в Эксетере и Цюрихе, станет не только местом встречи лексикографов, филологов и работников издательств, но и на то, что участниками, прибывающими с востока и запада предоставится возможность посредством личных и профессиональных контактов положить основы дальнейшего сотрудничества.

До встречи на BUDALEX '88

We invite you to take part in the
Third International Congress of EURALEX
in Budapest (PRH)
4-9 September 1988.

The overall theme of the congress will include all the most important aspects of lexicography. We intend to pay particular attention to the following areas of lexicographical science:

general (mono- and bilingual) lexicography,
computational lexicography,
terminological and special lexicography.

We intend to discuss separately questions concerning the so-called 'small', i.e. less widespread and 'big', i.e. more widespread languages.

In the frames of the congress we intend to hold plenary sessions, symposia, workshops, and also to discuss project reports. In addition there will be section meetings of the congress and demonstrations of the use of computer technology in lexicography.

The envisaged length of individual papers is 20 minutes, not counting supplementary speeches and discussions.

We ask for a short abstract of papers (up to 1000 words or up to 100 lines) by 15 November 1987, in any of the official languages of the conference, i.e. Russian, English, French or German, to be sent at the above address to the chief coordinator of the congress Judit Zigany or to the academic organizer of the congress Dr Tamas Magay. **We ask** you to send further correspondence to Chief Editor Judit Zigany.

The Press of the Academy of Sciences of the PRH intends to publish in the form of a collection all the academic material from the congress.

We hope that this congress, like its predecessors in Exeter and Zurich, will be not only a meeting place for lexicographers, philologists and publishers, but that also **the opportunity will make itself available** to the participants coming from East and West by means of personal and professional contacts to lay the foundations for further collaboration.

Till we meet in BUDALEX '88

English has many formulae or semi-fixed expressions in formal correspondence which rely heavily on using the passive for distancing, to project the writer as an agent of an objective process. Russian, on the whole, does not favour this strategy. Common fixed and semi-fixed phrases in Russian make use of the active voice. An expression such as 'we invite you to ...' is more natural in Russian than 'you are invited to ...', although both are possible. The last highlighted expression in the Russian back-translation, 'the opportunity will make itself available', illustrates the use of the reflexive, which is particularly common in Russian and is generally considered stylistically equivalent to the passive in English (James Mullen, personal communication).

As already mentioned, the main function of the passive in English and in a number of other languages is to avoid specifying the agent and to give an impression of objectivity. This is not necessarily the function of the passive in all languages which have a category of voice. Larson explains that in Aguaruna, a language of Peru, 'the passive is used almost exclusively in introductions and conclusions, but not in the body of the text. A shift to passive would indicate that the author is now giving a summary statement' (1984:226). In some languages, notably Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese and Thai, the main function of the passive, or passive-like structures as in the case of Chinese, is to express adversity. In these languages, the passive is traditionally used to report unfortunate events;¹² for instance, one would say something like 'I was rained on' in Japanese, rather than 'It rained on me' or 'I got wet in the rain'. Even events which would never be passivized in English because they involve only one participant and therefore cannot 'logically' be passivized are expressed in passive structures in these languages if they are unpleasant, for example 'I was died on by my father' in Japanese.

The regular a means that the p the event depicted Japanese can im favourable terms. Politics in Pre here is originally source text. The the original Jap Japanese translat make it easier f angle brackets grammatical su section 6.1). Pr make the text n

English/Ta

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Japanese/

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The regular association of passive structures with adversity in certain languages means that the passive can often carry connotations of unpleasantness even when the event depicted is not normally seen as unpleasant. Thus, using the passive in Japanese can imply that a certain event is viewed by the speaker or writer in unfavourable terms, as the following example illustrates. The source text, *Palace and Politics in Prewar Japan* (Titus 1974:20), is English. However, the example used here is originally a quotation from Japanese, translated into English and used in the source text. The Japanese translator of the English book seems to have recovered the original Japanese text (written in Classical Japanese) and quoted it in the Japanese translation. The English text will still be quoted first as this will hopefully make it easier for the reader to follow the back-translation from Japanese. Items in angle brackets in the back-translation do not actually occur in the Japanese text; grammatical subjects are often suppressed in Japanese clauses (see Chapter 6, section 6.1). Possible subjects are nevertheless inserted in the back-translation to make the text readable.

