Teachers’ Guide

This book offers an alternative approach to both translating and the training of translators – one that seeks to bridge the traditional gaps between the two, bringing translator training closer to the experiential processes of professional translators so as to help teachers teach student translators to translate faster, more reliably, and more enjoyably. The book is structured to achieve that goal in several ways.

First, it approaches translation from an “internal” or translator-based perspective, seeking to understand translation as professional translators do. The differences between this internal and a user-oriented “external” perspective are outlined in Chapters 1 and 2. Briefly, this internal perspective means seeing the translator less as the producer of a certain kind of text – the traditional approach to translator training – and more as a learner who must enjoy the work to continue doing it. This book offers exercises that work on text-production as well, but in general text-production is seen as the by-product of being a certain kind of person: a lover of language and culture, a lover of linguistic and cultural mediation, a lover of learning.

Second, it draws on recent pedagogical research on brain-compatible teaching and learning, seeking to develop new strategies for translator training that are strongly based in professional translators’ neural/intellectual/imaginative processes.

Since the primary research in this latter area has not been done, the book’s pedagogical techniques have been developed by the modification of innovative holistic methods from foreign-language and other related classrooms – especially Georgi Lozanov’s (1971/1992) suggestopedia, or accelerated learning. The book is not suggestopedic in any technical sense, nor does it require any special training in suggestopedic or other methodologies; in the interests of making the exercises accessible to as many different teachers and students as possible, suggestopedic and other accelerated teaching methods have been adapted to the ordinary classroom. (For a chapter on “The Translator as Learner,” which appeared in the first and second editions but has been deleted from the third see www.routledge.com/9780415615907).

These pedagogical approaches entail “multimodal” experience, eyes-ears-and-hands-on exercises that encourage the learner to use as many information-processing channels as possible: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic; drawing, storytelling, acting and miming; imaging, discussing, moving.

And third, it integrates the theory and practice of translation in experiential ways, seeking to build bridges between exciting new developments in translation theory and the rich and relatively unresearched practical world of professional translation.

Chapters 5–9 offer a series of integrated views of different theoretical approaches to translation: psychological in Chapter 5, terminological in Chapter 6, linguistic in Chapter 7, sociological in Chapter 8, and cultural in Chapter 9. The reigning idea throughout is that there is not a single “correct” or “useful” theoretical approach to
translation; rather, each learner can learn to take whatever s/he finds useful from the full range of theoretical approaches, which is presented somewhat schematically but nevertheless fully and fairly here. The model on which the integration between practice and theory is based is presented in Chapter 3; briefly, it borrows some concepts from the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce to see the translator as converting new experience into habit or “second nature.” This new experience is “abductive” or based on guesswork and creative, intuitive leaps; “inductive” or based on well-established working patterns; and “deductive” or based on rules, precepts, laws, theories. The key to integrating all three “ductive” processes is the understanding that all three are forms of experience: translators use all of them, guesses, practice, and rules, to deal with novel situations, and also to convert what they learn in those novel situations into “habitual” or “instinctive” processing. The more “subliminally” or “habitually” they can work, the faster they can translate; but subliminal translation proceeds in a fruitful back-and-forth shuttle movement with conscious, analytical experience, the processing of new situations that require alert awareness and thus bring about change and growth.

One of the fundamental assumptions behind this book is that learning is most effective when it is learner-centered – which is to say, when each learner (each student, but the teacher as well) has experiences and makes discoveries on his or her own, and those experiences and discoveries arise out of and are tied back into his or her previous experience and knowledge as well. For this book to work at its peak effectiveness in the classroom, the teacher has to be willing to enter into a learner-centered environment – to work with his or her students to create that kind of environment. This means:

- The teacher is not the source of all knowledge, but a facilitator of students’ learning experiences, and a learner along with the students.
- The students are not passive recipients of knowledge or knowhow but its active generators, and thus teachers along with the teacher.
- There are no right or wrong “answers” or solutions to the discussion topics or exercises given at the end of each chapter; they are designed to help groups of learners draw on what they already know in order to develop effective strategies for finding out things that they don’t yet know, and each group will get different things from doing them.
- Not all the discussion topics and exercises will work with all groups, since people are different; the teacher must be prepared to “fail” with some topics and exercises, and to try something else instead.

For centuries it was assumed that learning is simply a matter of being presented with facts and imprinting them on one’s memory. An authority, usually a teacher, tells the learner the facts and the learner takes possession of them, “stores” them in memory for later recall. This assumption is still very much alive today, of course, as is clear from
countless classrooms in which the teacher lectures and the students take notes in order later to be able to store the facts in memory for the final exam.

The Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970) calls this approach to education the “banking method”: the assumption is that the learner’s brain is a bank account into which the teacher makes factual “deposits.” Learning is simply the passive intake of information.

This pedagogy has been questioned for as long as pedagogies have been discussed – well over two thousand years – by those who argue that people learn best not by listening passively and memorizing what they hear but by doing things, actively participating in a process. This “hands-on” pedagogy lies behind the practical translation seminars that make up the bulk of translator training programs: if you learn to translate best by translating, then the best way to teach students how to translate is to give them texts and have them translate them into another language.

These two approaches to teaching, learning-by-listening and learning-by-doing, have often been seen as the polar opposites that cover the field: either you lecture and expect students to take notes and pass “objective” exams on the material covered in class, or you set them a practical task and give them feedback on how well they complete it, assuming that the act of completing the task will teach them at least as much as the feedback.

The two approaches have also been labeled “good” and “bad”: depending on one’s pedagogical philosophy, either (a):

- lecturing is “good” (because it is the most efficient way to cover large amounts of material for large numbers of students in a short period of time)
- practical seminars are “bad” (because they are inefficient – they are time-consuming and require a very low student-teacher ratio – and because it is hard to rank students on their practical “experiences” in objective, i.e. numerical, ways)

Or (b):
Historically, attitude (a), favoring lecturing over practical seminars, has been thought of as “conservative” and attitude (b), favoring practical small-group work over lecturing, has been thought of as “progressive.” Recent empirical studies of learning have shown, however, that this opposition is misleading. People can learn extremely well by listening passively while someone else talks. And while hands-on experience is unquestionably an effective channel of learning, there are ways of structuring that experience in classrooms that block its effectiveness.

This research shows that the most important factor in the effectiveness of various teaching methods for learning is what is called “brain-compatibility” – how well the teaching method “fits” the way the brain actually learns.

**Lecturing**

Thus, for example, at the broadest and most obvious level, what makes a lecture effective as a teaching tool is not its “coverage,” how much information the lecturer is able to squeeze into an hour and a half, but how interesting it is. Some lectures can be so fascinating that the audience does not notice the passage of time; others can be so dull that everyone is falling asleep after the first five minutes.

Some defenders of traditional lectures will admit that, yes, alas, some lecturers are not particularly riveting; but one must not forget, they will add, that part of the blame lies with the students. Students must make an effort to be interested as well.

Even the most brilliant speaker cannot get through to someone who is determined to be bored; and one can hardly expect teachers to compete with the blandishments of
YouTube. If students are not willing to make the effort to take an interest in the lecturer’s ideas, they should not be in the class – or, possibly, in the university at all.

And there is some truth to this. It is possible to block interest in a subject. But there are some hard scientific realities behind students’ interest in (and enhanced ability to learn from) an exciting, enthusiastic lecture and instant rejection of a boring, monotonous one:

1. **Modulation of voice, gesture, posture.** The brain is built to pay particular attention to change, and to sink into a less focused and less attentive state when things don’t change, or change is minimal. That is why we notice moving things against an unchanging background; why our fingers constantly seek out a wound or sunburn or other change in our skin, and our tongues constantly find their way back to the hole where a tooth was recently pulled out. It is also why lullabies put children (and sometimes parents) to sleep: melodies without sudden changes in pitch, volume, or timbre are physiologically soporific. A speaker who does not change her or his volume or pitch or rhythm, who stands stock still and maintains a poker face, will similarly put listeners to sleep. It is possible to fight this sleepiness, but extremely difficult; it is a physiological function that is hard-wired into the human brain.

2. **Personal enthusiasm, fervor, commitment.** Due to the power of the brain’s limbic system to shape our thought and behavior, emotions are physiologically very contagious. This “contagion” is very difficult to resist: when everyone is crying or laughing, it requires enormous emotional energy to keep from doing the same (see Robinson 2008: 19-33). The rapid transfer of emotional states from one body to another explains how attitudes, prejudices, taboos, fears, and the like are passed on from generation to generation: children pick them up from their parents, often without the mediation of words. It explains how the mood of a whole group of people can shift almost instantaneously. It also explains why an enthusiastic speaker makes her or his audience feel enthusiastic as well, and why someone who speaks with no emotion at all quickly numbs an audience into boredom.

3. **Examples, illustrations, anecdotes.** The neurological rule is: the more complex the neural pathways, the more effectively the brain functions. A synaptic firing sequence that only moves through three or four areas in the brain will always provoke less attention, excitement, thought, and growth in the learner than one that moves through several hundred, even several thousand. This is the problem with teaching (and writing) that adheres closely to a single method, like lists of general principles. There is nothing wrong with lists of general principles; but they only activate certain limited areas of the brain. When they are illustrated with anecdotes from the speaker’s or other people’s experiences, that not only activates new areas in the listener’s brain; it also inspires the listener to think up similar
events in her or his own experience, which again activates numerous new neural loops. From a speaking and writing viewpoint, the rule would say: the more specificity and variety, the better. Vague, general, and repetitive phrasings will always be less interesting and provocative than specific, detailed, and surprising phrasings.

