

Practical 8 Tutor notes

Discussion of the chapter is not problematic. Two points to emphasize are the overlap of sentential and discourse features, and the need to be aware of quasi-discourse features within sentences. Practicals 8.1 and 8.2 both illustrate these points. As regards the intertextual level, the main thing is to reassure students that they are not (yet) expected to have an encyclopedic knowledge of German culture. But they should be ready to research expressions that they suspect may have intertextual resonances. The main thing is that, when they do know they are facing an intertextual allusion, they should be able to assess its function in the ST, and therefore its strategic importance. (When setting pieces for assessment or examination, our own practice is to give intertextual references in the contextual information, unless they are very well known or can easily be traced in reference works.) The practical assignments do not actually include intertextual features; students can, if it is appropriate, be referred to Practicals 6.4 and 10.1, both of which have some intertextual interest.

8.1 Discourse issues

Much of the difficulty of translating this passage into equally cogent English lies in dealing effectively with the ST's discourse connectors. Points which the tutor might raise – in some cases referring to the notes which follow our TT – include the following. (1) Lines 2 and 3. Is there a recognized place in English for the colon as a logical connector, other than at the head of lists or introducing direct speech? The answer is surely yes, and we have recommended use of the TL colon at one or two other points in the course (e.g. Chapter 8, p. 94). And yet there is certainly no one-to-one relationship. Neither of these ST colon links (after 'gewußt' and after 'Arbeitslosigkeit') is best rendered by a colon in English. And the solutions are different. The difficulty of constructing a 'stand-alone' TT for 'Schon Brecht hat es gewußt' means that the most natural solutions are the one we use in our TT ('As Brecht observed long ago', followed by a main clause), or 'Brecht observed long ago that . . .', followed by a noun clause. The immediately following second instance of connection by colon – very frequent in German journalism – creates a different situation, in which a rhetorical formula is available for the introductory phrase – 'Take, for example' – and makes the TL connection perfectly clear even across the sentence gap. (2) Line 6. It is worth singling out 'jedenfalls'. Its actual usage is complex and cannot be dealt with

briefly, but it is clearly too often translated as ‘anyway’ or ‘in any case’, in instances where its use is emphatic, such as here. (3) Line 6. Likewise, ‘immerhin’ should be recommended to students as rewarding sustained observation across different contexts. (4) Line 8. In the second paragraph, the initial ‘Aber’ announces that this paragraph’s argument will run counter to the politicians’ indifference indicated in the first paragraph. Within the second paragraph, ‘auch’ twice marks a concessive element – yes, the latest figures *are* down, and yes, even the employment market will reflect the improved economic situation. Much of the paragraph is dominated by a larger-scale concession-plus-assertion structure straightforwardly marked by ‘Zwar’ and ‘aber’; ‘selbst’ is used to lend weight to the assertion. (5) Line 16. After the (omitted) preceding paragraph, ‘Eine vernünftige Politik’ sets off on a new tack, signalled by the *absence* of cohesion marking. Otherwise little in this paragraph calls for comment here. (6) Line 23. The article’s final paragraph is linked to the foregoing – in fact to the whole article up to that point – by what we might call a ‘hard’ connector, one with a clear logical function which must be explicitly rendered in the TT. Our note 22 confines itself to rejecting ‘therefore’ on stylistic grounds. But it is worth emphasizing that the preferred rendering ‘It follows that’ is not only idiomatically superior to ‘therefore’ (let alone ‘Therefore’ in leading position), but does justice by its weightiness to the crucial function of this ‘deshalb’ in announcing that the conclusions of a reasoned essay are about to be delivered.

