

# Practical 1 Tutor notes

## 1.1 Intralingual translation

If possible, this exercise should be handed in and looked at by the tutor before the first practical. It is an efficient introduction to the major issues of the course as a whole. Students will typically rephrase the text for a Sunday-school class, but they will usually be vague about the age-range, denomination and social background of the children, and about how the TT is to be used – whether for reading aloud, silent reading, dramatized reading, etc. Yet all these are essential strategic considerations, and essential to gauging the success of the TTs. Even when the story is rephrased for an adult Bible class, or as a satirical pastiche, the student often avoids saying whether it is to be taken allegorically or literally, or how sophisticated the readership or audience is, or what the target of the satire is. Whatever the intended public, in recasting the text students often overlook the role of the translator's ideology – the basic religious, philosophical, political or moral attitude taken to the Exodus story.

The exercise thus enables the tutor to stress from the start the importance of developing a translation *strategy* which takes account of, among other things, the purpose and genre of the ST, the function of its salient features and the purpose and genre of the TT.

## 1.2 Gist translation

This assignment will take a good 30 or 40 minutes. Time may be short in this first seminar, because the tutor will have introduced the course and outlined practical arrangements. If this is the case, it is possible to get some students to translate the first half and others the second – not an ideal approach, since the idea is to produce a gist translation of the whole text, but it is better than nothing, and this text does actually lend itself to this treatment. The very drawback in splitting the text is in fact also an advantage: the likely difficulties in attaching one student's second half to another's first half are an excellent demonstration of the need always to tackle an ST as a whole, not on a word-by-word, sentence-by-sentence or even paragraph-by-paragraph basis. (The same point can be made every time an ST is divided up for class work.)

Professional translators are commonly asked to do gist translation or something like it – in e.g. abridgements of news items, tourist leaflets where the TT just gives the bare

bones of the ST, or, as in this assignment, publications where commercial factors require a TT that is shorter and cheaper to produce than the ST (the 160-page English catalogue is abridged from the 370-page German one). The assignment therefore confirms the importance of a clear strategy: before deciding what can be left out or condensed, the student has to decide what the genre of the ST is, and what the purpose of the TT is.

The biggest problem students will find is how to cut the ST without obscuring or distorting the message. Deciding what sorts of distortion actually matter is itself a strategic consideration; and most of the decisions of detail should focus on the interpretative elements introduced by gist and exegesis. These are also the main issues to concentrate on in looking at the published TT, in which one peculiarity is the introduction of exegetic material in lines 15–17 which uses up some of the valuable space saved in lines 5–10. The technical nature of this extra material suggests that the translator consulted the publisher or a metallurgist when preparing the TT. Another plausible possibility is that, as often happens, the translator was working on a draft of the ST which was altered after the translation was done but before publication. Whatever the facts of the matter, comparing the ST and the TT as they stand is a good opportunity to draw attention to three things which will be stressed throughout the course and which professionals are always aware of: the need for liaison with the work-provider (what exactly does the client want to be in the text?), the ever-possible need for specialist peer advice, and the need to consult relevant reference sources.

## PRACTICAL 1.2 CLASS HANDOUT

### SCHNEIDWERKZEUG – FÜR DEN GUTEN SCHNITT TT

*Compare your TT with the published one:*

#### KNIVES

##### **Kitchen Knives.**

Hand-crafted knives and their cheap mass-produced counterparts are worlds apart. With every single cut the user will experience the difference.

##### **Steel: stainless or sharp?**

- 5 Toughness, hardness and elasticity are mere probabilities and potentials which only lie dormant in the initially soft iron. They have to be brought out of the material and fully realised by a qualified metalworker, using a rich variety of smelting and forming processes. Hardness as well as elasticity are the features of high-grade knife steel and these qualities have traditionally been combined in tool steels of a relatively high  
10 carbon content.

##### **Production: rolled or forged?**

- High-quality knives are supposed to last a very long time even in extensive everyday use and such knives can only be produced by forging. The steel material is compressed, stretched and condensed by hammering until its form and inner structure suit the  
15 intended purpose. The blanks for less sophisticated knives are stamped out of high-grade strip steel which is produced by huge forming rolls, churning out steel with exactly the same profile.

##### **The finish:**

- Be they forged or stamped, knives are given another great part of their characteristics  
20 through finishing by grinding. The most refined knives are equipped with an extremely fine edge which can be down to 1/400 of a millimetre thin. The blade's surface is then polished until even the smallest grinding marks become invisible.

(Manufactum 2003b: 7)

