

**Sight Translating Public Services Linguistic Components English/French/Arabic  
A Descriptive Process with Reference to Health, Legal and Finance Fields**

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**Abstract**

This study uses the descriptive method. The author analyses the suggested data and comes out to interesting evaluations. The analysed examples concern sight translation by investigating its process in English/French/Arabic. The differences in the cultural and linguistic features of the languages of study show that the problems that rise are not real, but may exist due to the linguistic lacunae of the sight translator. The study tries to clarify the ambiguities that emerge from the inadequate use of the methods of sight translation. By so doing, the study forwards guidance to interpreters through the examples and the discussion of the pros and cons. The suggestions try to lessen the revealed problems, provided that sight translation technical tools are not neglected. By investigating the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the examples, the methodology elucidates the reasons of the problems of sight translation. It, also, concludes that sight translation is a type at the same level as that of the other interpreting types. The study forwards some findings that the interpreter should arm himself/herself with to avoid shortcomings related to community interpreting. It also recommends that sight translation programmes should be introduced enhance the cognitive skills of interpreters.

**Key Words:** Sight translation, skills, community interpreting, text, converting.

**1. Introduction**

Since ancient times, people move from place to place looking for food, wealth in form of gold or recently oil or simply for pastures and games, and even wars. These movements were governed by our ability as humans to communicate and be social with others. As humans use writing to communicate and send letters, put documents into the archives, or places of worshipping God, sometimes they need someone to read the concerned document and interpret the content at the same time. Here comes the role of the interpreter to sight translate one of these specific document (See Weber W. K. (1990).

As well, daily life problems, contracts, contacts, meetings etc. call for interpreter once there are more than one language. Therefore, there is a need for translation and interpretation from one language to another. At this level sight translation (ST) appears as a type and a mode.

In case of exchange of views, opinions, medical information, or legal rules and proceedings where there is oral communication, normally simultaneous interpreting is the master of the event. It is a practical type for converting a speech from the SL into the TL. However, its techniques and methods differ from ST, despite the fact that the output in sight translation is similar to it. The author defined interpretation in one of his book entitled: *"Theories, Categories and processes of Translation..."* As follows: *"In the process of interpreting, the interpreter follows spontaneously and simultaneously the speech of a speaker. The first may be in a booth; the latter delivers his address or speech, in front of a public as in political, scientific or press conferences. Sometimes, the interpretation takes place with a written text, and, in other times, he may have some data on the subject treated in the*

*conference or the gathering concerned. This feature links this act of translation to the written one."*(2018)

However, sight translation occupies the scene when there is a text to be read and translated at the same time. This process is going to be developed hereinafter, to see the problems, if any, it has on community interpreting, English/French/Arabic. As well the author will explore strategies and methods that are proper to sight translation.

## **2. Sight Translation**

It is also called 'on sight translation', or 'at sight translation'. However, when it is done from a booth by a simultaneous interpreter who reads, with his eyes, a document and interprets it immediately and instantaneously, it is called 'sight interpreting'. Furthermore, sight translation is concerned with a process between written translation and interpreting or interpretation. The SL, the units of which are transferred in sight translation process, should be always in written; whereas the output is oral: the other language into which the process of translation or interpreting constitutes the TL. The latter is produced by and interpreter as if he/she is doing a simultaneous interpreting, but after reading a text with his/her eyes and reproducing it into a TL in form of speech in the language of the customer or the organizer of the event, either a courtroom, a hospital, a chamber of commerce, a University or any public Institution. So a specific text is converted by an interpreter, while reading it with his/her eyes and conveying it immediately into a TL.

### **2.1. Sight Translation constitutes one of two processes**

#### **2.1.1. A type**

Here when we split and divide interpreting into three major types: (1) simultaneous or instantaneous or immediate or spontaneous interpreting, (2) consecutive interpreting, (3) interpreters count, also, sight as a third type. This third type is our concern here in the present study.