8.2 Discourse issues

The tutor may wish to draw attention to some of the following points. (1) Line 3. The ST integrates the afterthought ‘neun Tage später’ into the sentence dealing with the 2 January 1955 debut. (2) Line 4. The emphatic cohesion marker ‘dennoch’ draws the appropriately emphatic TL ‘None the less’. (3) Lines 4–10. The ST can be reasonably held to suggest that the idiosyncratic nature of the programme actually deterred the leading US music critics from attending. The TT not only makes this suggestion explicit, but – paradoxically, by means of the disclaimer ‘seem to’ – invites the reader to assess its plausibility. (4) Lines 10–11. The ST’s idea sequence creates an impression of spontaneous writing: ‘The critics didn’t come – actually, looking back, this was a good thing. Why was it a good thing?’ – and it continues with David Oppenheim’s role, here too interpolating afterthoughts. To single out an individual point first: the translator has avoided the mild calque of causal ‘For’ beginning a sentence, and has instead incorporated the ‘for’ as the central connector in a long single sentence (though the omission of the comma before ‘for’ in such a long sentence is non-standard). This is one of several standard preferred solutions (see our brief discussion of ‘denn’ in Chapter 8). However, more interestingly, he has overhauled the whole logical structure of the ST, turning it into a long and complex but ‘planned’ sentence, probably easier for the reader to follow; he has also declared ‘enough is enough’ by reserving one item – Oppenheim’s remark about Gould – for a new sentence. Overall, there has been a major reorganization of the ST’s cohesion. (5) Lines 17–24. The most striking feature of the ST’s second paragraph is the extended rhetorical anaphora built on the initial simple inversion for sequential focus, ‘Über das Wunder [. . .] ist [. . .] geschrieben worden’, and producing no fewer than seven ‘über . . .’ constructions following the first, but marshalled in a set of variations of phrase length and syntax suggesting the virtuosity of

a professional pianist. The translator achieves a felicitous balance between respect for the ST and commonsense judgement about how much is too much. This works out at a striking enough use of rhetorical anaphora ('about' occurs four times in all) and then a confident and convincing fresh start with 'Equally important is'. That singular verb, of course, raises a question, and perhaps 'are' might have been a safer choice, given that what follows 'virtuosity' cannot be regarded as standing in apposition to it: inwardness and depth are not virtuosity. But in our view this is a minor flaw in a successful solution to the awkward problem of an unusually stretched ST rhetorical anaphora, which could easily have led to a badly over-stretched imitation in English. (6) Line 24. At the end of this long enumeration, the translator orchestrates the climax and transition to the next stage, inserting 'finally' (TT l. 23) to announce the end of the list (strictly speaking, the second half-list), and 'it was' (TT l. 24) to provide the reader with a rest point from which the extended metaphor of the opened window can take off. In comparison, the ST's corresponding passage is almost laconic. The ST/TT comparison here is a reminder that tendencies – like the tendency for cohesion to be more fully marked in German than in English – are no more than tendencies. The strategic decision here, if one was made, seems to have been to impose greater order and clarity on an ST that works well rhetorically, giving an effect of spontaneity, but might easily lose coherence in translation. (7) Line 27. The final point is more in line with the general tendencies noted in Chapter 8. The ST has a colon after 'nicht nur ein musikalischer', representing 'And here's why'. This time the TT follows conventional English practice and leaves the link completely unmarked.

PRACTICAL 8.1 CLASS HANDOUT

'TRÜGERISCHER TREND' TT AND COMMENTARY

(i) *Strategic decisions*

The article is a forceful call for action on unemployment, written under two slight constraints. The first is that the news triggering it was not of a rise in unemployment, but of a slight fall. The second is that the call for action is not focused on a single player (e.g. the Federal government of the time) alone. In other words, there is no cheap, 'knee-jerk' pretext for the critique, and no cheap target. These features mark the text out as one for thinking readers who will expect an analytical approach. The ST is correspondingly closely reasoned, with an important role being played by cohesion marking. This does not exclude rhetoric altogether, though the devices used are few and restrained: they consist in little more than the immediate occupation of a timeless, 'seen-it-all' perspective (created by 'Schon Brecht hat es gewußt') and a tendency to insert reflection pauses, i.e. paragraph endings, after the more lapidary statements of the argument. Neither of these features presents an acute translation problem. There is also some sign of planned construction in the tendency of the paragraphs to end in a relatively weighty sentence containing a lapidary final thought; each of the first three paragraphs of our excerpt progresses from distinctly shorter-winded opening remarks.