4. **Relevance.** This is closely related to the importance of illustrating general claims with detailed observations, examples, and anecdotes. The brain is a merciless pragmatist: because it is faced with millions more stimuli than it can ever process, it must screen out things that it perceives as irrelevant to its needs. Sometimes it is forced to shut out even very interesting stimuli, because they overlap with more relevant stimuli that must be attended to first. Speakers and writers who build bridges to their listeners’ and readers’ experience are often condemned by traditionalists for “pandering” to their audience; much better, in these people’s minds, to present a subject in its most logical, systematic, and objective form and let listeners and readers build their own bridges. While that works for specialists who have spent years building such bridges, discovering the relevance of a subject to their own lives, it does not work at all for beginners who have no idea what possible connection it might have to their experience.

5. **State of mind (brain waves).** It is common knowledge that we need to be in a receptive state of mind before we can take in new information. Most people also recognize that it is difficult to perform even the simplest analytical or other processing operations in certain mental or physical states – when worried, or feverish, or angry, or hungry. It should be obvious, for example, that a listener forced to sit through a boring lecture might well grow angry and become even less receptive to the lecture than otherwise; or that a listener who is enjoying a lecture will relax into a receptive frame of mind and will be more open to the new ideas presented in it than otherwise. What may not be so obvious is that the most receptive state of mind is not full alertness, as we have been taught to believe, but a relaxed, dreamy reverie state that our teachers have branded “not paying attention” or “daydreaming” – the so-called “alpha” state. Many of the exercises in this book use music and relaxation to help students get into this receptive frame of mind.

6. **Multimodal experience.** The rule regarding the complexity of neural pathways applies equally to the channels through which information comes: information presented through a single voice (as in the traditional lecture) is received and processed far less effectively than information presented through several voices (as in discussion, team-teaching, or taped materials); and information presented through voice alone is received and processed far less effectively than information presented through voice, music, visual material, and various tactile and kinesthetic experiences.
Small-group work

Most educators agree that human beings learn better by doing than by listening. The most effective lectures, therefore, will also get the audience involved in doing something actively, even if it is only a thought exercise. By this logic, practical hands-on small-group seminars ought to be the perfect pedagogical tool.

But again, it’s not so much the tool itself that makes the difference as how you use it. Many small-group exercises and discussions are just as boring as sitting in a monotonous lecture. Students given a boring task to perform or topic to discuss in a group will quickly shift to more interesting topics, like their social life; or, if forced to stay on task, will go through the required steps grudgingly, resentfully, and thus superficially and mechanistically, learning next to nothing. For small-group work too, therefore, it is important to take into consideration how the brain functions:

1. Variety. Variety is the spice of life for good physiological reasons: when things don’t change, the brain ignores them. Traditional teachers have begun to blame television for young people’s short attention spans and need for constant change and excitement; but it really isn’t television’s fault, nor is it even a new phenomenon. It is a deep-seated human need, part of the brain’s evolutionary structure. A classroom that uses lots of small-group work will only be interesting and productive for students if the nature of the work done keeps changing. If students are repeatedly and predictably asked to do the same kind of small-group work day after day (study a text and find three things to tell the class about it; discuss a topic and be prepared to summarize your discussion for the rest of the class), they will quickly lose interest.

2. Collaboration. It might seem as if this should go without saying: when students work together in small groups, of course they are going to collaborate. But it is relatively easy for one student in a group to assume the “teacher’s” role and dominate the activity, so that most of the other students in the group sit passively watching while the activity is completed. This is especially true when the group is asked to come up with an answer that will be checked for correctness or praised for smartness: when the teacher puts pressure on groups to perform up to his or her expectations, their conditioned response will be to defer to the student in the group who is perceived as the “best” or “smartest” – the one who is most often praised by the teacher for his or her answers. Collaboration means full participation, a sense that everyone’s contribution is valued – that the more input, the better.

3. Open-endedness. One way of ensuring full participation and collaboration is by keeping group tasks open-ended, without expecting groups to reach a certain
answer or result. The clearer the teacher’s mental image is of what s/he expects the groups to produce, the less open-ended the group work will be; the more willing the teacher is to be surprised by students’ creativity, the more they will collaborate, the more they will learn, and the more they will enjoy learning. Open-ended tasks leave room for each student’s personal experience to emerge—an essential key to learning, as students must begin to integrate what is coming from outside with what they already know. When the successful completion of a task or activity requires every student to access his or her personal experience, also, whole groups learn to work together in collaborative ways rather than ceding authority to a single representative. (All of the topics for discussion and exercises in *Becoming a Translator* are open-ended, with no one right answer or desired result.)

4. **Relevance.** Group work has to have some real-world application in students’ lives for it to be meaningful; it has to be meaningful for them to throw themselves into it body and soul; they have to throw themselves into it to really learn. This emphatically does not mean only giving students things to do that they already know! Learning happens out on the peripheries of existing knowledge; learners must constantly be challenged to push beyond the familiar, the easy, the known. Relevance means simply that bridges must constantly be built between the known and the unknown, the familiar and the unfamiliar, the easy and the challenging, the things that already matter to students and the things that don’t yet matter but should.

5. **State of mind.** This follows from everything else—part of the point in making group work varied, collaborative, open-ended, and relevant is to get students into a receptive frame of mind—but it is essential to bear in mind that these things don’t always work. An exercise that has worked dozens of times before with other groups leaves a whole class full of groups cold: they sit there, staring at their books, doodling on their papers, mumbling to their neighbors, rolling their eyes, and you wonder whatever could have happened. Never mind; stop the exercise and try something else. No use beating a dead horse. There are many receptive mental states: relaxed, happy, excited, absorbed, playful, joking, thoughtful, intent, exuberant, dreamy. There are also many non-receptive mental states: bored, distracted, angry, distanced, resentful, absent. The good teacher learns to recognize when students are learning and when they are just filling a chair, by remaining sensitive to their emotional states.

6. **Multimodal experience.** It is often assumed that university classrooms are for intellectual discussions of important issues—for the spoken and written word. Drawing, singing, acting, dancing, miming, and other forms of human expression are for the lower grades (and a few selected departments on campus, like art or theater or music). Many university teachers will feel reluctant to use many of the
exercises in this book, for example, because they seem inappropriate for university-level instruction. But the brain’s physiological need for multimodal experience does not disappear after childhood; it continues all through our lives. Some teachers may find these “shifts” in their teaching strategies exciting and liberating; for others, even a slight move in the direction of a more student-centered classroom may cause unpleasant feelings of anxiety. To the former, the best advice is to do whatever feels right: use the book as a springboard or muse rather than as a straitjacket; let the book together with your students and your own instincts lead you to an approach that not only works but keeps working in different ways. To the latter, the best advice is to try this approach in small doses. Teachers can use the book more traditionally, by having students read the chapters and take exams on the subject matter, with perhaps an occasional teacher-led discussion based on the discussion topics at the end of every chapter. But the true core of the book is in the exercises; it is only when teachers let students try out the ideas in the chapters through multimodal experiences with the exercises that the book will have its full effect. If, however, the exercises and the “less academic” classroom atmosphere that results from their extensive use – arouse all your suspicions or anxieties, teach the book mostly traditionally, but let the students do one or two exercises. And keep an open mind: if they enjoy the exercises, and you enjoy watching them enjoy themselves, even if you are not convinced that they are learning anything of value, try a few more. Give the exercises a fair chance. They really do work; what they teach is valuable, even if its value is not immediately recognizable in traditional academic terms.

All the discussion topics and exercises presume a decentered or student-centered classroom, in which the teacher mainly functions as a facilitator of the students’ learning experiences, not as the authority who doles out knowledge and tests to make sure the students have learned it properly. Hence there are no right or wrong answers to the discussion topics – no “key” is given here in the Teacher’s Guide for instructors who want to use these topics as exam questions – and no right or wrong experiences to derive from the exercises. Indeed I have deliberately built in a tension between the positions taken in the chapters and the discussion topics given at the end of the chapters: what is presented as truth in the chapter is often questioned in the discussion topics at the end. The assumption behind this is that human beings never accept anything new until they have tested it against their own experience. The assumption that facts or precepts or theories can or should simply be presented as abstract universal truths for students to memorize is based on a faulty understanding of human neural processing. The brain simply does not work that way.

Tied to this brain-based pedagogical philosophy is the progress in Chapters 4-10 through the “duction” triad: abduction (guesses, intuitive leaps), induction (practical
experience), and deduction (precepts, theories, laws). The idea here is that precepts and theories are indeed useful in the classroom – but only when they arise out of, and are constantly tied back to, intuitions and practical experiences. The middle of the book integrates a number of different translation theories – especially what have been called the linguistic, sociological, and cultural turns – into an experiential approach to becoming a translator by helping students to experience the steps by which a theorist derived a theory, or by having them redraw and rethink central diagrams to accommodate divergent real-world scenarios. Everyone theorizes; it is an essential skill for the translator as well. What turns many students off about translation theory, especially as it is presented in books and articles and many classrooms, is that it tends to have a “completeness” to it that is alien to the ongoing process of making sense of the world. The theorist has undergone a complex series of steps that has led to the formulation of a brilliant schema, but it is difficult for others, especially students without extensive experience of the professional world of translation, to make the “translation” from abstract schemas to practical applications, especially to problem-solving strategies. The wonderful thing about the act of schematizing complex problems visually or verbally is the feeling of things “locking into place,” “coming together,” “finally making sense”: you have struggled with the problem for weeks, months, years, and finally it all comes into focus. Presented with nothing more than the end-product of this process, however, students aren’t given access to that wonderful feeling. Everything just seems “locked into place” – as into prison.