English/Target text:

Komeda Torao, *Jiho* of the third rank, was the most blunt: 'If in the past [Your Majesty] had shown as much care for politics as he had passion for horsemanship, no such **criticism** from the public as "politics by two or three Ministers" would have occurred'.

Japanese/source text:

いちばんむきつけだったのは、三等侍補の米田虎雄だった。「平素御馬術を好ませてもうほどに政治上に獻慮を注がせたまわば、今日のごとく世上より二三大臣の政治などいわるることはあるまじくとつねに苦慮つかまつりおれり」。

The most blunt one was Komeda Torao who was the third *Jiho*. 'If <Your Majesty> pours his wise consideration into politics as much as <he> likes riding in his daily life, <I> would not think that <he/the government> would have been said as two or three ministers' politics by the public. So <I am> sincerely concerned.'

Because it is used in the passive, 'said' in the Japanese text is understood to mean something like 'criticized', and this meaning is correctly rendered in the English translation. Note that it is the use of the passive structure rather than the lexical item 'said' which signals this 'adverse' meaning of criticism.

The fact that the passive can and often does communicate adverse meanings in languages such as Japanese and Chinese must be borne in mind by translators working from or into these languages. Here are some examples which confirm that professional Japanese and Chinese translators are sensitive to the difference in function of the passive in English and in their target languages and generally tend to

replace a large number of English passive structures with active structures in their target texts in order to avoid negative connotations.

Example A

Source text (*A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan*, Blacker 1975:315):

... there is no barrier to be crossed, no mysteriously other kind of being to be met and placated.

Target text (Japanese):

そこには越えるべき障壁もなく、神秘的な異種の生きものに出会い、なだめることもない。

There is no barrier that *<one>* should go over, and *<we>* do not meet or placate a mysterious different being.

Example B

Source text (*Palace and Politics in Prewar Japan*, Titus 1974:11):

If the personality and policy preferences of the Japanese emperor were not very relevant to prewar politics, social forces certainly were. There are two reasons for giving them only the most tangential treatment here. First, this study simply had to be controlled in scope. Obviously not everything relevant to Japanese political development could be encompassed.

Target text (Japanese):

だが、日本の天皇の人柄や政策上の好みが戦前の政治に大した関係がなかったとしても、社会勢力の側は明らかにそうではない。社会勢力に対して本書がわずかにふれる程度の扱いしかしなかったのには、二つの理由がある。第一は、研究範囲を抑えねばならなかつた、という単純な理由である。日本の政治的発展に関係のあることすべてをとりあげる、などというのは明らかに不可能事である。

... The first reason was a simple reason which is *<we>* had to limit the area of research. It is obviously impossible to take up all the matters which are related to Japan's political development.

Example C
Source text (

... many h

Target text (

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lematic in tra
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language and
to do with the
words, it has
expression of
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example, 'P
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renders Heb
sounding E
which expr
another top
should go o
where the
policy'. Be

*Example C*Source text (*China's Panda Reserves*):

... many have been nursed back to health from the brink of starvation.

Target text (Chinese):

该中心的成年熊猫睡于笼子里，供应的食物匀称、营养丰富；许多熊猫已从饿死的边缘被护理恢复了健康。它们还享有一个大型的户外院子，可以漫游于半野生状态的自然植物中。

... many pandas have already through nursing recovered health from the brink of starvation and death.

The most important things to bear in mind as far as voice is concerned are the frequency of use of active, passive and similar structures in the source and target languages, their respective stylistic value in different text types, and – most important of all – the function(s) of the passive and similar structures in each language. The idea is not to replace an active form with an active one and a passive form with a passive one; it is always the function of a category rather than the form it takes that is of paramount importance in translation.

