Institute for Applied Linguistics

Case Study

The Kent Translation Case Study: Requirements and Working Procedures

1. Planning for the Case Study: Requirements

The Case Study in Translation is a graduation requirement for all students enrolled in the M.A. in Translation in Modern and Classical Language Studies (Arabic, French, German, Japanese, Russian and Spanish). The case study (also referred to below as the "project") is a test of translation, terminological, and research skills as well as a measure of the student's analytical and writing skills. This document states project requirements and recommendations.

1.1 Project Advisor, Selection of Source Text and Prospectus

Project advisors are usually professors who specialize in translation studies and work in your primary language or languages. The assignment of a case study advisor usually depends on a combination of factors, such as the student's preferred topic, the specialty of a given advisor, and/or the availability of a given advisor during the semester in question.

Students who are completing their degrees on a "part-time" or otherwise extended basis are requested to inform their advisor(s) in a timely way of their intention to complete the case study. This notification should occur during the spring semester of the year prior to graduation.

In consultation with the project advisor, the student will select a text for translation. (See Section 3 below for details.) The text selected should be equivalent to a minimum of 4,000 words. Alternatively, a group of related texts equaling 4,000 words may be selected. A prospectus describing the text must be completed, approved and signed by the advisor no later than **October 15** of the second year of studies in the case of full-time students. If October 15 should fall on a weekend, the prospectus will be due on the Monday following the original deadline.

Download a copy of the Prospectus Form from https://www.kent.edu/appling/forms-library fill it in using Word, and print it out. Three copies of the prospectus must be submitted to the advisor for approval and signature. The prospectus should be accompanied by a copy of the document to be translated. The advisor will retain a copy of the prospectus and file a second copy with the translation coordinator. The advisor will give the student the third copy of the signed prospectus.

1.2 Project Committee and Project Defense

The project committee has 3 official members: the project advisor, a second member specializing in the language of the source text, and a third member who is a native speaker of the target language and who has expertise in the subject matter,. The members of the committee are selected by the candidate and the project advisor in consultation. ***Do not personally ask a faculty member to serve on your committee. Discuss your preferences with your project advisor first, and he or she will contact the other faculty member. You will be informed once the committee has been officially formed***.

Others may attend at the invitation of the candidate or if the candidate agrees in advance. It is not customary to invite family members or close friends from outside the department unless these individuals are experts in the field of the text.

The advisor and the student will agree on a work schedule, which will require consultations, no more than three drafts, and revisions. Upon completing revisions, the student must submit the project to the committee for the final oral defense.

The format of the defense itself typically has the following pattern:

- Short introduction to the project, where the candidates present the main facets of their projects, their motivation for the choice of text, etc.
- Questions and discussion period, where the members of the committee bring up items for discussion.
- Students who wish to use PowerPoint during their introductions are invited to do so, bearing in mind that visual materials—like all other aspects of presentation and writing—are only as strong as the content they represent.

1.3 Master Schedule

The master schedule vary somewhat from language to language. Consult with your project advisor to determine specific requirements and delivery dates :

- **End of Spring semester** of the first year: Selection of the general topic and advisor
- **October 15:** Selection of the specific text and submission of the prospectus
- **January/September, First Friday of Semester**: LAST DAY TO SUBMIT APPLICATION FOR SPRING/FALL GRADUATION [Forms available in the Graduate Office, 108 Bowman; file the *NON-THESIS FORM*.]
- **April 10-17 (7 to 10 days before the case study defense):** Submission of three UNBOUND copies (or as needed for additional readers) of the final version of the Case Study Document delivered to the advisor or delivered individually to members of the committee; these copies should be presented in three-ring binders. Paragraphs must be numbered in parallel in both the source and the target text so that it is easy to refer back and forth between the two. Cite these paragraph numbers when discussing specific parts of the document in the analysis. [Note: it is OK to change paragraph boundaries, but ensure that you maintain parallel numbers for parallel segments.]
- **No later than Friday of the week before finals week**: Conduct defense. Determine the date in consultation with the advisor and members of the committee.
- **No later than Friday of finals week**: Hand in revised case study: one copy for the department; one copy if requested to the case study advisor; and a single PDF file as per instructions on TRST 61979 Blackboard Learn for compiling the final case study file. Failure to meet this deadline will result in an Incomplete for the course and will delay graduation until the revised case study is submitted. The revised copy of the case study, must be submitted to the Translation Coordinator.