In this sense theorizing translation is more important for the translation student than theories of translation as static objects to be studied and learned. Our students should become theorists themselves – not merely students of theories. This does not mean that they need to develop an arcane theoretical terminology or be able to cite Plato and Aristotle, Kant and Hegel, Benjamin and Heidegger and Derrida; what it means is that they should become increasingly comfortable thinking complexly about what they do, both in order to improve their problem-solving skills and in order to defend their translational decisions to agencies or clients or editors who criticize them. Above all they need to be able to shift flexibly and intelligently from practice to precept and back again, to shuttle comfortably between subliminal functioning and conscious analysis – and that requires that they build the bridges rather than standing by passively while someone else (a teacher, say, or a theorist) builds the bridges for them. This does not mean reinventing the wheel; no question here of handing students a blank slate and asking them to theorize translation from scratch. All through Chapters 5–9 existing theories will be explored. But they will be explored in ways that encourage students to find their own experiential pathways through them, to build their own bridges from the theories back to their own theorizing/ translating.
Seventy-five percent of teachers are sequential, analytic presenters that’s how their lesson is organized . . . Yet 100% of their students are multi-processors (Jensen 1995a: 130)

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1 External knowledge: the user’s view

The main idea in this chapter is to perceive translation as much from the user’s point of view as possible, with two assumptions: (1) that most translation theory and translator training in the past has been based largely on this external perspective, and (2) that it has been based on that perspective in largely hidden or repressed ways. Some consequences of (1) are that many traditional forms of translation theory and translator training have been authoritarian, normative, rule-bound, aimed at forcing the translator into a robotic straitjacket; and that, while this perspective is valuable (it represents the views of the people who pay us to translate, hence the people we need to be able to satisfy), without a translator-oriented “internal” perspective to balance it, it may also become demoralizing and counterproductive.

A consequence of (2) is that important parts of the user’s perspective, especially those of timeliness and cost, have not been adequately presented in the traditional theoretical literature or in translation seminars. Even from a user’s external perspective, translation cannot be reduced to the simplicities of “accurate renditions.”

Discussion

1 Just what else might be involved in translation besides “strict accuracy” is raised in this first discussion topic. The ethical complexities of professional translation are raised in more detail in Chapter 2 (pp. 00-00); this discussion can serve as a first introduction to a very sensitive and hotly contested issue.

The more heavily invested you are in a strict ethics of translation, the harder it will be for you to let the students range freely in this discussion: you will be tempted to impose your views on them. It is important to remember that, even if your views reflect the ethics and legality of most professional translation, students are going to have to learn to make peace with those realities on their own terms, and an open-ended discussion at this point, when the stakes are low, may help them do so. Also, of course, traditional ethics do not cover all situations; they are too narrow. As professionals, students will have to have a flexible enough understanding of the complexities behind translation ethics to make difficult decisions in complicated situations.

2 Here it should be relatively easy to feed students little tidbits of information about the current state of machine translation research and let them argue on their own.
Exercises

1 This exercise works well in a teacher-centered classroom; it is a good place to start for the teacher who prefers to stay more or less in control. Stand at the board, a flipchart, or an overhead projector (with a blank transparency and a marker) and ask the students to call out the stereotyped character traits, writing each one down on the left side of the board, flipchart, or transparency as you hear it. Then draw a line down the middle and ask the students to start calling out user-oriented ideals, writing them down on the right side as you hear them. When they can think of no more, start asking them to point out similarities and discrepancies between the two lists. Draw lines between matched or mismatched items on the two sides. Then conduct a discussion of the matches and mismatches, paying particular attention to the latter. Try as a group to come up with ways to rethink the national characteristics that don’t match translator ideals so that they are positive rather than negative traits.

    The idea is to shift students’ focus from the external perspective that sees only problems, faults, and failings to an internal perspective that seeks to make the best out of what is at hand. The students must not only be able to believe in themselves; they must be able to capitalize on their own strengths, without feeling inferior because they do not live up to some abstract ideal.

    Another way to run this exercise is in small groups: break the class up into groups of four or five and have each group do the exercise on its own; then bring them all together to share their discoveries with the whole group.

2 This can be done as a demonstration exercise in front of the class: ask for volunteers, have them plan what they’re going to do, and do it while the other students watch; then discuss the results with the whole class. Or it can be done in smaller groups, each group planning and enacting their own dramatization. A demonstration exercise leaves the teacher more control, but also gives fewer students the actual experience.

3 Here the important thing is pushing the students to generate as much complexity as possible. Some groups may be tempted to set up a tidy one-to-one correspondence between the specific types of reliability listed in the chapter and specific translation situations; encourage them to complicate this sort of neat tabulation, to find problems, conflicts, differences of opinion and perception, etc. Professionals need considerable tolerance for complexity; this exercise is designed to begin building that tolerance.

4 Here the temptation may be to settle things too quickly and easily. Set a minimum time limit: their negotiations must last at least ten or fifteen minutes. The longer they negotiate, the more complications they will have to imagine, present, and handle.
2 Internal knowledge: the translator’s view

This chapter offers the first tentative statement of a position that will be developed throughout the book: the internal viewpoint of the practicing translator. It is an attempt to reframe the user’s requirements – reliability, timeliness, and cost – in terms that are more amenable to translators’ own professional self-perceptions: as professional pride, income, and enjoyment.

Discussion

1 This first discussion topic is designed to help students address a common misperception: that translators translate, period. Many student translators believe implicitly that there are clear boundaries between translation and other text-based activities, and that they will never be asked to cross those boundaries – or if they are, that they should naturally refuse. This is a chance for you to correct these misperceptions with anecdotes from your own experience and knowledge of the professional field; but those anecdotes will have the greatest impact on students if they are presented as obstacles to their simplistic notions, problems for them to digest, rather than as truths that bring the discussion to a halt.

2 Here again, your own anecdotes will be helpful – especially ones that complicate an oversimplistic assumption about “improving” a text.

3 (a) Given that agency people often have to deal with under-qualified and semi-competent freelancers, and grow frustrated with the inflated claims freelancers make about themselves and the poor-quality work they send in, the satire was probably written by somebody who has worked for (or owned) a translation agency for many years. It might, however, have been written by a freelancer who felt contemptuous of his or her competition.

(b) Mario’s education has nothing to do with translation skills, language skills, or – unless he is planning to specialize in gardening translations – subject-area knowledge. Someone looking to hire a translator is likely to look for a degree in translating, a degree in foreign languages, or a degree in some specialized subject (law, medicine, engineering, business) along with experience in the field and considerable time spent abroad – or preferably some combination of the three. S/he would also prefer any experience to be professional, geared toward a demanding marketplace, rather than the kind of dubious work a fifteen-year-old might do to earn money for cigarettes. “Mnemonic” means memory-oriented, like learning rhymed jingles. Not only did Mario not learn important
skills or subject-area knowledge in school; he doesn’t even remember much of the “mnemonic” things he studied.

(c) Localization is the hot new market in the translating field; to established professionals in the field is has a bit of the “wildcatter” (unregulated) air about it. Big money has been made there, some of it by people without a lot of solid linguistic grounding or subject-area competence. The satire here implies that Mario became a localizer because he wasn’t competent and didn’t want to work very hard.

(d) Mario claims to “specialize” in just about every major field of professional translation, and to have “ample experience” in all of them. This is probably impossible, and at least highly unlikely; but exaggerating one’s experience in a field is the sort of thing one does on a job application. References are people who can vouch for the applicant’s experience and competence; if they are “unfounded,” either the people themselves don’t exist or they know nothing of the applicant and his work, and thus are utterly useless to the person doing the hiring. If “the professionals on this site” are “collaborating” with automated online translation programs like Babelfish (or Google Translate), that means that they are not doing the translations themselves, but are having notoriously unreliable TM programs do their work for them; if this is “the only reference their translations are built upon,” they are not reliable professionals but frauds. The author of the satire seems to be implying that most of the translations s/he sees are so bad that they must have been translated by TM software of the cheapest and simplest kind. Referees kept in total ignorance have no basis for their recommendations: they don’t know whom they’re recommending, or for what.

(e) TM software at best provides rough translations that must be post-edited by a human translator for it even to make much sense; the four “professionals” Mario teamed up with in 2001 are among the quickest and dirtiest TM programs around. They should never be used for professional translation jobs; they should only be used for what they were designed to do, provide quick and very rough gists of texts in languages one cannot read. There is, obviously, no crime in being a newcomer to a field; but neither is relative inexperience is anything to brag about. It is an inevitable and understandable liability to be overcome as quickly and as quietly as possible.

(f) Freelancers often complain about the translation tests agencies sometimes send them to determine whether they are competent. The freelancer rationale for not wanting to do these tests is that they are qualified and experienced professionals and should be paid for any translating they do, including testing. Many agencies, in fact, will “test” freelancers by sending them very short jobs to begin with, and paying them for their work; if the translations they get back are bad, they can then be edited into professional form without
too much difficulty and the bad translator will never be contacted again. Agencies, for their part, need to have some sense of the professional skill of the freelance translators they hire, and consider testing to be a normal and unexceptional professional practice which only an incompetent freelancer would resist taking, because it might reveal his or her lack of professional skill. Mario writes of “the entrepreneurial principle that quality doesn’t need prove,” meaning “doesn’t need proving,” but revealing in his very grammatical error that quality does need proving, and he can’t prove it.