The categories discussed and exemplified above are among the most problematic in translation but are by no means the only ones that cause difficulty. The expression of modal meanings, for instance, can vary widely from language to language and has to be handled sensitively and carefully in translation. Modality has to do with the attitude of the speaker to the hearer or to what is being said; in other words, it has to do with such things as certainty, possibility and obligation. The expression of modal meanings can take quite a different form in each language. In an article on political interviews on Israeli television, Blum-Kulka (1983) explains that English tends to use expressions such as *Let's ...* and *Shall we ...* in directing the actions of others, in controlling talk, and in making polite requests that have the force of commands. Hebrew, on the other hand, expresses similar modal meanings by addressing a question about the possibility of getting something done. For example, "Perhaps you'll go to sleep" (*ulay telex li[scaron]jon*) from a mother to a child simply means "go to sleep" (*ibid.*:147). Throughout her article, Blum-Kulka renders Hebrew expressions used by the interviewer to direct each talk with natural-sounding English expressions which are not literal renderings of the Hebrew but which express similar modal meanings. For example, she uses *Let's go on to another topic* where a literal translation of the Hebrew would be 'Perhaps we shall/should go on to another topic', and *Let's begin with the question of defence policy* where the Hebrew is literally 'Perhaps we shall start with the question of defence policy'. Becker (2009) offers a similar analysis of differences in the use of modality

in German and British political interviews; Kim and Thompson (2010) analyse the use of modal expressions of obligation in English and Korean newspaper science popularization texts and relate the findings to cultural norms characteristic of the two groups: individualism and task-orientatedness in the case of English and collectivism and relation-orientatedness in the case of Korean.

Other grammatical categories which can pose difficulties in translation include mood, direct and indirect speech, and causativity, among many others. Translators should find it useful to investigate and compare the expression of such categories and the meanings associated with various structures in their source and target languages.

For a good overview of a number of grammatical categories and their expression in various languages, see Robins (1964) and Lyons (1968). For a detailed discussion of the main categories and their realization and function in English, see the *Collins COBUILD English Grammar* (Sinclair 1990).

4.3 A BRIEF NOTE ON WORD ORDER

The syntactic structure of a language imposes restrictions on the way messages may be organized in that language. The order in which functional elements such as subject, predicate and object may occur is more fixed in some languages than in others.¹⁹ Languages vary in the extent to which they rely on word order to signal the relationship between elements in the clause. Compared to languages such as German, Russian, Finnish, Arabic and Eskimo, word order in English is relatively fixed. The meaning of a sentence in English, and in languages with similarly fixed word order such as Chinese, often depends entirely on the order in which the elements are placed (cf. *The man ate the fish* and *The fish ate the man*).

Some languages have **case inflections** which indicate the relationship between the elements in a clause, for instance who does what to whom. In such languages, the form of a noun changes depending on its function in the clause. In Russian, both *Ivan videl Borisa* and *Borisa videl Ivan* mean 'John saw Boris' (Lyons 1968), because -a marks Boris as the object, regardless of its position with respect to the subject and verb.

Languages which have elaborate systems of case inflection tend to have fewer restrictions on word order than languages like English, which have very few case inflections. In languages with elaborate case inflections, word order is largely a matter of stylistic variation and is available as a resource to signal emphasis and contrast and to organize messages in a variety of ways. Word order is extremely important in translation because it plays a major role in maintaining a coherent point of view and in orientating messages at text level. Because of its particular importance to the overall organization of discourse, the next chapter will be devoted to discussing word order at length from a purely textual point of view. But before we move from discussing the lower levels of language – words, phrases, grammatical categories – to talking about the text as a unit of meaning, it would perhaps be useful to explain briefly what a text is and why we identify a given

stretch of language
and sentences

4.4 INTRODUCTION

So far in this chapter we have considered the 'building blocks' of language: words, phrases, clauses, units and structures. We have also seen how the concept of 'meaning' in the context of translation can be considered in terms of the meaning of words and the meaning of the grammatical structures in which they are realized in context. In this section, we shall consider an instance of a text and look at how the different meanings and levels of meaning interact.

