

Practical 9 Tutor notes

Like Chapter 9 itself, Practical 9.1 concentrates rather artificially on the single issue of literal meaning. It is best done working individually at home, but it also works well if done in groups, whether at home or in class. If it is done in class, there will not be time to complete the whole text; dividing the text between groups should ensure that it can all be covered in plenary discussion, but the assignment should certainly be prepared at home first. Marking the exercise is a slow business, because students' analyses are invariably very different from one another; they also contain useful insights which do not figure in the handout. This is one of the most effective consciousness-raising exercises in the whole course, and one of those which students find open up new paths for exploration in other areas of their syllabus besides translation.

Students find it helpful to be given an idea of how to lay their work out for this exercise. And if they do all lay it out in the same way, marking it is easier. The tutor may want to distribute the first page of the handout *when setting* the exercise, as a specimen of how to go about it.

It is advisable to explain at the outset that the purpose of the assignment is to use an artificially intensive exercise to sharpen awareness of how widespread particularization, generalization and partial overlap are, and how multifarious their operation is. Hence the detailed analyses given in the chapter and the handout. Mastering a technique for recognizing these features makes it easier to identify and solve problems raised by literal meaning in any text. However, attention should be drawn to the note at the end of the handout.

Practical 9.2 is suitable for class work in groups. As regards degrees of semantic equivalence in the published TT, it is worth pointing out a few particularizations, e.g. 'mobile communications' (cf. 'mobile telephony'), 'legislature' (cf. e.g. 'the law'), and the explicitness of 'we ask' (cf. the faceless 'gilt die [. . .] Forderung'). The adjective 'leistungsfähig' in relation to functioning systems involves a choice between synonyms of 'efficient' and synonyms of 'powerful'. A number of other noun constructions have been replaced by verbs – e.g. besides 'gilt die [. . .] Forderung', both 'Für die Wahrung' and 'Position zugunsten [. . .] bezieht' have been given translations which might be regarded as unnecessary particularizations. Is a '*grundsätzliche* Forderung' simply a 'basic/fundamental demand', rather than something asked for 'as a matter of principle', or even a 'core requirement'?

PRACTICAL 9.1 CLASS HANDOUT

LITERAL MEANING IN CRANACH TT

ST 3–5 Mit [. . .] fortgesetzt

1 'Zyklus' is a slightly odd choice of term: 'Reihe' or 'Folge' were perhaps felt too plain for the context. Both these terms would be best translated with the particularization 'series'. 'Zyklus' denotes a specific type of series; whatever the reason for its use here, TT 'cycle' is a very close match, virtually a synonym in this context.

2 'Commemorating' is a particularizing translation of 'zu[m]', adding the notion of actively doing something to make people remember Cranach. Among possible TL prepositions, the closest in terms of literal meaning would be 'for', or possibly the complex preposition 'on the occasion of'. It could be argued that 'the occasion of' someone's death denotes only the day the person died, and that the expression is inappropriate in reference to a 14-week exhibition; 'for the' would thus come nearest to 'zum' in literal meaning here. (It is worth noting in passing that even the infinitive ('an exhibition to commemorate the anniversary') would particularize, adding the notion of purpose as well as of memory; indeed, any verb form used to render a preposition, in any context, will most likely be a particularization, because it adds either a temporal or a purposive dimension to the more neutral preposition – compare 'exhibition *on the occasion of* the anniversary' with '*to commemorate*' or '*which commemorated/has commemorated/will commemorate*' etc.)

Other verbs which could be used to render 'zu[m]' here are 'celebrate' and 'mark'. 'Celebrate' particularizes in the same degree as 'commemorate'. 'Mark' is less explicitly an invitation to remember, and is thus more 'neutral', semantically closer to the ST preposition; it is in any case preferable to 'commemorate' – after all, what is commemorated is not the anniversary, but the death, and the life it ended.

Revised TT: This cycle continues with an exhibition marking the 450th anniversary of the death of Lucas Cranach the Elder.

ST 6–8 Zu sehen [. . .] Malers

1 In respect of literal meaning, 'master' is a mistranslation: 'master' and 'Maler' are not synonyms and exhibit no degree of hyperonymy–hyponymy, not even partial overlap. But there are good reasons for choosing 'master'. First, coming so soon after 'painting', 'painter' might seem a statement of the obvious, even tautologous ('Gemälde' and 'Maler' sound acceptably different, even though their semantic relationship is similar to that between 'painting' and 'painter'). Second, the Cranach exhibition is one of a series on 'alte Meister', so that referring to him as a master avoids inelegance or bathos without compromising the meaning of the ST as a whole.