(g) There typically is a good deal of suspicion toward translation agencies on translator listservs, and agency owners and project managers often feel somewhat out of place on them, forced either to defend agency practices to freelancers angered by those practices or to keep quiet. From the freelancer’s point of view, the big problem in the relationship between freelancers and agencies is that agencies hide information from freelancers (who the client is, what the translation is for) and then pay the translator late or not at all; there are, in fact, several translator listservs dedicated solely to warning other freelancers about agencies that have not paid a freelancer on time or at all (see Translator Resources, “Payment Practices” [URL]). This sort of freelancer organization does seem like a professional threat to agencies, the sort one might expect from a professional guild. From the agency’s point of view, the big problem in the relationship between freelancers and agencies is that too many freelancers are ignorant and incompetent and somehow manage to hide their lack of professional skills and knowledge by relying on Google Translate and other on-line TM programs and the generous help of listserv buddies.

(h) Understandably, rates are a massive area of tension between agencies and freelancers. Agencies typically take a 45 percent cut of the translation fee paid by the client and pass the remaining 55 percent on to the freelancer. The 45 percent cut covers marketing (the freelancer doesn’t have to go in search of translation jobs because the agency has done that already, and calls the freelancer to offer him or her a job) and project management (not just editing the finished text but coordinating schedules, revisions, research, and so on). It often seems to freelancers as if agencies don’t really earn this money: they, the “real” translators, do the work, and agencies simply check commas for about five minutes and pass it on to the client, then take a huge chunk out of the fee. When freelancers start thinking this way, they dream of working for direct clients and cutting out the (agency) middle man. That way, they could charge more and still save the client money – a win-win situation for the client and the freelancer and a lose-lose situation for the agency. To prevent this from happening as much as possible, agencies typically do not disclose the identities of the clients who ordered the translation, or allow freelancers to communicate with them, even when the text is so badly written that some sort of collaboration between the writer and the translator is essential to the success of the project. Many agencies, in fact, make freelancers sign agreements not to work for a certain client for up to a
year after the freelance job is completed. From the agency’s point of view, finding and courting clients is hard work requiring expertise and considerable expense; mediating between clients who don’t understand translators’ needs and translators who don’t understand clients’ needs is equally tricky. They earn their cut, and depend on it to stay in business; freelancers who go behind their backs and try to contact the client in order to offer their services at a lower rate than the agency is charging are stealing from them not only the client but all the hard work the agency did to cultivate them.

(i) Agencies like to calculate translators’ fees based on an easily quantifiable unit, like the number of words or characters in the source text. If they have the source text in hand, it is then very easy for them to estimate how much it will cost them to hire a freelancer and bid out the job to the client accordingly. From a freelancer’s point of view, this procedure is often inadequate and unfair. Isolative languages like English and Spanish use far more words than agglutinative languages like Finnish and Hungarian; a 1,000-word text in Finnish may require 1,500 or even 1,700 words in an English translation. If word counts are used, therefore, many freelancers (especially those translating into isolative languages) will insist on billing based on the number of words in the target text – which is, after all, the translation that the freelancer actually produced. In addition, the use of word counts as the only unit of billing ignores wild fluctuations in text difficulty: a simple 1,000-word text might take an hour to translate, while a difficult 1,000-word text might take a week, with a team of researchers out searching for difficult terms and phrases. Freelancers thus often want to bill agencies on an hourly basis; but the number of hours a freelancer works on a text cannot be controlled or verified by the agency, or easily predicted when bidding for the job in the first place. Any attempt to deviate from the “simple” and easily quantifiable methods of calculating fees that agencies prefer might be seen as “gobbledygook.”

(j) The author probably sees himself or herself as a political moderate and the typical freelancer as a leftist; in this scenario, obviously, the “leftist” freelancer might well see himself or herself as a political moderate and the agency owner as a right-winger. Since in simplistic industrial terms agency owners are “bosses” and freelancers are “workers,” it is perhaps only to be expected that some agency owners should lean to the right and some freelancers should lean to the left. This sort of political tension is, however, not particularly widespread in agency–freelancer relations.

Exercises

1 Choose a source text, not too difficult, and mark it off in increasing increments, 10 words more each time: at word 10, word 30 (20-word interval), word 60 (30-word interval), etc. These intervals will be very artificial, of course; sometimes you will have
to include a single word from a sentence, or a larger segment of a sentence. An example from this chapter:

These are the questions we’ll be exploring throughout the book *[A: 10 words]*; but briefly, yes, translators and (especially) interpreters do all have something of the actor in them, the mimic, the impersonator *[B: 20 words]*, and they do develop remarkable recall skills that will enable them to remember a word (often in a foreign language) that they have heard only once. Translators and interpreters are *[C: 30 words]* voracious and omnivorous readers, people who are typically in the middle of four books at once, in several languages, fiction and nonfiction, technical and humanistic subjects, anything and everything. They are hungry for real-world experience as well, through travel, living *[D: 40 words]* abroad for extended periods, learning foreign languages and cultures, and above all paying attention to how people use language all around them: the plumber, the kids’ teachers, the convenience store clerk, the doctor, the bartender, friends and colleagues from this or that region or social class, and so on. Translation *[E: 50 words]* is often called a profession of second choice: many translators were first professionals in other fields, sometimes several other fields in succession, and only turned to translation when they lost or quit those jobs or moved to a country where they were unable to practice them; as translators they often mediate between former colleagues in two or more different language *[F: 60 words]* communities. Any gathering of translators is certain to be a diverse group, not only because well over half of the people there will be from different countries, and almost all will have lived abroad, and all will shift effortlessly in conversation from language to language, but because by necessity translators and interpreters carry a wealth of different “selves” or “personalities” around inside them, ready to be reconstructed on the computer *[G: 70 words]* screen whenever a new text arrives, or out into the airwaves whenever a new speaker steps up to the podium. A crowd of translators always seems much bigger than the actual bodies present.

Hand the text out to the students with the segments marked, so they can glance at the next or previous segment briefly; this will enable them to figure out the best way to translate partial sentences in a given segment. Insist that they use the full five minutes each time: when they are translating segment A (10 words), this will mean working hard to generate enough “work” to be doing for the entire five-minute period. As the segments get longer, they may feel pressured to squeeze a few more words into the five-minute period; insist that they stop immediately when you tell them to stop. Help them pace themselves through the translation. Call off the minutes, saying “First minute’s up, move on to the next two words; second minute’s up, etc.” (In the second segment, you will be giving them four words per minute; then six, then eight, etc.) As you increase the speed, insist
that they stay with it. Have people pay attention to their feelings as they stick with a certain speed: are they bored? As the speed increases, do they feel their stress levels rising? As each person begins to hit intolerable stress levels, they should quit translating and wait until everyone is done.

When everyone is finished, take ten or fifteen minutes to let the whole group discuss what happened, what people felt as they proceeded; whether the slower translators felt guilt or shame as they dropped out; whether the faster translators felt a competitive need to be better than everyone else, and so suppressed feelings of stress in order to “win the race.”

Be sure and stress that there is no one “optimum” speed for translators; it would be all too easy to turn this exercise into an opportunity for gloating and humiliation. Nor is it a good idea to collect the students’ translations, or to compare “error rates” in class. The idea here is not competition, but experience: each student should be able to explore his or her own speed and attitudes about rapid translation in a safe environment.

2 Either bring in a source text or have the students themselves bring one in from a translation seminar or actual translation task. Then set up the situation:

They are to imagine themselves as simultaneously “here” and somewhere else. The “here” is the classroom; the somewhere else is a place or time when they experienced burnout, or were very close to burning out. Talk them through it: have them remember an experience of burnout or near-burnout; have them summon up the feelings they felt then. As they begin to relive the desperation of that time, begin to shift them imaginatively “back” into the classroom as well, so that while they imagine themselves in that other place and time they are also in front of you, where they are required to translate the text in front of them. They don’t actually have to do the translation; but they have to try to convince themselves that they have to, and perhaps even put pencil to paper in the first attempt to do the translation. Create as much realistic pressure as you can: they must finish the translation by the end of the class period; they will be graded on their performance, and their grade on this “test” will constitute 50 percent of their grade for the term; errors will not be tolerated; no distinction will be made between minor and major errors; two errors will constitute failure. All errors will be read aloud to the class, and the other students will be encouraged to ridicule the “bad” translator.

All through this experience they should be monitoring their feelings about this pressure with one part of their mind while feeling them with another.

After fifteen to twenty minutes of the “desperate” part of the exercise, move to the “happy” or “hopeful” part. Tell them to stand up, shake themselves, stretch, jog in place, walk around, get a drink of water, etc. Then have them sit back down and work in groups – except that this time all the pressure is off, no deadlines, no grades. Also, they are to come up with the funniest “wrong” translation – an assignment that will guarantee a good deal of fun.
Leave ten to fifteen minutes at the end of class to discuss their feelings about the two different translation experiences. Have them ponder whether either situation is a “realistic” one – and whether, even if they are never actually required to translate in this or that exact way, it might be possible for them to put themselves into one of the two mental states they experienced in the exercise, by worrying too much, or by sharing difficult translation experiences with coworkers or friends.

This exercise can also be done entirely in small groups; in this case the students themselves will be expected to “inflict” the symbolic burnout on each other, each student pushing the others to remember and feel as much burnout as possible, threatening them with terrible things if they fail, and then focusing those desperate feelings on the text, as if they were required to translate it by the end of class. Once again, leave time at the end of class to discuss the experience with the whole group.