4.4.1 Texts as units of meaning

The notion of a text as a meaningful unit has been developed by a number of poets and theorists in the field of communication studies.

As translators, we are interested in the text as a meaningful unit, although with the exception of some very short texts, the text is always produced with a conscious or unconscious intentionality, at least one of which is to communicate. Once the text is produced, it is interpreted by the reader, based on the type of text, the situation for communication, the translator's knowledge of the grammatical patterns of the source and target-languages, and so on. Collocation, individual words, graphs and diagrams are all aids to interpretation of a text.

stretch of language as a text rather than assume that it is a set of unrelated words and sentences.

4.4 INTRODUCING TEXT

So far in this book we have attempted to deal with some of the basic 'building blocks' of language: its lexical stock and grammatical structures. In order to make some headway in describing and analysing language, we have had to treat linguistic units and structures temporarily as if they had an independent status and possessed 'meaning' in their own right. We now need to take a broader look at language and to consider the possibility that, as part of a language system, lexical items and grammatical structures have a 'meaning potential'. This 'meaning potential' is only realized in communicative events, that is, in **text**. Following Brown and Yule (1983:6), **text** is defined here as 'the verbal record of a communicative event'; it is an instance of language in use rather than language as an abstract system of meanings and relations.

4.4.1 Text vs non-text

The nearest we get to non-text in actual life, leaving aside the works of those poets and prose writers who deliberately set out to create non-text, is probably in the speech of young children and *in bad translations*.

(Halliday and Hasan 1976:24; my emphasis)

As translators, we have to operate with lexical items and grammatical structures at various stages of the translation process. It is nevertheless imperative that we view the text as a whole, both at the beginning and at the end of the process. With the exception of extremely repetitive and predictable texts such as computer manuals, a conscientious translator does not begin to translate until he or she has read the text at least once and got a 'gist' of the overall message. But this is only the first step. Once the source text is understood, the translator then has to tackle the task of producing a target version which can be accepted as a text in its own right. Depending on the type of text being translated (e.g. an experimental novel vs a set of instructions for operating a machine) and the purpose assigned to the translation by the translator or the commissioner,²⁰ the phraseology and the collocational and grammatical patterning of the target version may – and usually do – have to conform to target-language norms, but even then the translation may still sound foreign or clumsy. Worse still, it may not even make sense to the target reader. Acceptable collocational patterns and grammatical structures can only enhance the readability of individual sentences, but they do not in themselves ensure that sentences and paragraphs add up to a readable or coherent text. In an unpublished manuscript, 'Ingredients of good, clear style', Wilson comments as follows on the difference between an old and a revised version of the Bible in Dagbani:

For a native speaker it was difficult to express what was wrong with the earlier version, except that it was 'foreign'. Since superficially there seemed to be no obvious grammatical blunders, and the vocabulary was not obviously faulty, the ingredients of this foreignness were not at first apparent. Now, however, a comparison ... has made clear that what the older version mainly suffers from are considerable deficiencies in 'discourse structure', i.e., in the way the sentences are combined into well-integrated paragraphs, and these in turn into a well-constructed whole. The new version, on the contrary, shows native-speaker mastery over the means of signposting the text into a coherent, clear prose, which is ... a real pleasure to read.

(quoted in Callow 1974:10–11)

A text, then, has features of organization which distinguish it from non-text, that is, from a random collection of sentences and paragraphs. Just like collocational and grammatical patterning and a host of other linguistic phenomena, these features of text organization are language- and culture-specific. Each linguistic community has preferred ways of organizing its various types of discourse. This is why target readers can often identify what appears to be a lexically and grammatically 'normal' text as a translation, or as 'foreign'.