In our strategy for translating the text, the main priorities are to ensure that the clarity of the argument is undiminished and the cool, rational tone preserved. In detail this will involve checking that the TT cohesion marking is not over-prominent, but also, in the first paragraph at least, filling out the TL syntax with verbs where a literal rendering of the ST's staccato phrases and meaningful colons would be unidiomatic and thus suggest a more excited tonal register (see Chapter 10) than the ST warrants. On the other hand, there is no reason why the TT should not preserve the unobtrusive rhetorical effect of the progressively lengthening sentences where this is present.

(ii) *TT*

A MISLEADING STATISTIC¹

As Brecht observed long ago,² there are things³ which we lose from sight because of their sheer size. Unemployment, for instance, has⁴ become a huge problem, yet⁵ for many politicians it no longer seems to exist. Certainly,⁶ it rated barely a mention throughout the weeks of coalition bargaining in Bonn – during which, after all,⁷ the focus was on the central priorities of future Federal policy.⁸

However, in the absence of⁹ a proper strategy,¹⁰ the employment crisis is threatening to become permanent. The¹¹ latest batch of statistics from Nuremberg makes no difference. It is true¹² that the effects of the economic upturn have worked through to the labour market. The figure of four million registered unemployed – recorded at the beginning of this year – will probably not be reached again in the coming winter. But

not even the governing coalition's experts believe the present growth rate will produce enough jobs to improve the situation significantly.¹³ [. . .]

15 Any¹⁴ realistic approach¹⁵ to boosting employment must aim to create new, additional jobs. Redistribution of existing work – advocated in some quarters¹⁶ – rapidly proves to have limitations, particularly in East Germany,¹⁷ where¹⁸ the ratio of part-time vacancies to all vacancies is already¹⁹ higher than in the West. But with wage levels so low,²⁰ not many people²¹ can afford to live on half a wage.

20 It follows²² that the real answer must lie²³ in an employment strategy²⁴ involving not only all branches of government but also the unions, the employers and – not least²⁵ – the Bundesbank.²⁶ The Bank²⁷ must use²⁸ interest rates to stimulate growth. If Bonn continues to look the other way, the unemployment statistics will go on making headlines, month after month, in the next millennium.²⁹

(iii) *Decisions of detail*

1 The main title's alliteration is one of the ST's few rhetorical flourishes. Catchy headings are so routine in modern journalism that it is often worth sacrificing some literal accuracy for the sake of a felicitous TL rendering. Here, however, the word 'trend' itself is apt to mislead – as indeed the SL 'Trend' does, based as it apparently is on a single set of statistics. In any case, the seriousness of the text is sufficient reason to discard alliterative headline efforts like 'Deceptive Dip'.

2 'Schon Brecht' provides a variant on the hoary 'Schon die alten Römer' opening which has long provided one of the classics of 'Denglish'. German 'schon' and English 'already' are a tricky match. Even moved to a normal adverbial position, 'already' cannot provide an idiomatic rendering here. The loss can be compensated for by using 'long ago' instead, in conjunction with a free interpretation of 'gewußt'. If we know Brecht knew it, he clearly also said it, and the ambiguity of 'observed' reflects the non-explicit quality of 'gewußt'.

As noted in Chapter 15, English actually has fewer inhibitions about complex syntax than modern German, and has correspondingly less use for the staccato form of words used for the article's opening point, in which the connective logic rests on the punctuation. What is crisp and attention-catching in the ST would be over-dramatic and strained if taken straight across into English. Our TT's commonplace introductory formula, 'As Brecht observed', in no way weakens the effect of the ST sequential focus, which highlights 'So manches [. . .] annimmt'.

3 The expression 'manches' (as opposed to 'vieles') cannot be intensified; the 'so' is therefore approximative (*DUW* Sense 5a). Indeed, the term 'so manches' is so vague that no quantitative measure at all is required in the TT.

