

3. Communicative Translation

This type of translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the translating conventional formulae or proverbs and it involves some original text in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the reader. It is particularly suitable when levels of cultural approximation. Communicative translation aspires to create the same effect created by the SL text on the TL reader. Though it is not as accurate as semantic translation which sticks to the original text, it communicates the meaning at the expense of accuracy. However, it is preferred by many translators because it resorts to concepts that are more familiar to the TL reader on cultural and social levels. It is usually used for culturally specific idioms, proverbs or clichés where the translator replaces a SL word or concept with one that already exists in the TL. Communicative translation concentrates on the message and the main force of the text, tends to be simple, clear and brief, and is always written in a natural

and resourceful style (Newmark (1988: 48). For some linguists, communicative translation 'is produced, when, in a given situation, the ST uses a SL expression standard for that situation, and the TT uses a TL expression standard for an equivalent target culture situation. Study the following examples:

Charity begins at home. الأقرابون أولى بالمعروف

Diamonds cut diamonds. لا يفل الحديد إلا الحديد

Notice here that 'diamonds' is rendered by حديد which is equivalent to *iron* in English. Literal translation would not convey the message here. In Arabic 'diamond' has positive associations related to beauty and noble characteristics while iron is associated with strength and physical power. Prophet Mohammad said:

“النَّاسُ مَعَادِينُ كَمَعَادِينِ الدَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ، خِيَارُهُمْ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ خِيَارُهُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ إِذَا فَتَهُوا”

This translates as follows: 'People are like metals such as gold and silver. The good ones before Islam are also good when converted as long as

they learn about Islam.’ Diamond, then, is used in Arabic to refer to how good or bad a person is.

Iron is cut by iron. لا يفل الحديد إلا الحديد

Road signs, greetings and compliments are best rendered by communicative translation as shown in the following examples:

Dead end, no exit: طريق غير نافذ

Detour: تحويلة

Bus, load/unload: موقف باص/تحميل/تنزيل

As for everyday greetings, communicative translation is preferred, especially for colloquial phrases.

Exercise: Translate the following English proverbs using communicative translation.

1. A burnt child dreads the fire.

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2. A cat has nine lives.

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3. Don't count your chickens before they're hatched

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4. Let bygones be bygones.

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5. Marriage is a lottery.