

TRANSLATION COURSE TUTOR : Mr. Salim BOUDAD

An overview of the different types of translation: ملخص لمختلف أنواع الترجمة:

Translation is often defined according to the subject area of the text. This is a useful way of classifying translation types because specialist texts normally require translators with specialist knowledge.

Here are the most common types you're like to come across in this category

1. General Translation: الترجمة العامة

The translation of non-specialised text. That is, text that we can all understand without needing specialist knowledge in some area.

The text may still contain some technical terms and jargon, but these will either be widely understood, or easily researched.

What this means?

The implication is that you don't need someone with specialist knowledge for this type of translation – any professional translator can handle them.

Translators who only do this kind of translation (don't have a specialist field) are sometimes referred to as 'generalist' or 'general purpose' translators.

Examples

Most business correspondence, website content, company and product/service info, non-technical reports.

2. Technical Translation : الترجمة التقنية

We use the term "technical translation" in two different ways:

Broad meaning: any translation where the translator needs specialist knowledge in some domain or area.

Narrow meaning: limited to the translation of engineering (in all its forms), IT and industrial texts.

This narrower meaning would exclude legal, financial and medical translations for example, where these would be included in the broader definition.

What this means ?

Technical translations require **knowledge of the specialist field** or domain of the text.

That's because without it translators won't completely understand the text and its implications. And this is essential if we want a fully accurate and appropriate translation.

Good to know

Many technical translation projects also have a **typesetting**.

Examples

Manuals, specialist reports, product brochures

3. Scientific Translation: الترجمة العلمية

The translation of scientific research or documents relating to it.

What this means?

These texts invariably contain domain-specific terminology, and often involve cutting edge research.

So it's imperative the translator has the necessary knowledge of the field to fully understand the text. That's why scientific translators are typically either experts in the field who have turned to translation, or professionally qualified translators who also have qualifications and/or experience in that domain.

On occasion the translator may have to consult either with the author or other domain experts to fully comprehend the material and so translate it appropriately.

Examples

Research papers, journal articles, experiment/trial results

4. Medical Translation: الترجمة الطبية

What is it?

The translation of healthcare, medical product, pharmaceutical and biotechnology materials.

Medical translation is a very broad term covering a wide variety of specialist areas and materials – everything from patient information to regulatory, marketing and technical documents.

As a result, this translation type has numerous potential sub-categories – ‘medical device translations’ and ‘clinical trial translations’, for example.

What this means?

As with any text, the translators need to fully understand the materials they’re translating. That means sound knowledge of medical terminology and they’ll often also need specific subject-matter expertise.

Good to know

Many countries have specific requirements governing the translation of medical device and pharmaceutical documentation. This includes both your client-facing and product-related materials.

Examples

Medical reports, product instructions, labeling, clinical trial documentation

5. Financial (Economic) Translation: الترجمة المالية أو الاقتصادية

What is it?

In broad terms, the translation of banking, stock exchange, forex, financing and financial reporting documents.

However, the term is generally used only for the more technical of these documents that require translators with knowledge of the field.

Any competent translator could translate a bank statement, for example, so that wouldn’t typically be considered a financial translation.

What this means

You need translators with domain expertise to correctly understand and translate the financial terminology in these texts.

Examples

Company accounts, annual reports, fund or product prospectuses, audit reports.

7. Legal Translation: الترجمة القانونية

What is it?

The translation of documents relating to the law and legal process.

What this means

Legal texts require **translators with a legal background**.

That’s because without it, a translator may not:

- fully understand the legal concepts
- write in legal style
- understand the differences between legal systems, and how best to translate concepts that don’t correspond.

And we need all that to produce professional quality legal translations – translations that are accurate, terminologically correct and stylistically appropriate.

Examples

Contracts, legal reports, court judgments, expert opinions, legislation

Types of translation based on the translation method employed:

أنواع الترجمة من خلال الطريقة المستعملة

This category has two sub-groups:

- the **practical methods** translation providers use to produce their translations, and
- the translation strategies/methods identified and discussed within **academia**.

The translation methods translation providers use

There are 4 main methods used in the translation industry today. We have an overview of each below.

1. Machine Translation (MT): الترجمة الآلية

What is it?

A translation produced entirely by a software program with no human intervention.

A widely used, and free, example is Google Translate. And there are also commercial MT engines, generally tailored to specific domains, languages and/or clients.

Pros and cons

There are two limitations to MT:

- they make **mistakes** (incorrect translations), and
- **quality of wording** is patchy (some parts good, others unnatural or even nonsensical)

On the positive side they are virtually **instantaneous** and many are **free**.

Best suited for:

Getting the general idea of what a text says.