A translation may be undertaken for a variety of purposes. However, in the chapters that follow we will assume that the ultimate aim of a translator, in most cases, is to achieve a measure of equivalence at text level, rather than at word or phrase level.²¹ More often than not, a translator will want the reader to accept a given translation as a text in its own right, if possible without being unduly alerted to the fact that it is a translation. To achieve this, the translator will need to adjust certain features of source-text organization in line with preferred ways of organizing discourse in the target language. The following chapters will attempt to outline some of the main features of discourse organization by looking at a number of factors which constrain or aid the way we produce and understand text.

This area of language study is somewhat 'messier' than the study of lexis and grammar. Texts may be organized in a variety of ways, the naturalness or otherwise of their organization being determined by a multitude of factors. De Beaugrande and Dressler rightly point out that it is 'much more straightforward to decide what constitutes a grammatical or acceptable sentence than what constitutes a grammatical or acceptable sentence sequence, paragraph, text, or discourse' (1981:17). More importantly, text studies are a relatively recent development in linguistics. There is, admittedly, a long tradition both in linguistics and in literary studies of analysing the works of individual writers, particularly literary writers, but relatively little work has been done on such areas of text studies as the conventions of non-literary writing within a community or the preferred patterns of organization in different types of discourse. Moreover, of the studies now available, most are concerned with describing the patterning and conventions of spoken and written English. Very little is available in the way of describing the types of text available in, say, Chinese or

Spanish, or of how a book will sometimes agree that raising problems.

4.4.2 Features

Any text, in any language, identifies itself as a text. It is presented to us as a unit – and partly because these connections established through this relates to the arrangement of sentences; these connections which allow us to trace patterns of the text relate to semantic connections; these are dealt with in ('Pragmatic equivalence').

Another important notion of genre is packaged by the term classified in two main categories: straightforward communication results in institutionalized paper editorial or specialized and therefore whole text but may include 'narration', 'exposition', 'abstraction', 'definition', 'nature of the matter', 'types of classification', 'specific strategies', 'religious texts' etc. In this book, for frequent references see (1990). For a brief history see (1997).

Spanish, or of how such texts are organized. Readers will note that the rest of this book will sometimes raise more questions than it answers, but they will, I hope, agree that raising questions is at least a step towards providing answers and solving problems.

4.4.2 Features of text organization

Any text, in any language, exhibits certain linguistic features which allow us to identify it as a text. We identify a stretch of language as a text partly because it is presented to us as a text – and we therefore do our utmost to make sense of it as a unit – and partly because we perceive connections within and among its sentences. These connections are of several kinds. First, there are connections which are established through the arrangement of information within each clause and the way this relates to the arrangement of information in preceding and following clauses and sentences; these contribute mainly to topic development and maintenance through **thematic** and **information structures** (Chapter 5). Second, there are surface connections which establish interrelationships between persons and events; these allow us to trace participants in a text and to interpret the way in which different parts of the text relate to each other (**cohesion**; Chapter 6). Finally, there are underlying semantic connections which allow us to 'make sense' of a text as a unit of meaning; these are dealt with under the heading of **coherence** and **implicature** in Chapter 7 ('Pragmatic equivalence').

Another important feature of text organization derives from the overlapping notions of **genre** and **text type**. Both relate to the way in which textual material is packaged by the writer along patterns familiar to the reader. Texts have been classified in two main ways to capture this type of 'packaging'. The first and more straightforward classification is based on the contexts in which texts occur and results in institutionalized labels such as 'journal article', 'science textbook', 'newspaper editorial' or 'travel brochure'. The second is a more subjective, less institutionalized and therefore much vaguer classification which does not normally apply to a whole text but rather to parts of it. Typical labels used in this type of classification include 'narration', 'exposition', 'argumentation' and 'instruction'. The first classification abstracts across contexts, the second abstracts across such factors as the nature of the messages involved or the addresser/addressee relationship. Both types of classification are useful in defining translation problems and in justifying specific strategies to overcome them. Reference to institutionalized genres, such as 'religious texts' and 'newspaper editorial', is made wherever applicable throughout this book. For an interesting discussion of translation problems which makes frequent references to the second type of classification, see Hatim and Mason (1990). For a broader discussion of the issue of text type and genres, see Trosborg (1997).