2. Format of the Case Study

2.1 Basic Parts of the Case Study Document

The *translation case study text* is the source text that is translated. The *translation case study document* is the complete set of materials that is submitted to the project committee for review and defense. The *translation case study document* consists of five mandatory parts:

- The Case Study translated text
- The Case Study source text
- The analysis of the Case Study , including relevant bibliography

- A terminology section, including specific terminological bibliography (books & articles)
- Pertinent parallel and secondary texts, if applicable

2.2 Format of the Case Study Document

The Case Study Document must have the following parts, assembled in the specified order (variations from this order must be pre-approved by the advisor).

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Acknowledgments (identify committee members and all consultants by name)
- Translation (number the paragraphs in the translation to mirror the numbered paragraphs in the source)
- Source Text (number the paragraphs in the source text to mirror the numbered paragraphs in the translation)
- Translation Analysis (approximately 4,000 words or 15 pages)
- Bibliography. Be sure to cite parallel and background texts (use MLA style or any other accepted style approved by the advisor, as appropriate)
- Terminology (use standard format; see Section 7 below.)

3. Case Study Text

Students are advised to select a text that represents a serious area of translation activity, for instance, a scholarly, commercial, legal, scientific, technical, or literary work. The text should be the kind of text that a professional translator (including literary translators) would actually translate for publication.

Provided that a suitable advisor is available, the text can be a Web page or another type of localization project, such as help files, resources files, etc. In such cases, you will probably use special tools to prepare the project. Upon completion of the project it will be highly desirable if possible to recompile the project, e.g., as a Web page, so that you can actually run the file in a browser. Attention to non-text-related localization issues will be as much a part of the translation process as the translation of the text itself.

4. The Case Study Journal

The case study journal is a record of the translation process and forms the foundation upon which you will build your analysis. You should maintain the record faithfully while preparing the translation so that you can draw upon it later when you write your analysis.

The journal is not a report or an analysis in itself. It is a simple running commentary in which the translator records decisions made, problems encountered, strategies tried, and solutions discovered during the act of translation. The comments made by the advisor and by other readers will also provide important material for the journal. The more complete your journal, the easier it will be to write your analysis. It is not, however, handed in with the Translation Case Study Document.

5. The Translation Analysis

5.1 Resources

When documenting the translation process and writing your analysis, you will want to be sure to use appropriate terminology for translation approaches, procedures, and strategies and to be aware of work that has been done in the past with respect to the theory and practice of translation. You will be expected to consult primary resources in Translation Studies that are pertinent to your individual project. Discuss with your project advisor which current thinkers in the field are likely to be most useful to you.

For a systematic treatment of the terminology used in translator training, see Jean Delisle, Hannelore Lee Jahnke, and Monique Cormier, *Translation Terminology*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999, as well as the standard Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, *Comparative Stylistics of French and English: a Methodology for Translation,* translated and edited by Juan C. Sager and M.-J. Hamel. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1995. You may use tertiary resources to guide you in finding relevant resources, but you are expected to cite primary sources.

5.2 Initial Source Text Analysis

Comprehension: What problems did you have understanding the general language of the text, specific terms, and the subject of the text? Did background texts provide relevant information?

Text type: What kind of text is it? What are the stylistic features that characterize this type of text and what are the features that make it different from other texts? For specialized texts, what are the characteristics of this text type (intentional aim, important information, semantic structure, coherence)?

Audience: Who was the intended or likely audience?

5.3 Initial Target Text Analysis

Text type: What is the text type of the target text? Are you translating into the same or a different text type? What are the cultural differences in reader expectations for this text type? Is cross-cultural adaptation or localization necessary? Why? For a literary text, what authors in the target language exhibit similar stylistic features or themes? Can they be used as parallel texts? For specialized texts, you can also consider standards of textuality or other theoretical features such as those discussed in Neubert and Shreve (*Translation as Text*) or in other standard theoretical works. If you do use such criteria, be sure to cite the sources of the concepts you used when you write your analysis later.

6. Producing the Project

6.1 The Translation Process – Initial Text Production

When addressing your project, it is important to distinguish between the overall approach you will take, the strategies you will use, and the processes involved. (Delisle's *Translation Terminology* provides a good overview of these criteria.)

Translation Approach: You must decide which approach is appropriate for your text and for the general text type. Is one approach appropriate for part of your text and another appropriate elsewhere? Some of the major theorists you have read may be useful in making this decision.