Students can also be asked to explore their experience through other channels: by drawing or diagraming it, acting it out in their small groups, telling stories, etc.

3 The process of translation

This chapter presents the general theoretical model on which the whole book is based; an additional topic for class discussion might deal with what good theoretical models are, how they help us, and also how they restrict our imaginations, how they block us from seeing other things that might be equally important but according to the model don’t “exist.” The main idea is that professional translators shuttle back and forth between “subliminal” translation, which is fast and largely unconscious, and alert, analytical translation, which is slow and highly conscious. The former mode is made up of lots of experiences of the latter mode: every time you solve a problem slowly, painstakingly, analytically, it becomes easier to solve similar problems in the future, because you turn the analytical process into a subliminal one. Also, one of the things you “sublimate” is the sense that certain types of textual features cannot be handled subliminally: they set off “alarm bells” that bring you up out of the “fast” mode and initiate the “slow” one.

Some students may shy away from the theoretical model – especially, perhaps, the terms, such as abductive/inductive/deductive. In the third edition of the book, those terms have been replaced in later chapters with paraphrases in ordinary English—“intuitive leaps” for abduction, “pattern-building” for induction, and “rules and theories” for deduction—but students may still respond negatively to the “closed system” feel of the model, and it is important to deal with such negative feelings by talking about them in an open-ended way, without trying to ram the terminology or the model down anyone’s throat. A good approach here might be to discuss your own reservations about them – you are not likely to feel entirely comfortable either, since you didn’t think them up yourself, and talking about the process by which you tested them against your own experience and partly overcame your mistrust, partly decided to set it aside, may help. If some student(s)
cannot get over their mistrust, reassure them by saying that suspicion of theoretical frameworks is an important part of critical thinking, and encourage them to continue to critique the model as they proceed in the book. It is not essential for the students to accept the model as “true,” or the best possible one; only that they agree to use it provisionally as one explanation of translation.

Discussion

One possible scenario: when scholars theorize a process, they have to be as conscious as they can in order to become aware of details, their connections to other details, any discrepancies or conflicts between details and different parts of the explanatory model, etc. It is quite natural, then, for them to project this conscious analytical state onto the process they’re studying, and assume that the people engaged in it – in this case, translators – are doing much the same sort of thing they are doing when they theorize it. In this reading, the one crucial detail of which the theorists do not become conscious would be the critical differences between theorizing and translating – the fact (if it is one) that translators work much less consciously than theorists.

Another, more radical scenario: it only seems natural for theorists to project their own conscious, analytical state onto translators because that is the state in which, traditionally in the rationalist West, all important human processes are supposed to take place. Because we have been taught to idealize total alert consciousness and to associate with that state certain rational, logical, analytical processes, we “see” it in any human activity that we similarly want to idealize. If translation, then, is a respectable profession, translators must work rationally, logically, analytically, consciously; and, contrariwise, if anyone says that they don’t, that constitutes an attack on the respectability of the profession. In this interpretation, rationalist ideals condition “empirical” perception to the point where we think we see what we want to see.

And one more step: perhaps theorists do not work as consciously and analytically as they like to think either. This would explain the fact (if it is a fact) that translation theorists have been so unable or unwilling to “see” translator behavior that doesn’t fit their explanatory model. In this interpretation, the model does their thinking for them; because they have internalized or “sublimated” the model, it seems as if they are thinking consciously, analytically, etc., but in fact they are only the channels through which the model imposes itself on the world.

A good argument could also be made for the interpretation that the model developed in this book works in much the same way: that it arises less out of a “true” empirical perception of the way translators actually translate, and more out of the author’s personal unconscious predilections or “learning styles.” Discussion topic 5 in the old learning styles chapter (first and second editions, now online <a href=”URL”>here</a>) raises this very possibility. If you want to advance this last
argument in class, you may want to review that chapter and the suggestions for teachers for that particular exercise.

**Exercises**

1 This exercise can be (1) run by the teacher, with all the students participating at once, calling out suggestions of habits that run their lives; (2) done in small groups, with each group responsible for coming up with a list of ten or so habits that they rely on in their day-to-day living; or (3) done individually, as homework, with each student going home to think about the question and coming to class the next day prepared to discuss it. This third approach could also be set up as a research project: each student goes and talks to the people who know him or her best, parents, spouses, lovers, roommates, and asks them to list his or her habits – irritating and otherwise. However the material on habits is collected, be sure and give students a chance to air and discuss them with the whole class. Students can also be asked to present their findings through other channels than the auditory: by drawing “habit diagrams” of their typical day, by dramatizing their habits, etc.

2 This exercise could take the same forms as exercise 1: whole-group discussion run by the teacher, small-group work, individual homework or research project. The process here will be slightly different, however, since in this exercise the students are not just noticing habits, but exploring memories of how they came to be habits. The similarity between the two processes should also be clear, however: since habits are things that we rarely notice, we may need other people’s help to see them at all, to realize that this or that thing we do is highly habitualized. Again, various visual or dramatic channels might be used to present findings.

3 This exercise can be done fairly quickly, in class discussion (either with the full group or in smaller groups), just to give students some sense of the variety of linguistic problem areas in their language combination – and, of course, of their own awareness of those problems, their own sense of the alarm bells that do (or should) go off. Or it could be turned into a longer project, involving the keeping of a translator’s log or journal as they work on translations for other classes and the analysis and/or classification of the problem areas that they find in their own work. Be sure and get them to reflect on and articulate what it feels like when an “alarm bell” goes on in their head while translating.

4 **Experience**
This chapter is about experience, the translator’s experience of the world in general, of language, people, and so on – an introduction to the series of experiences in Chapters 5–9. What this emphasis on “experience” may not make immediately clear, however, is that it is also about learning. In almost every way, experience is learning. We learn only through experience – whether that experience is in the classroom or out. We learn things by listening to other people talk about them, reading about them, having them happen to us, or making them happen. People talk to us about things in lectures, on the television and the radio, in church, on the telephone, in cafes and restaurants and bars, in streets and stores, in living rooms and kitchens and bedrooms. We can learn in all of those places. We read about things in books – textbooks and novels, encyclopedias and nonfiction paperbacks, dictionaries and travel books, humor and collections of crossword puzzles – magazines and newspapers, SMSs and e-mail and Facebook chat and Skype. Things happen to us at work and at home, with other people and alone, with lovers and spouses and friends and total strangers; the things that happen are wonderful or devastating, earth-shaking or trivial, things that we plan and things that take us by surprise, things that we want to tell others about and things that we are ashamed to tell anyone. We make things happen by wanting to learn something specific (play a musical instrument, learn a foreign language) or by vaguely craving a change in a humdrum life; with ideas (democracy, love, salvation, change) and with objects (guns, blueprints, fire).

These are obvious channels of learning, of course – but a surprising number of students believe that learning only takes place in the classroom. It seems to be a part of school culture in many parts of the world (possibly even everywhere) to believe that school is the source and setting of all learning; that beyond the classroom walls (in street or popular culture, in families and workplaces and bars) lies ignorance. If you have students who believe this, their learning outside of school is probably entirely unconscious. But even in school much of what we learn is unconscious: that teacher X is an ignoramus who doesn’t know how to teach, teacher Y is sad and lonely and bitter, hates kids, and burned out years ago, and teacher Z is a pedagogical genius who should be in the history books; that learning is not supposed to be fun (“no pain, no gain”); that “good” students always (act as if they) agree with the teacher and only “bad” students dare to disagree, and only out of a “bad attitude”; that a teacher who encourages you to disagree or argue with him or her, or to develop independent and original views on things, probably doesn’t really mean it, and will punish you in subtle ways if you act on such encouragement; or that (in teacher Z’s classroom) learning is exciting, challenging, chaotic, unpredictable, and mostly enjoyable, but may also make you angry or anxious; that being a teacher would be the worst fate you can imagine (if many of your teachers are like teacher Y) or the greatest job on earth (if even a few of your teachers are like teacher Z). All of this is learned in school – but neither the teachers teaching it nor the students learning it typically realize that this learning is going on.
Depending on how comfortable you are with challenges to your teacherly authority, you might even want to get your students to talk about the unconscious lessons you’ve been teaching them. Of course, the more uncomfortable you are with such things, the stronger these lessons will have been, and the more adamantly the students will refuse to enumerate them for you – unless you let them do so anonymously (by writing a list of five things they’ve learned from you that you didn’t know you were teaching, for example). The more comfortable you are with such discussions, the more likely it is that you have them with your students all the time anyway: they are powerful channels of critical thinking, self-reflection, metalearning – of getting students to reflect critically on how and when and why they learn, so that they can maximize the transformative effect of their learning (and eagerness to engage in it) all through their lives.

The important thing to bear in mind through Chapters 4–9 is that inductive experience remains the best teacher – far more effective than deduction, the use of rules and laws and abstract theories. Students cannot be expected to internalize an entire deductive system of translation in the abstract and then go out and start translating competently. In fact, without hands-on exercises and other practical experiences they cannot be expected even to understand an entire deductive system of translation – not because they are students, but because they are human, and human beings learn through doing. Deduction can be a powerful and productive prod to learning; it can force people to rethink a rigid or narrow position, or to return to their ordinary lives with a fresher eye for novel experiences, things that their previous assumptions could not explain. But the prod is only part of the learning process, which must continue long after the prodding is done – and continue specifically in ways that build bridges between “knowing that” and “knowing how,” knowing something in the abstract and being able to do something in the real world.

