How to talk about your work on translation - a brief guide

**(REMEMBER! Everyone ought to have the discussed texts with them
in class so as to be able to follow the discussion)**

THE FIRST MEETING WITH THE TEXT - DEVISING THE GLOSSARY

(A) A few general questions:

- Why have you decided to <u>choose</u> this text?
- How did you <u>find</u> it?
- What made you <u>interested</u> in this text?
- At first, did you think it's going to be <u>challenging</u> to translate the text?
- What do you think will be the <u>effects</u> of tackling the translation of this text? What do you hope to <u>learn</u>?

(B) Terminology

- What <u>field</u> does the terminology belong to? How would you <u>classify</u> it?
- Is the terminology in general based on <u>single-word items or longer phrases</u>?
- Have you noticed any relevant <u>collocations/structures</u> specific for the source text?
- Have you noticed any <u>culture-specific</u> terminology that needs careful attention?
- Are there any comprehensive <u>sources</u> that can be recommended when dealing with these kinds of text? What are their advantages?
- What were the major <u>difficulties</u> you faced when preparing the glossary? How did you <u>overcome</u> them?
- Are there still any <u>unanswered queries</u> you have about terminology? How do you think you can <u>sort these difficulties out</u>?
- What are the <u>key terminological items</u> for the text in question? <u>Present them</u>.

<u>NOTE: The discussion of the glossary should follow the text.</u>

THE SECOND MEETING WITH THE TEXT - TRANSLATION DRAFT

In this part, you are supposed to present a fragment of the translated text in the form of a draft. The text has to be a continuous fragment. While discussing the fragment the following should be taken into account to facilitate the discussion.

These are the reasons for keeping **documentation of translation process**. Follow them in order to be ready to discuss your work in class.

- notes on <u>options discarded</u> or <u>problems noted</u> are necessary in order to decide better on the 'final' choices.
- documentation of problems helps inform later versions of the translation.

It is recommended that student-translators note down – while doing the translation – <u>problems, alternatives, uncertainties or any other thoughts</u> they wish to share with the others and the class. A few key words suffice; comments do not have to be fully phrased out. These notes might include <u>cultural adaptations</u> and/or <u>translations that at first sight seem to be a deviation from the norm but which are purposefully chosen</u>.

What to mention when discussing translation process (you can briefly cover all points below OR focus in a more detailed way on selected ones):

- ***translating meaning*** - translation involves understanding the meaning of the source text and conveying this meaning in the target language <u>with the means of the target language</u>. For example, "a direct translation of 'meet socially' into the German language could even invoke formal events such as a reception, a ball, a speech, etc." and could thus not be in line with the aim of a given translation.

- ***translating connotation***, i.e. associations implied by a word in addition to its referential meaning (e.g., 'thin' vs 'slim'). Please be careful that the translations used do not convey any ambiguous/unintended connotations.

- ***preserving/avoiding ambiguity*** - also syntactical ambiguity - an example: "I really dislike answering machines" could be understood as "I dislike answering" or as "I dislike the machines".

- ***gender issues*** - for example, "[i]n some languages and translations, the masculine form of 'doctors' and 'nurses' can be used to refer to both men and women because it can be used in a generic way. In other languages, one may need to find paraphrases in order to avoid making this item a gender-specific item: for example, 'nursing staff members' could be used as a translation for 'nurses'".

- ***omissions*** - the result of being unsure of the meaning of certain words or phrases should never be the reason for omitting them or not translating them. At the same time, please be aware that not every single word needs to be translated literally.

- ***conjunctions*** ('and', 'or', 'because of' etc.) - these should be rendered carefully in the target text so as to avoid confusion / misunderstanding.

- ***sequence*** - consider carefully in what sequence you present relevant fragments of the translation. The differences between the languages may have a bearing here (e.g., in English, longer items in a sequence frequently go last in the sentence).

- ***clarity and fluency*** - make sure the translation aims at being easy to understand and the reader does not have to put much effort to "catch your drift".

- ***brevity and conciseness*** - do not make your translation unnecessarily long.

- ***consistency*** - be careful to be consistent especially with terminology and key phrases throughout the text.

- additionally, be wary of ***mistranslations*** due to:

a) ***false friends***, e.g. "audition" in English is not Polish "audycja";
b) ***grammar and syntax interference***: e.g., "'Information' is a typical English singular word that often gets translated by a plural noun in other languages", including Polish;
c) dangers of <u>one-to-one</u> equivalence - "'[g]overnment' can have different translations, 'work' can have different translations, 'job' can have different translations";
d) quite obviously <u>avoid careless reading</u> of the source text, glossary and the target draft.

Adapted with quotations from "European Social Survey Round 6 Translation Guidelines".