4 The ST's verbless formulation has a touch of speech or lecture rhetoric about it, like a title announcement. Direct rendering would be too abrupt for the equivalent TL genre conventions. It would be quite feasible to retain the ST structure, including the connective colon: here the TL reader would have no difficulty in seeing that it announced what is to come. However, our simpler structure has a more natural ring and entails no loss of focus.

5 Perhaps unusually, the compound sentence with 'obwohl' needs to be rendered by two main clauses linked by 'yet', if the TT is not to lack forcefulness.

6 'Jedenfalls' is one of the more commonly mistranslated connectors. The problems are

greater for German native speakers, owing to the subtleties of English usage of the expressions 'anyway', 'anyhow', 'in any case' and 'at any rate'. In principle, any one of the four can be used to translate 'jedenfalls', provided that the full wording in context conveys 'this much is definite'. Oddly, the reading most apt to cause misunderstanding is the lookalike 'in any case'; and it will not do here.

7 Another connector which cannot be safely left untranslated. Often used on its own, as an interjection, the word 'immerhin' is always adversative in meaning. Here it is an economical way of conveying incredulity at the omission of *this* topic from *those* talks.

8 Having moved from staccato introductory phrases to a relatively long and complex sentence, the writer ends his first paragraph with a moderately emphatic delayed punch-line (cf. Chapter 16, p. 202). It would not be difficult to mimic this structure in the TT – simply by shifting the compact 'it hardly rated a mention' to the end. If anything, however, the TT sentence might actually lose forcefulness as a result.

9 TL genre conventions here require something more than 'without'. Like many other arguably inflated phrases (e.g. 'in circumstances of', 'at the present time'), the cliché 'in the absence of' may have gained its foothold in the language through its usefulness in the context of public speaking, where the extended phrase (replacing, in our examples, 'without', 'with', 'now' respectively) allows more thinking time for the audience and, often, the speaker. Whatever the reason, 'in the absence of' has established itself in written discourse too. Whether a mildly 'inflated', 'stalling-for-time' expression is appropriate in a given specific context is of course for the translator to decide, in the light of the ST's overall style. In our view, only an exceptionally terse ST style overall would warrant the use of 'without' in the present context.

10 One of the less well known German hyperonyms, the SL term here is clearly used in the sense of 'strategy' rather than 'concept'.

11 Occurring five times in this ST, 'auch' is a regular source of difficulty to translators. Alongside clear, unproblematical senses approximating to English 'also/too' and 'even', it appears in general usage in a range of other roles (see e.g. the discussion in Chapter 14). It also often hovers – as it does here (ST l. 9) and in lines 11, 17 and 28, but not in line 24 – in an ambiguous function which for the SL reader has something of 'too' and something of 'even', without necessarily allowing idiomatic translation by either. As with some of the terms discussed in Chapter 8, the 'zero' option may be best; in our view this applies in lines 9, 11 and 28 of the present ST – though for the line 11 instance we have in fact offered a compensating translation in 'worked through to'.

12 As noted in (i), Perina is publishing his article in direct response to news – the most recent statistics – which *prima facie* contradicts his thesis. The concessive character of the sentence led by 'Zwar' is completely frank – contrast the mere hint of dialectic in 'auch die jüngsten Zahlen' – and we translate it in equally transparent terms: 'It is true that . . .'.

13 In this second paragraph, as in the first, the concluding long sentence is designed to throw the focus onto a lapidary final statement. The decision whether to seek a similar structure in the TT depends on balancing the cost in terms of natural idiomatic expression against the return in terms of a conclusive-sounding ending to match the ST's. The equation has to take account of the generally lower incidence of postponed main clauses in English (see also Chapter 16, p. 200). It is hard to see how the ST's sequence of ideas could be even approximately replicated without a clumsy linking phrase, e.g. 'But that the present growth rate [. . .] significantly is something that not even [. . .] experts believe'. This is so unnatural in English that it defeats its own

purpose; our TT sentence has the same focus of attention as the ST one, and is idiomatic.