Discussion

1–4 Remember that there are no right answers here. These are questions that people are likely to feel very strongly about, to the point of believing that their position is not only right but the only possible one. Those who can really only learn foreign languages well by living in the country are going to insist that that is the only legitimate way to become a translator; those who are very good at learning languages from books or classes, and indeed have learned several languages that way (and perhaps have never left the country in which they were born) will disagree strongly. Some people have very strong opinions on the issue of how to improve your native language: lots of grounding in grammar classes and strict prescriptive rules; a thorough familiarity with the great classics in the language; total immersion in pop and street culture; or simply a good ear. There are good translators who started off in language classes or a foreign country and only later, as professional translators, started learning a technical subject or specialization; and there
are good translators who started off as engineers or lawyers or medical students and only later began to work with languages. Some will argue that you should never accept a job in a language combination for which your ability is not absolutely tiptop professional – never into a foreign language, never out of a language that you only know slightly, etc. – and some that it doesn’t really matter how well you know the language, you can always have your work checked. Let them fight it out – the main thing being not to reach a conclusion but to explore the implications of thinking either way, and (especially) of basing a general principle on one’s own experiences and preferences.

5 There are two fairly well-defined camps on this question. On the one hand, you have people arguing that there is no room for intuition at all, you either know the word or phrase or you don’t, and if you don’t, you should find out – not “guess,” which is how this camp tends to portray intuition. On the other hand, you have people (like the author of this book) arguing that intuition is inevitable, that all translators rely on intuition constantly, and that even “knowing” a word or a phrase is largely or even entirely an intuitive act. If any middle ground is to be found, it may be that translators tend to begin more tentatively, afraid to trust either their intuitions or their knowledge, and to grow in confidence with practice – an important point to stress because a rigid condemnation of all intuition may well frighten off the less confident students, who know they don’t know enough to translate with total certainty (nobody does).

6 This is another very general discussion topic aimed at exploring the pedagogical assumptions underlying this book – which are stated vis-à-vis this topic in the Introduction, namely, that it is important to chart out a middle ground between the two extremes raised in the topic. Practical/experiential learning (abduction/induction) needs to be sped up with various holistic methods; precepts and abstract theories (deduction) needs to be brought to life experientially.

Exercises

1 This exercise can be done either by individual students on their own (in class or at home) or by small groups of students working together. For example, the students could work in pairs, each partner telling the other his or her experiences of cultural change. The advantage of this latter approach is that some students working alone may not be able to remember any changes – or may never have been to a foreign culture – and other people’s memories may help them remember or imagine such changes. If none of your students has ever been to a foreign culture, of course, the exercise will not work very well – unless you adjust it for knowledge of foreign cultures through foreign-language classrooms, television, etc.
These exercises are designed to bridge gaps between traditional pedagogies based on grammatical rules and dictionaries and the more experientially based pedagogy offered here. Many precept-oriented teachers, theorists, and students of translation react with contempt to the notion that intuition plays a significant role in translation, claiming instead that “craft” or “professionalism” always entails a fully conscious and analytical following of precepts.

The idea here is that intuition is never pure solipsism or subjectivity; it always works in tandem with analytical processes, in part driving those processes (we have an intuitive sense for how to proceed analytically), in part serving as a check on those processes (we sense intuitively that an analysis is leading us in the wrong direction, producing results that run counter to experience of the real world), and in part being checked by those processes (analysis can show us how and where and why our intuitions are wrong and must be retrained).

For the three exercises you will need to find source texts for the students to work on – or you can ask them to bring source texts from other classes. All three exercises could be done with a single source text; or you could move on to a new source text with each exercise. The advantage of using a new text for each one is that students may grow bored with the same text and find less and less to talk about in it with each exercise.

5 People

In a people-oriented book, this chapter and the next are the most people-oriented of all. They make a case for teaching not only terminology but all translation skills through a person-orientation. (See also the introduction to Chapter 6 for further comments.)

Discussion

The consequences of this topic are intensely practical. Some people (philosophically they are called “foundationalists”) would argue that the only way it is ever possible for us to understand each other is if the rules are stable, transcendental (i.e., exist in some otherworldly “realm of forms” rather than constantly being reinvented based on actual usage), and thus “foundational” – provide a firm foundation for communication to rest upon. One practical consequence of this belief is that rules become primary in the classroom as well: students must be taught grammar and vocabulary in the abstract, first and foremost, and applications later, if at all (“if we have time . . .”). Drill grammar and vocabulary in the A and B languages, and students will have an excellent foundation for translation skills. Similarly, translation theories must be taught in the abstract as well, so that students are given a systematic theoretical foundation for practice. If possible, of course (again, “if we have time . . .”), they should be given a chance to apply those
theories to practice, to test them in practice, or to derive the theories inductively; but if we don’t have time (and somehow we never do), well, that’s all right too.

If we want to explore other possibilities in the classroom, it is also important to explore other theoretical possibilities for communication, because foundationalists in the department (teachers and students alike) will say, “If you don’t start with the rules, with the abstract theories, with system, no communication will be possible at all, everything will fall apart, the students won’t learn anything, etc.”

I developed a countertheory in The Translator’s Turn (1991); if you’re interested in pursuing this theoretical issue at length, you may want to read the first chapter of that book. Generally, however, the “antifoundationalist” or “postfoundationalist” view is that usage (experience of language in actual use situations, writing and speaking) is primary, and the rules are reductive fictions deduced from perceived patterns in usage. People can communicate without absolutely stable rules partly because speech communities regulate language use, and try to make sure that when someone says “dog” everyone thinks of or looks at a canine quadruped; but partly also – and this is important because a speech community’s regulation never works completely or perfectly – people can communicate because they work hard at it, restating things that are misunderstood, explaining and clarifying.

Exercises

1–5 These exercises are all designed to help students experience what I have called the “somatics” of language: the fact that we store the meanings of words, phrases, registers, and so on in our bodies, in our autonomic nervous systems, and that our bodies continue to signal to us throughout our lives how and what we are going to mean by those things (Robinson 1991). This means simultaneously that the meanings of “dog” and “cat,” taboo words, lower-class words and phrases, baby talk, foreigner talk, and shaming words will all have been shaped powerfully by our speech communities, and thus regulated in collective ways (this is what I call “idosomatics”); and that those meanings will have acquired more peripheral idiosyncratic (“idosomatic”) meanings as well, through the personal experiential channels by which they reached us (specific dogs and cats, our parents’ and teachers’ and other adults’ attitudes toward swearing and lower-class language, etc.).

All five exercises are typically very enjoyable for students. All five can usually be done in a single hour-long class session.

6 Working people

This chapter maps out an approach to terminology (and related linguistic phenomena such as register) through the interpersonal contexts of its actual use: working people
talking. In comparison with the traditional terminology studies approach, this person-oriented focus has both advantages and disadvantages. One of its main disadvantages is that it is difficult to systematize, because it varies so widely over time and from place to place, and therefore also difficult to teach. One of its main advantages is that it is more richly grounded in social experience, and therefore, because of the way the brain works, easier to learn (to store in and retrieve from memory).

This unfortunate clash between ease of teaching and ease of learning creates difficulties for the contextualized “teaching” of terminology, of course, in terms of actual situational real-world usage. A systematized terminology, abstracted from use and presented to students in the organized form of the dictionary or the glossary, seems perfectly suited to the traditional teacher-centered classroom; it is easily assigned to students to be “learned” outside of class, “covered” or discussed in class, and tested. The only difficulty is that the terms learned in this way are harder to remember than terms learned in actual working situations – and, unfortunately, those situations are hard to simulate in class (they are better suited to internships).

The traditional middle ground between learning terminologies from dictionaries and learning terms in the workplace is learning terms from texts: students are handed specialized texts and the teacher either goes over the key terms or has the students find them and perform certain exercises on them. This has the advantage of giving students a use-context for the words, so that instead of learning terms per se, they are learning terms in context. The problem here too, though, is that black marks on a page provide a much more impoverished context than the actual workplace, making these words too hard to remember. Clearly, if the teacher is going to use specialized texts in the classroom, s/he should give the students multimodal exercises to perform on them, such as exercises 1–3 in this chapter. As we saw in the old learning styles chapter, experiencing a thing through several senses not only makes the experience richer and more powerful; it physiologically, neurologically makes it easier to remember and put into practice later. Above all, these exercises give students the intuitive (abductive) experience of having to guess at or construct cohesive principles or imaginative “guides” to a translation – an experience that will stand them in good stead even when they are very familiar with the terminology in the source text. The “cohesion” of any text is always an imaginative construct, something the reader builds out of her or his active imagination; the only real difference between an “abductive” construct such as we’ve been considering here and an “inductive” construct based on more experience is that the latter is based on more experience, and is thus more likely to be convincing, sound “natural.”

One solution to the problem of simulating the workplace in the classroom, of course, is to leave the classroom: make a field trip to a local factory where terms found in a source text are used, or to a hospital, or an advertising agency. Go directly to the source. Have students take copious notes or carry a tape recorder. Everywhere stress
interpersonal connections, getting to know the people who do the jobs, not just the words they use. The words flow out of the people, are part of the people, part of who they are as professionals, and how they see themselves as part of the working world.

Back in the classroom, try exercise 2 – but with the field trip experience. See how much can be recalled through the use of various visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic projections. Exercise 2 is designed to help people recall experiences long past, along with the words that originally accompanied them; but it can also be used to store more recent experiences in vivid ways that will facilitate later recall.