2 'Maler/master' aside, '*of the master*' is an inevitable particularizing translation of the

genitive ‘des Malers’: the alternatives are ‘by the master’ and ‘the master’s’. ‘By’ would be misleading here, suggesting that the books were written by Cranach. But ‘books of the master’ would sound awkward, and would in any case suggest that these are books of reproductions of Cranach. So the most suitable particularization is ‘the master’s’.

3 ‘On exhibit’ is a particularization of ‘zu sehen’. Other possible hyponyms are ‘to be seen’, ‘on show’, ‘on display’, ‘on view’. Of these, ‘to be seen’ is not right for the context, because it implies randomness (as in ‘the briefcase was nowhere to be seen’, ‘sometimes there are cormorants and puffins to be seen’, etc.). ‘On exhibit’ is unidiomatic; the choice between the other hyponyms depends mostly on which accords best with the genre.

Revised TT: About 100 of the great German master’s paintings, prints and books are also on view.

ST 8–11 Ihnen [. . .] gegenübergestellt

1 ‘Compared’ is a partially overlapping translation: it keeps the core element of things being viewed in terms of one another, but it *adds* an element of discursive assessment (e.g. in interpretative texts displayed next to the exhibits), and it *loses* the explicit ST reference to placing the works close to one another (the comparison could even be with works that are referred to, but not actually on display). ‘Gegenüberstellen’ is certainly often used in German to signify ‘compare (and contrast)’, but, when used of objects, it includes a much clearer reference to physically looking from one thing to another. English has a similar, but less economical, way of putting it, as in ‘looking at Cranach and Picasso side by side, one does see a resemblance’. A close enough match for ‘gegenübergestellt’ here would be ‘exhibited/shown alongside’ (a partial overlap), or ‘placed side by side with’, which is a particularization, but in which the implication of comparison is triggered by the context.

2 ‘Interpretation’ is a misleading partial overlap: it keeps the idea of ‘preservation of central meaning’, but *adds* an element of ‘effort to distinguish and formulate a meaning’, and *loses* the element of ‘(parallel) rephrasing/reformulation’. A more accurate rendering would be the generalizing translation ‘reworkings’, in which the element of preserving central meaning is only implicit, but, in this context, unmistakable.

3 The ‘of’ in ‘interpretation of’ is a particularization that amounts to a mistranslation: in this context, ‘by’ is so obviously the correct translation of ‘von’ that it may even count as a synonym rather than a hyponym. However, it is less important to decide this than to recognize that ‘Cranach interpretations of 20th century artists’ unambiguously means ‘interpretations by Cranach of 20th century artists’, which is nonsense.

Revised TT: These are shown alongside reworkings of Cranach by 20th-century artists such as Picasso, Kirchner and Giacometti.

ST 12–15 In den kommenden Jahren [. . .] präsentiert

1 ‘In the near future’ is a misleading particularization of ‘in den kommenden Jahren’: whether ‘the coming years’ are the immediate future, the not-too-distant future, the

years to come or the coming years depends on context (of no help here) and situation (how often are exhibitions held at this gallery? etc.). The most accurate rendering of the ST expression as it stands is 'over the next few years'; the translator would ideally consult the gallery about its plans before deciding on any alternative translation.

2 'Additional' is a particularization of 'weitere'; it is slightly unsuitable, because it is most often used to mean 'added' or 'extra', as in 'additional information', 'additional charges', etc. Here, it sounds odd, suggesting that there is an agreed quota of 'first-rate endeavors', but that supplementary ones will shortly be available. In context, a more appropriate particularization is 'further'.

3 Particularization is inevitable in translating 'Leistungen', which, as used here, has no synonym in English. 'Endeavors' is more elevated in register than 'efforts', and carries a stronger implication of *moral* striving. However, neither is suitable here, where the ST refers to something that has actually been accomplished. Of particularizations like 'feat', 'performance' or 'achievement', 'achievement' is the most appropriate for the context and genre. It may, however, be difficult to integrate any of these terms idiomatically into the sentence; if that is the case, then compensation may be preferred to a literal translation of 'Leistungen'.

4 'Erstrangige' is another term that can only be translated with a hyponym, chosen from 'first-rate', 'first-class', 'superb', etc. Which particularization is chosen will, as usual, depend on context and genre. 'First-rate' sounds like an official assessment of a service (e.g. 'the food and service were first-rate'); here, taken together with 'endeavors', it perhaps suggests an old-style schoolteacher lauding a pupil's plucky strivings. A better fit in this TT would be 'outstanding' (i.e. 'of unusual quality') or 'major' (i.e. 'of great importance or significance'); in fact, if 'Leistungen' proves impossible to translate convincingly, it can be omitted and to some extent compensated for with 'major', with its suggestion of impact and influence.