#### **2.1.2. A mode: Sight Interpreting**

It is a modality when practiced in a booth; here the author calls it 'sight Simultaneous interpreting'. As briefly mentioned here-above in the introduction, it is practiced by interpreters from time to time. It is done when a speaker gives his/her speech in written to the interpreters, via or through the Conference Director or the Secretariat of a certain conference before delivering it. Normally, some hours or half an hour before a certain session where this speaker is going to speak. Here the interpreter reads a text which is delivered at the same time as a speech, from a stand in a certain conference, by the speaker who has already given this speech to him/her as interpreter. The interpreter converts the text 'speech' and sight translate it in oral as if it is received through headsets or receivers and reproduced in oral simultaneously through a microphone from, in general, a soundproof booth. For the author, this kind of sight translation is a mode and is called 'sight interpreting' and not 'sight translation' due to the existence of the simultaneous mode, produced in the booth in form of output of the read text. This process makes 'sight translation' a mode: it is combined with simultaneous interpreting. As well, this latter shifts from a type to be a modality and becomes, also, a mode due to the duality with sight translation, in the oral reproduction step. In other words, the difference between 'sight translation' and 'sight interpreting' is that the former is a type while the latter is a mode. The target audience follows a speech as if it is done simultaneously. The interpreter, the Conference Director and the other booth-mate interpreters know that this interpreting process is done through sight mode, despite its being simultaneous for the customer or the audience. Nevertheless, once the interpreter puts away the sheet of the speech and interprets immediately or simultaneously the speech, the process becomes one hundred percent (100%) simultaneous interpreting, which is a major type of conference translation.

### **2.2. Principles of Sight Translation**

It is composed of three principles:

- Have a written translation mental analysis in the SL, or a written document to read
- Understand and convert the meaning of the read document into the TL, verbally or orally.
- Verbalise the memorised idea into the TL, where the output demands certain cognitive skills that are different from that of reading skills.

The important issue to understand here is that sight translation helps in the following:

1. The development of rapid understanding.
2. The disclosing of the places of weaknesses in the translated units in the TL, by comparing the output to the source or original text.
3. The consideration of sight translation as a preparation step or prerequisite exercise to other types, modes and techniques of interpretation, in particular, to simultaneous interpreting which requires high interpreting and mental qualities.

### **2.3. Requirement of Sight Translation**

It requires from the interpreter to have:

1. A deep and good knowledge about the text to translate.
2. Linguistic and cultural knowledge of the concerned languages: the SL and the TL. The interpreter should have a deep background that enable him/her to carry out the translation mission.
3. Full understanding of the SL text according to the content and not the words that compose it. Otherwise, the output will be literal. Of course, the interpreter has to have a package of terms that enable him/her to eliminate the unrequired meaning by the context. As well, he/she should have the ability to understand the terminologies of the SL, and be able to replace them adequately and decode the SL text in best way, that will yield in a good translation in TL.
4. The ability to understand the SL text and to reproduce it in the TL. The ability to read a text in the SL, understands it and translate it orally at the same time: spontaneously in a TL.

### **3. Community Interpreting**

This type is also called public service interpreting (PSI) or social service interpreting (Bowen M. 2000). It concerns many public institutions such as hospitals, courtrooms etc. where sight translation is a necessity to save a sick person from death, a suspected one from prison etc. These institutions are owned by the governments which means by the citizens so are called public institutions or community Institutions. The interpretation process that run there is called community interpreting. Many public institutions such as courts, hospitals, prisons, any public institutions, International, regional and local conferences, etc. are places where people of different languages may meet. Sometimes, for instance, in national courts, sight translation is present due to the fact that an interpreter may read a text and sight translate it into another language to make a defendant or a plaintiff understands the issue it contains. The need for a sight translator is a must is die to fact that in these mentioned above public Institutions there may be immigrants or low linguistic aptitudes persons who need sight translation.

#### **3.1. Community Interpreting Skills**

There are skills needed to interpret some sentences at a public service facility, for instance a hospital. In case of interpreting to a physician or practitioner sentences of a sick person, the interpreter or the escorting translator should have some skills such as:

a) Linguistic ability to communicate with others.

- Within this linguistic skill, the interpreter should have the skill of questioning the concerned person to whom he/she is interpreting.
- To have the ability to answer questions and develop a dialogue.
- To master the four language skills which are: listening, speaking, reading, etc.

- To have the cultural knowledge about the client and the customer: for instance, the sick person and the physician.

4. To know the culture of the area of the where sight translation is needed.

5. All other interpersonal skills necessitated by the language and the interpretation process, such as fluency, dependability, intelligence, patience, good attitude, etc.

That is why interpreters and translators were trained to have documentation about the subject matter of any process of interpretation to do: culture, terminology, country of the conference, the speakers and their accent, and in case of sight translation the topics and ideas of concerned document to sight translate.

The interpreter should also know how to manage his/her time for the benefit of the employer, or the physician, or the judge and the third party who is the sick person, or the employee or the accused or suspected person who is supposed to have linguistic deficiency in communicating with the milieu where he/she lives, or with other the party. In case of the sick person the other party will be the physician or the practitioner, and the judge or the lawyer in case of legal field.