**Discussion**

1 This question, of course, gets at the heart of the pedagogical philosophy undergirding this book, and as such may provide a good opportunity to get students talking about the kind of learning experience the book is channeling for them, and how they are responding to it. While most people would agree that experientially based learning is more powerful and effective and realistic, even more “natural,” than abstract, systematic, or theoretical learning, the latter is nevertheless still considered more “appropriate” for the university classroom (or for that matter any classroom), and some students will continue to feel uneasy about bringing an experiential component into the realm of abstract theorizing. Most likely, however, the students who feel most uneasy about multimodal experientially based methods in the classroom will also have strong beliefs in the importance of experience outside the classroom, and can be engaged in fruitful discussion of the apparent contradictions or conflicts between these two views. Why should the classroom be different? Just because it always has been?

2–3 These questions address two of the most potentially inflammatory statements in the chapter; as discussion topics they provide a chance for students to air their disagreement – and, more importantly, to explore the precise nature of their disagreement or agreement.

Some will want to claim, for example, that translators are not fakers or pretenders but highly trained professionals whose work involves a great deal of imitation – which would be quite true. But precisely how do these two ways of formulating the work of translators differ? Only in the amount of professional self-esteem each seems to reflect or project outward to the user community?

Similarly, some will want to insist that the translator never pretend to know how to write in an unfamiliar register, but that s/he instead always learn first, and then imitate. But again, are these two positions really so far apart? Isn’t the difference between them mostly one of self-presentation? Certainly for non-translating users – clients, especially – it may be more effective to present oneself as an expert in a certain register. But is it really essential to maintain that particular form of self-presentation among other translators?
The value of talking about translation as “faking,” it seems to me, is that it builds tolerance for the transitional stages in becoming a translator (and, perhaps, a sense of humor, always a good thing!) in translators themselves – especially student translators, who are nervous about having to be experts all of a sudden. Nobody becomes an expert all at once; they only pretend to, while they’re learning. Making the jump from beginner to expert seem sudden and drastic, something that happens overnight, may well have the effect of frightening some future translators out of the field.

**Activities**

1 For this exercise, students should bring a bilingual dictionary with them in class; you will need to bring a tape or CD and something to play it with.

Write up a series of word lists in the students’ source or target language. (This exercise works differently, but equally well, in both directions.) Each list should contain five words of medium difficulty that do not quite fit into a single coherent discourse or register. For example:

- demonstrator, ordinance, signpost, escalator, plastique
- venerable, vehicular, venereal, vulnerable, virtual
- cylinder, antislip surface, counter, column, revolving door
- float, chute, flatbed, load limit, listserv
- jamb, jack, jig, joist, joint
- manifold, mandatory, manifest, mangle, manhole

Print each list on a separate sheet of paper and photocopy enough for the whole class; or else write them on the board or overhead transparency. Then take the class through the following exercises, one with each list.

(a) Have the students work on the first list (it doesn’t matter which) with a dictionary, alone; encourage them to be as thorough and analytical as possible, even looking up words they know and choosing the meaning that they think most likely (but don’t encourage them to construct a coherent context to facilitate the determination of “likelihood” – yet). Get them to put their facial muscles into “concentration” mode: focused eyes, knitted brow, clenched jaw.

(b) Next have them work on the second list, still alone, but now relaxing, getting comfortable in their chairs, visualizing every word, and building a composite image of all five words before translating.
(c) With the third list, have them work alone again, and relaxing and visualizing again, but with classical (or other fairly complex but enjoyable) music playing in the background as they translate.

(d) With the fourth list, start with relaxation, music, and visualization again, but now have the students break up into groups of three or four, discussing context and collectively creating a reasonable and realistic context for the words (imagining a professional context for them, telling a story about them, etc.) before translating them.

(e) With the fifth list, do everything as in (d), but now have the students mime the meanings of the words to each other before translating.

(f) With the sixth list, do everything as in (e), but this time have the students try to come up with the funniest possible wrong or bad translations.

The exercise can be completed in about 30 minutes if you rush, but works better if you allow 45–60 minutes. Even if you rush, be sure to allow 15–20 minutes after it is over to give students a chance to talk about what they were feeling as they moved from one step to the next. What difference did relaxation make? Music? (Some find music very distracting; others become many times more productive once the music starts playing.) Group work? Mime? Funny wrong translations?

Some, incidentally, may find the idea of doing wrong translations disturbing. Note, however, that the creative process is the same in both right and wrong translations, just a lot more fun, and thus also more productive – generates more possible versions – in the latter. Skeptics can also be directed to the findings of Paul Kussmaul (1995: 39ff.) in his think-aloud protocol research:

It could be observed in the protocols, especially during incubation, when relaxation was part of the game, that a certain amount of laughter and fooling around took place amongst the subjects if they did not find their solution at once. This, in combination with the “parallel-activity technique” described above, also prevented them from being stuck up a blind alley, and promoted new ideas. Laughter can also be a sign of sympathetic approval on the part of a subject and may help to create the gratification-oriented condition postulated by neurologists. (1995: 48)

2 This exercise is obviously closely related to (1), differing primarily, in fact, only in using a whole text instead of a word list. (The word list, being simpler, is more “teachable”; the whole text is more realistic, and more complicated.) Elements from exercise (1) not listed here might in fact be added – especially music.
Note the somewhat artificial distinction made in this exercise between “preparatory” or “pre-translation” activities (a–c) and “translation” (d–e). In real life these blur together, of course, but it is useful for students to realize what an important role “pre-translation” processes play in the act of translation – how essential it is to “get in the right frame of mind” to translate something.

**Exercises**

1 This exercise can be done by individual students or in small groups. Its purpose is to give them a different way of organizing dictionary-knowledge about terminology than simply looking up individual words, and to enhance their ability to remember what they find through this method, using visual representation.

2 Make it clear to students that professional translators go through this process many times every day – and that it is a good idea to get into the habit of documenting the decision-making process (and coming up with a final justification) as in this exercise, in case a client or agency project manager challenges your choice. Get them to describe the mental processes they went through in determining the best word at each step of the way: based purely on databases in (c), on web searches in (d–e), on a phone call to an expert in (f), and on a listserv query in (g). What swayed them one way or the other? What gave one word the “edge” over another? In sifting through the different authorities (databases, web search hits, experts, other translators), which carried the most weight, which less – and what factors made it seem like this or that authority carried more or less weight?

3 The value of this exercise for future translators’ knowledge of terminology should be obvious. What may not be quite so obvious is that it can also serve to develop connections in the working world that may one day mean employment for the graduate. This is essentially an ethnographic research method; expanded to research paper or MA thesis length (especially if the workplace they study is a translation division in government or industry), it can put students in touch with potential future employers.

**7 Languages**

This chapter is an attempt to reframe linguistic approaches to translation in terms of students’ acts of dynamic theorizing – to offer students analytical and imaginative tools with which to transform static, formalistic, and heavily idealized linguistic theories into mental processes in which they too can participate. The chapter is based on the dual assumption that (1) the use of language is primary, and is steeped in specific language-use situations in which we try to figure out what the other person is saying, gradually building up a sense of the patterns and regularities in speech and writing; and (2) abstract linguistic structures are deductive patterns that grow out of that process of sense-making,
not (as twentieth-century linguists used to believe) ideal structures that exist prior to speech and are, alas, mangled by actual speakers. Abstract linguistic structures are the inventions of linguists trying to reduce the complexity of language to logical forms. And that is a perfectly natural part of language use. We always try to find patterns; and because language is too complex for the patterns we find, we always overgeneralize. Overgeneralization is not only a natural but also a valuable reaction to complexity; in this sense linguists perform an important function. It is essential, however, that we remember what we (and linguists) are doing, that we are overgeneralizing, reducing complexity to an artificial simplicity – that we not start believing, with the mainstream linguistic tradition throughout most of the twentieth century, that we are somehow uncovering the “true underlying structure” of language.

Discussion

1 This topic is obviously designed to let students explore some of the ideas introduced just above, in the introduction to this chapter’s appendix entry. Depending on where you stand on the issue of “what language is” or “what linguists do,” you may want to (1) articulate my assumptions as spelled out above as a target for student critiques (if you disagree with me strongly and want to encourage students to do the same); (2) articulate those assumptions as something for students to think about and consider as an interesting (but not necessarily correct) alternative to linguistic approaches, and an explanation for why the book says the things it says (if you’re flexible and open-minded about these things); (3) present my assumptions as the truth (if you’re completely in agreement and want to encourage students to join you there); (4) some combination of the above. Personally, I’d prefer (2). But it’s your classroom.

2 Here again, the notion that every overgeneralization about language, including linguistic analyses, is an overgeneralization is only “insulting” if we want to assume that linguistic analyses describe a true underlying reality called la langue or competence. If linguistics is just an interesting and useful way of reducing the complexity of language to a workable analytical simplicity – an intellectual fiction, of potentially great heuristic value – then it is fundamentally no different from the overgeneralizations any of us come up with to explain the language we use.