14 An under-used TL resource generally in German–English translation, the term ‘any’ here gives a more vigorous and idiomatic sentence opening than the indefinite article.

15 The ST term’s hyperonymy (see Chapter 9) is well illustrated in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this text.

16 While ‘by some’ is an acceptable literal translation, ‘in some quarters’ is slightly preferable, because less apt to provoke an easy retort like ‘By whom?’. Where to put the parenthetical information is not an issue. The parenthetical structure is preferable to e.g. ‘redistribution of existing work, as advocated [. . .]’, which introduces needless ambiguity: does it mean ‘which is advocated’ or ‘in the manner advocated’? That snag apart, ‘as’ certainly is a perfectly natural connector in context.

17 The literal rendering ‘East Germany’ is not quite as easy a choice as it looks. The main disadvantage is that for many TL speakers, even 15 years after the *Wende*, ‘East Germany’ is still a term denoting the German Democratic Republic. ‘Eastern Germany’ is not wholly satisfactory either, tending to connote a geographical reference framework and thus introduce an unjustified vagueness. Conversely, ‘the five new *Länder*’ would be more insistently precise than the ST here warrants.

18 In English TTs, ‘here’ and ‘there’, like ‘this’ and ‘that’, merit special attention in the coherence check which should be carried out at as part of the revising and editing process. In the present instance, ‘here’ might not be instantly understood as meaning ‘in East Germany’ if it were used mid-sentence. And if placed at the beginning of that sentence, might it not suggest, momentarily, that the ST originated in Eastern Germany? One solution would be to begin the sentence: ‘There, the ratio . . .’. This would avoid all risk of confusion. Our TT adopts the equally clear, and less stilted, solution of linking the two sentences with ‘where’.

19 Cf. note 2. The ST expression, translated unproblematically as accented ‘already’ in our TT, is a reminder that German ‘schon’ on its own is generally given less voice stress than its popular supposed equivalent in English.

20 The translator might hesitate over how to interpret the expression ‘angesichts niedriger Löhne’. A rendering such as ‘with wage levels at their current low’ would imply a perspective of wage fluctuation over time. This would be arbitrary: a good case could be made for interpreting the ST in geographical or political terms, by translating: ‘in a low-wage economy’. Given the specified target audience, the neutral option we have chosen is probably explicit enough; and it will not mislead.

21 There are four possibilities for translating ‘nur wenige’: ‘only a few’, ‘only few’, ‘few’, and ‘not many’. The first is idiomatic but wrongly focused, as the ST term’s focus is on the excluded majority; the second is literal but unidiomatic; the last two both fit the bill.

22 We have not used ‘therefore’ because it is not idiomatic in the present context – whereas in a mathematical or philosophical argument, say, it would be normal usage. See the discussion in the coursebook, Chapter 8, pp. 98–101.

23 Even with word-order changes, or passive for active, a literal translation could seem stilted. We make the ST object into the TT subject, and compensate for the loss of explicit ‘promise’ by adding the modal verb ‘must’. It might be argued that ‘versprechen’ in general offers expectation rather than certainty, i.e. that ‘must’ goes too far. However, our ‘must lie’ can be defended on the basis that the newspaper article

culminates with this 'solution' and no other.

24 See note 15. Compounds on this pattern have become common in specialized texts (cf. 'ordnungspolitisch', 'bautechnisch', 'verwaltungstechnisch', 'warenzeichenrechtlich', also 'unfallträchtig', 'arbeitsteilig', 'sprachteilig'). Unsurprisingly, there is no set approach for translating them. For instance, a compound with the '-technisch' suffix may sometimes simply be translated 'technical', where the discipline concerned is obvious; 'steuerpflichtig' can often be rendered as 'taxable'. Many such terms resist concise translation. In the present case, we have merged the ideas of 'policy' and 'programme/approach' in the term 'strategy', and of course retained the specifier 'employment'.