#### **4. Background**

As sight translation is a hybrid process that engages translation and interpreting, plus the need for reading and phonological skills, many scholars in Europe and in other parts of the world have stated principles and techniques for conducting each of them separately, as well, as in case of duet or double process. The latter process is witnessed in sight translation process. In fact, there are scholar such as Nida (1945), in the USA, Newmark (1986), Catford (1987) in the UK who says that in written translation, the problem is at the level of the convention. It is a problem of transliteration between the Arabic and the English languages. In the previous literature of translation, we also find in France, Mounin G. (1963), forward, even, theories on translation that helped translators to fulfil their job.

In interpreting, as well, some researches were conducted on sight translation, part of them were empirical which tackled the training of interpreters in ST, (Weber W. K. 1990). By the ends of 1999s and the 2000s. Bowen M. (2000), achieved an empirical study on sight translation with regard to other modes and public services interpreting (PSI). Lambert S. (2004) conducted studies on a comparison between sight translation and consecutive interpreting and simultaneous interpreting. Agrifoglio Marjorie (2004) accomplished a similar study to that of Lambert, where the results showed that sight translation is not less complicated than consecutive interpreting or simultaneous interpreting. Other studies treated the role of the professional interpreter without making any comparison between sight translation and the other types of interpreting. Some studies focused on other types of interpreting discussing the levels of interpreting as modes. In the same line, Nolan J. (2005) and Corsellis A. (2008), made, separately, studies, on interpreting. The former on interpretation techniques in the USA, the latter on public service interpreting tackling the development, the role and expertise of sight translators showing the responsibilities and finished the study by making emphasis on the management and policy to take as regard to the (PSI).

The author, in one of his articles, made a rapid comparison of sight translation, as a mode, with other types of interpreting, mentioning the method of its fulfilment (2020). In another study the author pointed out that sight translation may be present in a booth, also, as a mode where an interpreter may read a written speech following a speaker who is delivering the same speech from a rostrum or platform or a podium in an international conference. However, the strategies and methods of developing the present topic and subject differ from the previous studies in the analysis. As well, this study focuses on the three languages of the study suggesting the process to take, the procedures and technique to apply to come out to good results on the level of the grammars, cultures and phonologies of the three concerned languages. It makes the link between sight translation and community interpreting is that those who live in a community other than those of its origin may need to communicate with responsible people of the new community in which they may find themselves as

refugees, immigrants, people in asylum. In France the term covers even the so-called 'the second generation, in French *'la deuxième génération'*, which means the first children or generation of the immigrants who are expected to know the language of their country of birth. Here intervenes the role of the sight translator when there are documents to sight translate to the concerned person of the community. The communication will be verbal, so a sight translator or an interpreter is, highly, needed. This study is concerned with the written communication which may be at any public service. Examples will be given here under in the three languages of study. The methodology applied shows the difference with previous studies.

### **5. Pros and Cons of Sight Interpreting**

Sight translation may have advantages and disadvantages. Seeing them closely may permit future interpreters and trainee sight translators to be at the peak of a verbal process such as sight translation.

#### **5.1. Pros**

Any sight translator should have a text beforehand. He/she can think over the meaning of the terms and the idea of this given text. So, the output in form of oral sentences is, supposed to be, easier than the other types of interpretations, such as the simultaneous one.

As students were trained to apply the four skills of any language, so I sight translation, using them or those of reading and pronunciation, despite the differences compared to interpreting, is beneficial for the interpreter.

The sight translator will find himself/herself before two modes. That is to say a process which begins with translation methods and should finish with verbal interpreting skill. This movement from sight translation skills and to interpreting skills, seems also beneficial for the work. Because it creates diversity and change of skills. In case one skill is weak the other one will cover on it. Although the weaknesses may jeopardise the whole operation, the interpreter should work on his talent and deviate this, supposed, weakness to make it a point of strength. Thus, the sight translator is before two different skills: Reading skills, as well as phonological skills; and at the completion of the process he/she will be exploiting speaking and interpreting skills.

The sight translator has to grasp a quick full understanding of the idea and content of the text to convert in the TL.

In the process of sight translation, there is a difference in the cognitive skills necessary in the output (the oral mode) compared to that of the input (reading process) which is mixed with the interpreting skill. This mental movement of reading necessitates that the sight interpreter be of what the author calls a 'shifting memory': That shifts from one level and mode to others, those of simultaneous interpreters and sight translators.

Despite the errors that may occur in sight translation, it is as a vessel that functions at the same level as other type of interpreting.

As the sight translator executes two operations of translation at the same time, and as he/she has the text before his/her eyes, the process is expected to yield in a good process of translation.