- Choose a notional category such as time reference, gender, countability, visibility, modality or animacy and compare the way it is expressed in your target language with the way it is expressed in English. Comment in particular on the sort of problems that could arise in translation from differences in the way the notion in question is expressed in the two languages. You may find it helpful to refer to grammars of your source and target languages and to base your discussion on an analysis of authentic translated texts.
- Imagine that you have been provisionally asked to translate John Le Carré's *The Russia House* (1989) into your target language. Before you can sign the translation contract, the publishers insist that you provide a sample translation of a couple of pages to allow them to assess your competence as a translator of this type of literature. They choose the following extract and ask you to submit a target version of it, stating that they appreciate that you may not have had time to read the whole novel but that they just want to see how you might handle Le Carré's distinctive use of language. They provide you with a short summary of the context to help you assess the tone of the extract.

Note to the translator:

John Le Carré's *The Russia House* is a spy thriller which revolves around the then new era of glasnost in the Soviet Union. The general feeling that one gets from reading this novel is that nothing much has changed and that the cold-war machinations are still at play and are as irrelevant and as brutal as ever. The narrator in the following extract is Palfrey, legal adviser to the British secret service or, in his own words, 'Legal adviser to the illegals' (p. 47). In this passage, which is very near the end of the book, he ironically sums up the manner in which the hypocritical bureaucrats of Whitehall and Washington dealt with their own inadequacies when their major spying operation went wrong. The various people mentioned, such as Ned and Barley, had all been involved in the operation in one way or another.

Extract for translation:

Oh, and note was taken. Passively, since active verbs have an unpleasant way of betraying the actor. Very serious note. Taken all over the place.

Note was taken that Ned had failed to advise the twelfth floor of Barley's drunken breakout after his return from Leningrad.

Note was taken that Ned had requisitioned all manner of resources on that same night, for which he had never accounted,

exercises

among them Ben Lugg and the services of the head listener Mary, who sufficiently overcame her loyalty to a brother officer to give the committee a lurid account of Ned's high-handedness. Demanding illegal taps! Imagine! Faulting telephones! The liberty!

Mary was pensioned off soon after this and now lives in a rage in Malta, where it is feared she is writing her memoirs.

Note was also taken, if regrettably, of the questionable conduct of our Legal Adviser de Palfrey – I even got my *de* back* – who had failed to justify his use of the Home Secretary's delegated authority in the full knowledge that this was required of him by the secretly agreed Procedures Governing the Service's Activities as Amended by etcetera, and in accordance with paragraph something of a deniable Home Office protocol.

The heat of battle was however taken into account. The Legal Adviser was not pensioned off, neither did he take himself to Malta. But he was not exonerated either. A partial pardon at best. A Legal Adviser should not have been so close to an operation. An inappropriate use of the Legal Adviser's skills. The word injudicious was passed around.

It was also noted with regret that the same Legal Adviser had drafted a glowing testimonial of Barley for Clive's signature not forty-eight hours before Barley's disappearance, thus enabling Barley to take possession of the shopping list,** though presumably not for long.

In my spare hours, I drew up Ned's terms of severance and thought nervously about my own. Life inside the Service might have its limitations but the thought of life outside it terrified me.

(pp. 412–413)

* Palfrey's full name is Horatio Benedict de Palfrey, but, as he explains earlier (p. 47), 'you may forget the first two [names] immediately, and somehow nobody has ever remembered the "de" at all'.

** A document detailing information required by Whitehall and Washington from the informant/potential defector on the Russian side.