Translation Strategies: As you work through the translation of your text, you will find yourself using various strategies to solve specific translation problems. Take care to define for yourself those strategies that you choose to use and document how you used them. Do some of your choices fail? If so, why, and which strategies will you use to replace them? Record your attempts and date them in your log so that you can examine the evolution of a passage or sentence over several versions. **These items will be useful when you prepare your analysis, but the analysis SHOULD NOT consist of a linear catalog of strategies and examples.**

Translation and Terminology Research: Do not cut corners in collecting parallel texts and other resources to support the translation process. Your first source of information may be from the Internet, but do not fail to examine available print media as well. Your committee will look very carefully at your choice of resource materials. Ideally, you should cross-validate terminological choices and even the content of the text against your support materials.

6.2 Final Text Production – The Editing Phase

Revision for thematic and structural reorganization (i.e., for specialized texts): Do you have to rearrange the order in which ideas are presented in the text? If so, why? Do you have to change the actual format or linguistic organization of the textual segments – for instance, delete a “conclusion” and turn it into a “prologue”, move an abstract, etc.?

Revision for style: Do you want to make changes in the translated text purely for stylistic reasons, for readability, or for idiomatic fluency? This could include some complex strategies such as theme/rheme recasting, etc. Can you classify your revisions? These kinds of changes occur in all translations, but are very important for literary translation.

Revision for cohesion: Do you feel the need to make changes to lexical items and phrases in order to introduce greater cohesion into the text? Do you see the need to abandon cohesive devices present in the source text and to use different ones in the target text?

Revision for register: Is it necessary to accommodate different levels of language between the source and the target text?

These questions will vary according to the kind of text you are translating, the quality of the original, and the cultural distance between the source and target audiences. Not all the items cited here will apply for every project, so when you write your analysis, you should discuss only those elements that are relevant to your text and your working decisions.

6.3 Writing the Translation Analysis

The analysis should be a coherent discussion of the translation process. It is an expository essay and you should follow the guidelines given during the Research and Writing course. Remember that as an essay, the analysis is about your translation, the translation process itself, and the special factors affecting the translation of this particular text. With a few exceptions, it should not be a diary-like narrative told in the first person detailing the individual steps in your process. Essential elements of the essay include:

Introduction and general approach to the translation: Present your project briefly, describing your general approach and indicate the outline you will follow in your paper, as is proper for standard essay writing in English. In getting started, you may use the first person where it is natural to explain why you chose the text, but after the Introduction, it is inappropriate to continue with an extended first-person narrative.

Discussion of the source text: Describe the source text briefly, reflecting your answers to questions posed in Section 5.2 above. Did you encounter any special problems at this stage in the process?

Preparing the target text: What kinds of issues, especially those treated under Sections 6.1 and 6.2, were most relevant to the preparation of the target text? How did text type and stylistic issues affect the decisions you made while translating? What kind of research was necessary? What kinds of parallel texts did you choose? How did you verify and validate the information you found? Did you use a consultant, and if so, who, when and how?

General translation process: Reflect on how you approached the actual processing of the target text. Did you proceed sentence-by-sentence through the source and then revise afterwards? Did you do a paragraph at a time? Did you read the source text completely through and then translate? Or did you read a paragraph or section at a time and then translate in sections? If you used a translation tool, did you find yourself working along a sentence at a time? If so, how did this affect the overall cohesion of the text? Without lapsing into a sequential narrative (*first I had breakfast, then I sat down at the computer ...*), integrate your answers to these questions into the broader structure of your analysis.

Specific translation process: This should be a major part of your essay. Present your discussion in some kind of logical order, which should ideally be dictated by the critical features of your text. Within the framework of your overall discussion, you will want to consider the strategies you employed and the solutions you reached using these strategies, but this information should be folded into the flow of your main discussion. ***Do not*** catalog strategies as the primary focus of your analysis. If you used special tools to produce the text, such as a translation memory or localization program, reflect on the effect that the tool has had on the production phase. What are its good and its bad aspects?

Terminological discussion: Discuss any specific problems that you encountered with terminology. Were there distinct patterns that evolved with respect to terminology? In the case of some specialized texts, terminological issues become the main focus of the analysis.

Conclusion: Summarize the analysis and indicate how successful you think the translation was. Are there problems still remaining? What are they? Are there things you could have done differently? For specialized texts, you might want to appraise the result in terms of readability and fluency. For literary texts, you might indicate what you tried to accomplish and whether it was possible. Are there significant conceptual differences between the source and the target language communities that affect term formation or knowledge organization? Link your observations to theorists whose writing has informed your decisions and your analysis.