25 In the TT, the overall coherence, including the rhetorical emphasis on 'the Bundesbank', requires the singling out of 'not least' in parentheses.

26 Given the specified target audience, retention of the SL term (without italics) not only causes no recognition problems, but avoids any remote risk of confusion with US institutions.

27 'The latter' might be thought by many readers to be incorrect or unidiomatic here, since the Bundesbank is the last in a list of four, not two. 'The last/last-named' is too pedantic. A tempting alternative is to use a relative pronoun, e.g. 'the Bundesbank, which must . . .'. But this change in cohesion weakens the emphasis placed on the bank's role by the separate sentence in the ST. 'The Bank' avoids these pitfalls, while not clumsily repeating 'Bundesbank'.

28 Another example of how monotony and an insidiously 'foreign' feel to English TTs can be avoided by using two verbs where the ST has one; here, we consider 'use interest rates to stimulate growth' to be more idiomatic than 'stimulate growth through interest rates'. See also Chapter 15, pp. 190–7.

29 Once again the ST author has arranged for his paragraph (and here the article) to culminate in a modestly ringing curtain line; this time the millennium reference provides much of what sense of climax there is. At the level of detail, however, the SL sentence's ending cannot possibly be called weighty, and for once the TT can end rather more resonantly than the German ST, without appearing to strain for effect. This of course does not imply that ending 'more resonantly' is somehow a 'gain' (cf. Chapter 2): rather, the wording chosen minimizes translation loss by reflecting clearly at the sentence ending an effect produced by the ST sentence as a whole.

PRACTICAL 8.2 CLASS HANDOUT

GLENN GOULD TT

Compare your TT with the published one:

The twenty-two-year-old Glenn Gould was already a celebrity in his native Canada when he made his United States début at the Phillips Gallery in Washington on January 2, 1955. (His New York début followed nine days later at the city's Town Hall.) None the less, neither of these recitals attracted the attention of the 'praetorian guard' of the
5 North American musical scene, who seem rather to have been discouraged by the somewhat idiosyncratic programme (a *Pavan* by the English virginalist, Orlando Gibbons, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck's *Fantasia cromatica*, five of Bach's three-part *Sinfonias* and his fifth Partita, Anton Webern's Variations, Op. 27, Beethoven's E major Sonata, Op. 109 and, by way of conclusion, Alban Berg's Piano Sonata). With hindsight
10 we have every reason to be glad of their absence for otherwise David Oppenheim, the managing director of Columbia's classical division, who had been advised by a friend to hear the young man for himself and who had turned up at the recital more or less by chance, would not have had the great good fortune to sign an immediate and exclusive contract with Gould on behalf of Columbia Records. In Oppenheim's view, Gould 'was,
15 alas, a little crazy but had a remarkable, hypnotic effect at the piano'. [. . .]

A great deal has been written about this extraordinary recording – about its vitality and verve, about Gould's fascinating refusal to play legato and reluctance to use the sustaining pedal, about its 'swing', to say nothing of his almost irreverent approach to one of the sacrosanct heroes of music history (an approach which inspired a number of
20 critics to refer whimsically to the 'Gouldberg Variations'). Equally important is the breathtaking virtuosity of the interpretation, its inwardness and depth, its 'calculation' and 'ecstasy' (two attributes to which Gould himself laid claim), and, finally, its impact on the international world of music: it was as though someone had suddenly opened a window in a room that had not been aired for a century or more, allowing a breath of
25 fresh air to sweep away the cobwebs. But Gould's triumph was not only musical. The twenty-two-year-old pianist was in striking, indeed perfect, accord with the spirit of the times – an angry young man of the kind that John Osborne had conjured up in 1956 in the figure of Jimmy Porter in *Look Back in Anger*, a first cousin to Holden Caulfield in J.D. Salinger's 1951 bestseller, *The Catcher in the Rye*.

30

(Stegemann 1992b: 9–11)