This method should never be relied on when high accuracy and/or good quality wording is needed.

2. Machine Translation plus Human Editing (PEMT) : ترجمة آلية زائد التحرير البشري

What is it?

A machine translation subsequently edited by a human translator or editor (often called Post-editing Machine Translation = PEMT).

The editing process is designed to rectify some of the deficiencies of a machine translation.

This process can take different forms, with different desired outcomes. Probably most common is a 'light editing' process where the editor ensures the text is understandable, without trying to fix quality of expression.

Pros and cons

This method won't necessarily eliminate all translation **mistakes**. That's because the program may have chosen a wrong word (meaning) that wasn't obvious to the editor.

And **wording** won't generally be as good as a professional human translator would produce.

Its advantage is it's generally **quicker** and a little **cheaper** than a full translation by a professional translator.

Best suited for:

Translations for information purposes only.

Again, this method shouldn't be used when full accuracy and/or consistent, natural wording is needed.

3. Human Translation: الترجمة البشرية**What is it?**

Translation by a professional human translator.

Pros and cons

Professional translators should produce translations that are **fully accurate** and **well-worded**.

That said, there is always the possibility of 'human error', which is why translation companies like us typically offer an **additional review process** – see next method.

This method will take a little **longer** and likely **cost more** than the PEMT method.

Best suited for:

Most if not all translation purposes.

4. Human Translation + Revision : الترجمة البشرية + المراجعة**What is it?**

A human translation with an additional review by a second translator.

The review is essentially a **safety check** – designed to pick up any translation errors and refine wording if need be.

Pros and cons

This produces the **highest level** of **translation quality**.

Best suited for:

All translation purposes.

There's also one other common term used by practitioners and academics alike to describe a type (method) of translation:

5. Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) : الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب**What is it?**

A human translator using computer tools to aid the translation process.

Key features

Virtually all translators use such tools these days.

The most prevalent tool is **Translation Memory** (TM) software. This creates a database of previous translations that can be accessed for future work.

TM (ذاكرة الترجمة) software is particularly useful when dealing with repeated and closely-matching text, and for ensuring consistency of terminology. For certain projects it can speed up the translation process.

The translation methods described by academia**انواع الترجمة حسب منظري الترجمة**

A great deal has been written within academia analysing how human translators go about their craft.

Seminal has been the **work of Newmark**, and the following methods of translation attributed to him are widely discussed in the literature.

These methods are **approaches** and **strategies** for translating the **text as a whole**, not techniques for handling smaller text units, which we discuss in our final translation category.

1. Word-for-word Translation : الترجمة الحرفية

This method translates each word into the other language using its **most common meaning** and **keeping the word order** of the original language.

So the translator deliberately ignores context and target language grammar and syntax.

Its main purpose is to help understand the source language structure and word use.

Often the translation will be placed below the original text to aid comparison.

2. Literal Translation : الترجمة الحرفية

Words are again translated independently using their **most common meanings** and out of context, but word order changed to the closest **acceptable target language grammatical structure** to the original.

Its main suggested purpose is to help someone read the original text.

3. Faithful Translation: الترجمة القصدية

Faithful translation focuses on the intention of the author and seeks to convey the **precise meaning** of the original text.

It uses correct target language structures, but structure is less important than meaning.

4. Semantic Translation : الترجمة الدلالية

Semantic translation is also author-focused and seeks to convey the **exact meaning**.

Where it differs from faithful translation is that it places equal **emphasis on aesthetics**, ie the ‘sounds’ of the text – repetition, word play, assonance, etc.

In this method form is as important as meaning as it seeks to “*recreate the precise flavour and tone of the original*” (Newmark).

5. Communicative Translation : الترجمة التواصلية

Seeks to communicate the message and meaning of the text in a **natural and easily understood** way.

It’s described as reader-focused, seeking to produce the same effect on the reader as the original text.

6. Free Translation : الترجمة الحرة

Here conveying the **meaning** and **effect** of the original are all important.

There are no constraints on grammatical form or word choice to achieve this.

Often the translation will **paraphrase**, so may be of markedly different length to the original.

7. Adaptation : الأقامة

Mainly used for poetry and plays, this method involves **re-writing the text** where the translation would otherwise lack the same resonance and impact on the audience.

Themes, storylines and characters will generally be retained, but cultural references, acts and situations adapted to relevant target culture ones.

So this is effectively a **re-creation** of the work for the target culture.

8. Idiomatic Translation : الترجمة الاصطلاحية

Reproduces the meaning or message of the text using **idioms** and **colloquial expressions** and language wherever possible.

The goal is to produce a translation with language that is as **natural** as possible.