These are suggestions of issues that are likely to be pertinent to your texts, but they should be adapted for each particular case. Your outline will be determined by the kind of text you chose and the kind of approach selected. A highly specialized text with a rigid text type will require a more substantial discussion of terminology, while a literary text will entail a significant discussion of stylistic features.

Students frequently ask to look at previous Case Studies. Consult with your advisor to ensure that you have the opportunity to examine high-quality projects similar to the one you are doing. It can be counter-productive to model your analysis or presentation on a Case Study that might not have been highly rated when it was reviewed. If you look at a project that impresses you, discuss it with your advisor before using it as a model. Even if another project is very good, your project is unique and should not mimic anyone else's approach.

7. Terminology

The terminology collection should follow the minimum standard terminology format used in the Institute for Applied Linguistics as evidenced in the models introduced in MCLS 60011. The model introduced here and posted on the TRST 61979 Blackboard Learn site has been designed to produce a readable, efficient "dictionary-style" representation of your terminological data. Do not try to reproduce this model on your own – it is very doubtful that anyone can do that because of the complexity of the printout format used. If you do not use the posted data and input models, you run the risk of having to redo or significantly remodel your termbase if it is not sufficiently in conformance with the standard model.

Students should use the SDL-MultiTerm for Windows terminology management system or some other comparable TMS. The terminology pertaining to the case study is a translation-oriented resource constructed by the translator for his or her own use. Terms included in the termbase should be those for which the translator had to do research and/or for which the translator wishes to supply documentation. Terminology work should be initiated as soon as work on the case study begins, preferably before beginning to translate the actual text. The termbase should be constructed as terms are encountered, researched, and resolved. It defeats the purpose of terminology management to do the translation and then try to reconstruct the termbase after the fact.

Your advisor should be able to look at your terminology and give you suggestions at any point during the preparation of the Case Study. If your printout requires special formatting (for instance, ordering in

Japanese), however, explain to your advisor that this is a time-consuming process that should be saved for the final production stage. The definition in your entries refers to the whole entry and not necessarily to any one term, so it appears before any of the terms in a given language and not after the term, unlike in lexicographical resources.

The selection of terms to include in the Case Study involves several considerations:

- Document those terms or terminological units that are central to your project.
- Do not include items of common knowledge (e.g.,copper=Kupfer=cuivre=cobre). You may include such items for your own use, but filter them out when you prepare the terminology section of the Case Study Document.
- Some texts result in huge terminology collections. You may want to reduce the published version to about 45 to 50 terminological entries. By the same token, some texts only generate shorter termbases. Consult with your project advisor if you suspect that your "termbase" is likely to differ from more common configurations.
- Literary translations may provide a limited number of strictly terminological problems. Discuss with your advisor(s) whether your text lends itself to a study of the author's unique personal lexicon. Sometimes it is useful to document dialectal or period-specific use of words and terms.
- The final hardcopy version of the termbase should be prepared using the MultiTerm RTF dictionary export feature, accompanied if necessary by the appropriate filter. Use the MultiTerm Glossary feature together with the 2009 IAL rtf output model to produce a Source-Language – Target-Language version of the glossary. You should follow this file with an HTML table output from MultiTerm for the Target-Language – Source-Language direction so that your readers can cross-reference terms. Check TRST 61979 Blackboard Learn resources to find the output resource that is compatible with your current version of MultiTerm.

Dr. Sue Ellen Wright is currently the terminology advisor. Consult her when you are ready to begin creating your termbase. She will conduct a terminology workshop for case study students in fall preceeding the case study semester. If you wish to work on the MAC, you will need to be able to install a PC emulation program and to provide PC-compatible files to your advisor or to Dr. Wright for their examination. When it comes time to produce an attractive printout of your terminology file, consult the appropriate PowerPoint (see TRST 61979 Blackboard Learn) resources. If necessary, contact Dr. Wright for help.

8. Style and Layout Guide

Many students repeat the same stylistic errors that have been committed by other students in other years. This sometimes makes advisors and readers a bit testy. The following list of tips may help you avoid this.

8.1 Organization and General Layout for the Case Study

Number the paragraphs in the original text and in the translation so that it is easy for readers to move back and forth between them. In your analysis, whenever you refer to individual points in the text, include the relevant paragraph numbers so that your readers can orient themselves.

8.6 Translation Management Criteria

If you make a decision on a particular terminological item or a turn of phrase that recurs elsewhere in the text, be sure to track it throughout the text and bring all instances of this problem into compliance with your new strategy. If there are stylistic or semantic differences that dictate that you *not* do this, it's a good idea to discuss the issue in your analysis so that your readers know why you chose different solutions in different contexts.