Exercises

1–2 Both of these exercises are designed to encourage students to look closely at linguistic approaches to translation, one (Nida and Taber) more prescriptive, the other (Baker) more descriptive – specifically in terms of their own inductive processes, their own work toward formulating patterns and regularities in language and translation. These
exercises are designed to help students explore the learning processes behind Nida and Taber and Baker (and, by extension, the other linguistic translation theorists they read). The main consideration here is this: students are all too often presented with theories as *faits accomplis*, prefabricated structures that they are expected to observe from a distance (sometimes a very short distance) and memorize. They are neither required nor allowed to test the theories against their own experience, much less attempt to derive the theories on their own. But we know that deriving things on one’s own is the best way to learn them. This is, in fact, most probably what translators and translation students mean when they complain about theory: not so much that it has no practical application (though that is often how they express it), but that they are given no chance to explore or experiment with its practical applications. It is presented to them as an inert object to be internalized. Indeed, since academic decorum frowns on theorists explaining in detail how they arrived at a certain theoretical formulation, and especially on theorists leaving things open-ended, half-articulated (perhaps with the suggestion that readers finish the thinking process on their own), students and other readers are given the impression that there is nothing more to be said, nothing to add to or subtract from the formulation, and therefore no place into which the reader could insert himself or herself as a thinker-in-process. (As Shoshana Felman (1983) notes wryly, J. L. Austin’s willingness to remain in process with his thinking about speech acts in *How to Do Things with Words* (1962/1976) scandalized his followers, notably John Searle: Austin developed the distinction between constative and performative speech acts, realized that the distinction didn’t really work, and so, halfway through his book, discarded it and started over. This is not how academic books are supposed to proceed! The advantage of Austin’s approach from a student’s or other critical reader’s point of view, however, is that it leaves room for them to participate, join in the inductive process of moving from complexity to simplicity – rather than simply taking it or leaving it, or, worse, simply memorizing it.)

I should also note that this dynamic underlies my insistence on building into this book exercises and discussion topics that encourage students to explore how I put the book together and why I did it that way, and how they would do things differently had it been theirs to write. It is not that I am some sort of masochist, wanting to be attacked; it is rather that I believe that students learn best if they actively construct knowledge rather than passively receive it, and that always involves or requires the ability to analyze and challenge and criticize received wisdom.

### 8 Social networks

This chapter explores the social nature of translation: how translators interact with other people to learn (and keep learning) language, to develop and improve translation skills, to get and do translation jobs, to get paid for them, etc. Because a sociological approach to the study of translation was first most powerfully developed by the German
skopos/Handlung school, the chapter concludes with a brief exposition of their theoretical models, along with exercises designed to help students understand those models better. New to the third edition is a section on the so-called “sociological turn” in translation studies.

**Discussion**

1. The main stability lost in a shift from text-based to action-based theories is the notion of textual equivalence, which becomes a nonissue in skopos/Handlung theories. For people who believe that translation (and translation studies) is and should remain text-based, focused on stable structures of linguistic equivalence between a source text and a target text, this approach will seem not only impossibly vague and general but not really about translation at all. Translation studies, they believe, should be about translation, which is equivalence between texts – not about translators in some huge sociological context. The skopos/Handlung theorists, on the other hand, argue that those sociological contexts are precisely where such things as the type of equivalence desired are determined.

   This also means, of course, that any claim to universality is lost: a focus on the sociological contexts in which equivalence is determined will inevitably relativize discussions of the “correct” translation, because different people in different contexts will expect different types of correctness. For people who prefer absolutes and universals, this relativism will seem dangerous – it will seem to be saying to students that anything goes. It doesn’t, of course – in those real-world contexts, anything does not go, translation is very closely regulated by sociological forces – but the comforts of universal absolutes are indeed lost.

2. The idea here is to give students a chance to talk about their fears and anxieties, and to help them to work through them to a greater sense of confidence in their own abilities. Students who are inclined to heap abuse on such fears should be gently but firmly discouraged from doing so in class.

3. This is a good chance for you to do some proselytizing for your national and/or regional translator organization or union, and to encourage students to join, buy their literature, attend their conferences (even, perhaps, offer to present their projects from this class at those conferences). If you are personally active in that group, share your experiences with them. Figure out ways to get the students to attend a conference – does the department have funds to help students attend? Would a fund-raiser be possible?

4. Social groups are often thought of as airtight categories: each person will be a member of certain groups, and other people will be members of other groups, with no overlaps.
Obviously, this is not the case. Not only will people who are members of different groups also at some level be members of the same group – at the highest level, of course, we’re all members of the human race – but the boundaries between groups are often fuzzy. Racially, for example, there are probably as many people of mixed race as there are of “pure” ones (if indeed such a thing exists). Not only are there many people with dual nationalities; immigrants and people living in borderlands often have mixed national and cultural loyalties. Even gender is fuzzy: some men are more feminine, some women more masculine; gays, lesbians, and bisexuals blur the gender lines; and there is even a small group of hermaphrodites who are biologically both male and female.

5 This topic is aimed implicitly at this entire book, and specifically Chapters 4–9 of the book, which constitute a series of bridges between theories and practice. At the extremes of the discussion, some will argue that theorists should serve practice by telling translators how to translate (usually a highly unpopular position among translators, for obvious reasons, but one that some translators do nonetheless hold), while others will claim that theory is useless for practice and should not be studied at all. Once these extreme positions have been aired, it will be most fruitful to explore the middle ground between them: how can theories be made useful for practice? Do we have to rely on the theorists themselves for this, or is it possible to convert apparently useless theories into practically useful ones on our own, as readers? (Chapters 5–9 are attempts to achieve such conversions, and the exercises in those chapters are examples of them.)

**Exercises**

1–2 As I mentioned just above, these exercises are designed to help students work through translation theories in ways that will render them more useful for translation practice – and in the process also help students begin to theorize translation more complexly themselves. Both exercises, like the ones in Chapters 7 and 9, are long, elaborate, and complicated, and will require quite a bit of time – even a whole week of class time – to work through. Since they serve to introduce students to the prevailing theories of translation in the world today, and do so in ways that make those theories accessible, interesting, and practical for everyday use, they should be worth the time.

**9 Cultures**

This chapter explores the significant impact culture has on translation – not only in making certain words and phrases (so-called *realia*) “untranslatable,” but, as recent culturally oriented theorists have been showing, in controlling the ways in which translations are made and distributed. Its main focus is on these latter theorists: the school
variously called polysystems, descriptive translation studies (DTS), and manipulation, as well as the newer feminist, postcolonial, and activist (‘‘intervenient’’) approaches.

Discussion

All four of these topics address the universalist positions that have dominated Western translation theory until the past few decades; first developed by the medieval Christian church, later secularized as liberal humanism, that universalism has most recently been propounded by theorists like Eugene Nida and Peter Newmark, and is likely to be one of the main theoretical assumptions brought to this class by your students. If so, the relativistic notions that have come to prevail in translation theory over the past two or three decades will provoke considerable resistance among them – and that resistance needs to be expressed and discussed.

If you have time in your course to assign extended readings from these culturally oriented theorists, you may be able to deal with that resistance at greater length, and perhaps wear it down. If not, it is probably better not to try to convince students that these new theorists are right and they, the students, and 1,600 years of hegemonic Western translation theory, are wrong. Most effective at this point is to raise the possibility that things are more complicated and difficult than the universalist position makes them seem.

1 This position ties in closely with the one raised in topic 1 of Chapter 6; refer to that discussion above for further ideas.

2 This is likely to be an unpopular view; the main idea in discussing it, again, should not be to convince students of it (I’m not convinced myself), but to get them to take it seriously enough, for long enough, to consider its implications. Imagine a professional situation in which that assumption did in fact control your every decision – what would that be like?

3 Depending on how hot the political-correctness fires have raged in your country, you may or may not want to open this can of worms at all. Perhaps the best way to avoid the kind of useless bickering that the topic typically seems to generate is to focus the discussion on whether the professional community does require the avoidance of discriminatory usage – and, when and where it does, how best to deal with that.

4 Since the first scenario is so blatantly tied to medieval Christianity, where it originated, some students who do actually believe in that model will feel uncomfortable defending it, and will want to modify it in secular ways. Helping them to articulate their modifications, and to explore just how different they are from the scenario as spelled out in the chapter, may in fact be a useful way of getting at the point being made: that we all still retain a
powerful loyalty to the universalist model, which continues to affect our thinking about translation when we overtly resist or reject it.

**Exercises**

1–2 Like the exercises in Chapters 7–9, these are designed to help students work through recent translation theories in hands-on ways, thinking about them critically, applying them to their experience, etc. As before, you should probably devote at least a week to these two exercises alone.

**10 When habit fails**

This concluding chapter returns us to the issue of analysis, which has *seemed* to be neglected throughout the book – though in fact it has always implicitly been present.

Analysis is obviously a crucial part of translation, and this chapter explores some of the reasons why. Because the model used in this book portrays the translator as someone who shuttles back and forth between conscious analysis (whenever a problem arises, whenever, to put it in Massimini and Carli’s (1995) terms, the challenge exceeds the translator’s skills) and internalized or sublimated but still analytical processing (most of the time), it may seem to some as if analysis is being relegated to the peripheries of the translator’s work, made secondary, even irrelevant. This could not be farther from the truth.

The key to successful translator training, I’ve been arguing, is to move from the painfully slow analytical processes that are typically taught in classrooms to the fast subliminal processes that most translators rely on to make a decent living – and the best way to do that is to learn to internalize those slow analytical processes, so that they operate unconsciously, by “second nature.” At the same time, however, we must not lose sight of the fact that problem areas in a source text *always* force professional translators out of their “fast” modes and into the “slow” modes of conscious analysis – and this chapter explores that latter.

**Discussion**

1–2 Both topics, clearly, give students one more chance to discuss the model developed throughout the book, the practical pedagogical consequences of which they have been experiencing throughout the course.

**Exercise**
This exercise can be done by individual students, or they can work in pairs, one student reading the text to the other and monitoring the “translator’s” physical changes – eyes widen, posture straightens, etc. You can also generate your own versions of these “problematic” source texts by finding or writing relatively simple texts and making some absurd change in them about ten lines from the top.