5 While 'old master' is a recognized term in art history, and corresponds to 'alter Meister', 'old art' is not. It even sounds rather dismissive (cf. 'a load of old junk/stuff/paintings'), and thus collocates jarringly with 'first-rate endeavors'. This is partly a matter of connotative meaning (see Chapter 10), but, as far as literal meaning is concerned, it is clear that 'art of the past' is a more accurate rendering of ST 'alte Kunst' than 'old art'.

6 'On display' is a well-chosen particularization, more appropriate in this context than others such as 'offered/on offer' or 'presented'; another particularization that would work here is 'exhibited'.

Revised TT: The next few years will see further exhibitions of major European art of the past

ST 16–18 frühe Ikonen [. . .] 19. Jahrhunderts

1 Strictly speaking, 'including' does not translate a lexical item, but corresponds to an intersentential feature, the colon. Note, however, that it is tantamount to a misleading partial overlap: the ST colon is all-inclusive (cf. 'viz', 'to wit', 'namely'), whereas TT 'including' implies that there will also be other, unspecified, exhibitions in the cycle. The translator may have felt that 'including' was more idiomatic or user-friendly than a colon; the slight inaccuracy certainly does not seem to matter much in this consumer-oriented text. Another idiomatic TL alternative is to use a dash instead of a colon.

2 In ‘Baroque paintings’, ‘Baroque’ is an idiomatic particularization of ‘des Barock’. The other plausible particularization, ‘of the Baroque’, is cumbersome and has an uncomfortable potential ambiguity (might it mean Spanish paintings depicting the Baroque?).

3 ‘Paintings’ is a perhaps harmless, but needless and inaccurate, partial overlap: it keeps the core element of ‘painted pictorial art’, but *adds* a reference to individual works of art (plural paintings) and *loses* the reference to a collective style or genre of art. In this context, the singular ‘painting’ is a synonym of ‘Malerei’, and perfectly idiomatic.

4 ‘Bild’ is more frequently used in SL art-history texts than ‘picture’ is in TL ones to denote paintings, drawings or etchings. Here, ‘cloud pictures’ would be too general and sound a bit naive or amateurish. Which of the other particularizations to use will ideally depend on consultation with the author or the exhibition organizers; perhaps this is how ‘cloud paintings’ was decided on. If such consultation were impracticable, ‘cloudscapes’ would be the safest rendering – a less exclusive particularization (although cloudscapes do tend to be paintings). Note that, unlike ‘spanische Malerei des Barock’ (ST 1. 0), ‘Wolkenbilder’ does denote a plurality of paintings which do not collectively belong to any one style, school or genre.

5 ‘From the’ is a partially overlapping translation of the genitive ‘des’: it keeps the notion of connection with the nineteenth century, but *adds* an element of remoteness in time (cf. ‘a voice from the past’ etc.) and *loses* the element of being defined specifically as nineteenth-century. The particularization ‘of the nineteenth century’ would be more accurate, but might be felt to be slightly unidiomatic; in that case, a more idiomatic particularization would be to use ‘nineteenth-century’ attributively: ‘nineteenth-century cloud paintings’ (cf. TT ‘Spanish Baroque paintings’). However, the subject matter of the ST is an exhibition of old masters going back nearly 500 years, so ‘from’ is arguably perfectly appropriate here – another case where absolute accuracy in literal meaning can be a lower priority than the demands of genre and context.

Revised TT: – early Novgorod icons, Spanish Baroque painting and nineteenth-century cloudscapes.

Note: This practical was essentially a consciousness-raising exercise. You were asked to concentrate exclusively on how closely the TT has rendered the literal meaning of the ST. This is why we have gone into such detail here. But normally, literal meaning is only one of many factors to take into account in discussing TTs (including your own), and you would not be expected to analyse it so exhaustively: it is only necessary to discuss cases where it poses significant translation problems.

PRACTICAL 9.2 CLASS HANDOUT

BDI TT

Compare your TT with the published one:

7.1. Secure the competitive principle and liberalization benefits long-term

Mobile communications is the best example to show that efficient information and communications systems develop quickest in competitively organised markets for telecommunications infrastructure and when there is a competitively organised range of related services. In this area, existing competition (four infrastructure competitors and over 10 service providers) ensures a price structure determined by market forces. To guarantee competition continues, retrospective checking for conformity with general competition law will suffice to deal with any cases of abuse. Regulating even one single mobile communications market would have far-reaching consequences for the companies affected and for the market structure formed by competition. This would not only entail developing new cost accounting systems and the associated bureaucracy, but also cast doubt on some successful business models. In view of efforts currently being made to secure the introduction of price regulation in mobile communications, we ask, as a matter of principle, that the German legislature should take a clear stand vis-à-vis any EU pro-regulatory moves, insisting on a regulatory structure based firmly on the principle of subsidiarity.

(BDI 2004b: 56)