When you have translated the above text into your target language, discuss any differences between the source and target versions in terms of grammatical meaning, paying particular attention to the use of passive structures²² and the reflexive *take himself to Malta* (paragraph 6). You may also wish to use this opportunity to consolidate your

knowledge of other areas covered so far, namely semantics and lexis. Consider, for instance, the evoked meaning of an expression such as *all over the place* (paragraph 1), or the impact of an unusual collocation such as *lives in a rage* (paragraph 4); how well do these expressions translate into your target language?

Comment at length on the strategies you used to overcome difficulties at the grammatical level in particular.

- Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow is the title of one of two English translations of an award-winning novel by the Danish author Peter Høeg, which first appeared in 1992. On the surface, the story revolves around Smilla Qaaviqaaq Jaspersen, daughter of a Greenlandic Inuit mother and a rich Danish dentist, who becomes suspicious about the death of a Greenlandic child in Copenhagen and decides to investigate it. At a deeper level, the story is about Denmark's colonial history and the relationship between different groups in Danish society today.

In the following extract (Høeg 2005:262–263), Smilla switches from reflecting on her current situation to remembering aspects of her past life.

I put on my tracksuit. I knot the steel ball into a long white bath towel that I've folded double. Then I hang it back on its hook. And I sit down to wait.

If you have to wait for a long time, you have to seize hold of the waiting or it will become destructive. If you let things slide, your consciousness will waver, awakening fear and restlessness, then depression strikes, and you're pulled down.

To keep up my spirits I ask myself, What is a human being? Who am I?

Am I my name?

The year I was born my mother travelled to West Greenland and brought home the girl's name Millaaraq. Because it reminded Moritz of the Danish word *mild*, which didn't exist in the vocabulary of his love relationship with my mother, because he wanted to transform everything Greenlandic into something that would make it European and familiar, and because I apparently had smiled at him – the boundless trust of an infant, which comes from the fact that she still doesn't know what's in store for her – my parents agreed on Smillaaraq. With the wear and tear that time subjects all of us to, it was shortened to Smilla.

Imagine that Peter Høeg and the English publisher of this novel have commissioned you and various other translators to render a number of

SUGGES

Beekman, Jo
Chapter
Grammar
Downing, An
edition, A
Huddleston, R
Grammar
Lyons, John
University
Function
Robins, R. H
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On gender

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EXERCISES

passages, including this one, into your target language(s) in order to establish whether the English translation can serve as a source text in situations where translators from Danish (for example into languages like Ukrainian or Kurdish) are unlikely to be available. When you have translated it, comment on the relevant difficulties and the strategies you used to convey the function(s) of each tense and the impact of the switch in tenses. Your comments need to be clear and accessible, because they will be passed on to the translators who will eventually be commissioned to render the full novel into a range of languages. These translators will need to be sensitized to the impact of the interplay of tenses, among other things, in the English translation – because they will use this English translation as a source text.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

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- Gadalla, Hassan A. H. (2006) 'Arabic Imperfect Verbs in Translation: A Corpus Study of English Renderings', *Meta* 51(1): 51–71.
- Gentry El-Dash, Linda and JoAnne Busnardo (2003) 'Interaction of Semantic and Pragmatic Choices in the Translation of Verb Forms: English and Portuguese', *Journal of Pragmatics* 35(12): 1823–1841.
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Fujii, Yasunari
Voice: Implicative Texts
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Kinsui, Satoshi
Japanese

NOTES

- 1 A system
- 2 See Chap
- 3 for an ex
- 4 The lexical meaning of absence
- 5 And some language than mas
- 6 the anima (Sapir ar
- 7 inanimat action's
- 8 A determiner meaning
- 9 Unmarked wishes t
- 10 The reason are not certain such as lati
- 11 French for 'ship'
- 12 I am gr
- 13 Elizabeth (second form to
- 14 The mo
- 15 Brown any lan
- 16 This ch
- 17 Disting adding

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NOTES

- 1 A system is a set of options or contrasting choices.
- 2 See Chapter 5 for a discussion of word-order patterns and note 1 of the same chapter for an explanation of the functional elements **subject**, **predicator** and **object**.
- 3 The lexical item *late*, as in *the late Graham Greene*, can be used to convey a similar meaning in English. The difference is that this information is optional in English and the absence of *late* therefore does not necessarily indicate that a certain referent is alive.
- 4 And sometimes as masculine, feminine or neuter, as in the case of German. In some languages, the gender category is expressed in terms of animate vs inanimate rather than masculine vs feminine. Southern Paiute, an American Indian language, combines the animate/inanimate distinction with a further dimension, namely that of visibility (Sapir and Swadesh 1964). A given entity must be classified (a) as either animate or inanimate, and (b) according to whether or not it can be seen from the standpoint of the action's main setting.
- 5 A **determiner** is a word such as *the*, *this* or *some*, which is used with a noun to limit its meaning or specify its reference in some way.
- 6 Unmarked here means that it is the form normally used unless the speaker specifically wishes to highlight the distinction.
- 7 The reason that gender distinctions can be manipulated in this way in English is that they are not a regular feature of the grammar of English. An English speaker can convey certain expressive meanings by using *she* (rather than *it*) to refer to an inanimate object such as a *car* or *ship*, for instance. It would be difficult to transfer this type of manipulation into a language such as French, where gender is a regular grammatical feature. A French speaker has to use the feminine form for '*car*', *voiture*, and the masculine form for '*ship*', *bateau*; he or she has no other choice.
- 8 I am grateful to Monika Bednarek and her students for this information.
- 9 Elizabethan English made a distinction between *thou* (second-person singular) and *you* (second-person plural). The singular form was used to express familiarity and the plural form to express respect or distance. This distinction no longer exists in Modern English.
- 10 The most detailed study of this issue remains Brown and Gilman (1960/1972).
- 11 Brown and Gilman use *T* to refer to the familiar form and *V* to refer to the polite form in any language.
- 12 This classification is taken from St John (1983).
- 13 Distinguishing between the present and the future in non-past reference is achieved by adding a time adverbial such as '*now*' or '*tomorrow*' (Netsu 1981).

- 14 For a good, accessible summary of the functions of the passive in English, see *The Collins COBUILD English Grammar* (Sinclair 1990), sections 10.10 to 10.14 (pp. 404–405).
- 15 Reflexive structures involve a reflexive pronoun such as *myself* or *himself* as object. They suggest that the person or thing affected by the action is the same as the person or thing doing it, for example *I blame myself for not paying attention*, *He introduced himself to me* (examples from Sinclair 1990). Like passive structures, reflexive structures are sometimes used to suppress the agent. For example, ‘the opportunity made itself available’, which is a perfectly natural expression in Russian, allows the speaker to avoid specifying who made the opportunity available in much the same way as *The opportunity was made available*.
- 16 See Bennett (2007) for an interesting discussion of various features of English academic discourse, including the passive voice.
- 17 See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the role of voice in organizing messages.
- 18 This is still true to a large extent, even though passive structures are becoming more common in various contexts because of the influence of translation.
- 19 See Chapter 5, note 1, for an explanation of the functional elements **subject**, **predicate**, **object**, **complement** and **adjunct**.
- 20 For an excellent and accessible discussion of various considerations that impact on the translator’s choice of strategy and degree of adherence to source- or target-culture norms, see Nord (1997).
- 21 This is not to say that equivalence at word level is not or should not be given priority in some contexts. The biblical or koranic translator, for instance, will often be at least equally concerned, if not more concerned, with equivalence at the level of the word or phrase.
- 22 I imagine that the extensive use of the passive in this particular text will not prove problematic in languages such as Japanese and Chinese, where the passive is associated with adversity. It may well be that the adversity function will be compatible with the tone of the text and the implications of cowardice and denial of responsibility.

CHAPTER

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