The interpreter is not bound to adopt interpreting techniques regarding the tone or the rapidity or the speed of a certain speaker as he/she is the controller of that according to the speed of his/her reading of the text. In consecutive interpreting or simultaneous interpreting the interpreter is governed by the speed and tone of the speaker.

#### **5.2. Cons**

The client should expect human error, in case of hiring a non-specialised interpreter. This point is clear in every profession if invaded by non-specialists. In some countries, many people confuse the profession of interpreting with that of translation, despite the light curtain that separates them. As well, there is a big confusion of sight translation with the English language speaking skill. Many think that if you speak English you may interpret any speech or sight translate any text! This is not

true. Each discipline has its own specifications and aims. The present study develops themes on that sense.

Sight translation as all the types of translation and interpreting suffers from literal translation during sight translating an English text into Arabic or French as well as into any other language.

The bad deliverance or non-sufficient transferring of the content of the SL text into the TL text results in defamatory content and maybe a dangerous one in case of working in a courtroom or a hospital. Because the result of giving misleading translation in such Institutions will, definitely, results in a catastrophic TL verbal translation.

Of the cons of sight translation, one counts the inaccuracy due to common mistakes. This as well be pointed out hereunder, will also lead to grave results that may put in danger the works or lives of others.

An aspect that causes disadvantages regarding sight translation is the inability of the sight translator to avoid confusing the adequate equivalent with the 'false fiends', in French '*faux amis*'. Or his/her choice of an equivalent in the TL which is not the suitable one, so, the whole sentence, and consequently, the entire idea will be hindered and jeopardised.

Another item of the cons of sight translation, is to consider it as a normal exercise of reading. This type of thinking about sight translation leads to cognitive results that may be negative for the process of sight translation and converting the text in the TL.

The bad fluency, the tone and intonation of the sight translator will render the output or the translation in a misleading form. The sight translator may be a smart person but his/her way of pronouncing the translation in TL may jeopardise all the efforts don by him/her.

A certain unqualified interpreter may transform the process of sight translation in a simple written or machine translation processes by demanding to translate the text using a paper dictionary or to consult google translate for instance. Then, he/she reproduces the written text, has it on a sheet of paper and comes and reads it to the client. This action renders the process a simple act of written translation. In sight translation there is no room for asking for more time and consulting a dictionary to sight translate a text.

Similarly, there is no time granted to the sight translator to read and write the text in the SL or the TL then comes and rereads it to the client or the audience. This will make the process as a consecutive translation process and not sight translation process.

Therefore, if all these disadvantages, and the like, are avoided the process of sight translation will be executed smoothly and professionally.

## **6. Methodology**

This study uses the descriptive method. It analyses the sight translation process by investigating it in English/French and Arabic languages suggested examples. Considering sight translation as just an act of reading a text diminishes its methods and purposes. For this reason, this research targets to clear this confusion and aims to point out that sight translation is a real sort of interpreting that has two characteristics which make it a type and a modality. Thus it plays a major role in the interpreting processes in community interpreting or (PSI). Thus, the study will try to clarify the ambiguities that may emerge from the methods and the process of sight translation. The study will, also through the methodology, describe methods and techniques and will point out that they are beneficial to interpretation in general, and to sight translation in particular. By so doing, the study forwards guidance to interpreters and freelance interpreters by analysing the pros and cons and the process of sight translation, through some simple demonstrative examples in English/French/Arabic. The suggestions and conclusion lessen the problems revealed by some given examples that may rise from the work of an untrained sight interpreter, provided that the technical tools of sight translation are not completely neglected. This analysis may be avoided by the expert interpreter, so these mistakes and errors are not labels to stick on every sight translation interpreter.

One of the problems that encounter the interpreter from the beginning of the process of sight translation is that the skills needed at the start are:

- a) Those of written translation and reading, then,
- b) The process passes by those of consecutive interpreting, by memorising instantly the meaning of the units read, and
- c) Finishes by that of simultaneous interpreting.

Sight translation, as defined by the author here-above is an act of rendering a written text into a verbal one by the methods of sight translation: The interpreter has to read a text with his/her eyes and reproduces it orally and immediately into the TL. This complicated status, as stated by the author here-above, makes the sight translation process having two methods: That of written translation and the other is relevant to interpreting. That is why, this study aims to give random examples to determine to what extent the passage from one language to another may be simple, by the outside, may a very complicated process in its essence, that necessitate training, skills, amiability and flexibility in reading and in impersonal skills as well as in those of interpreting. The final purpose is to provide the reader and the sight translator with the methods, techniques and strategies of sight translation that will enable him/her to carry out the job confined to him/her in the best manner. Thus, the sight translator, by following these humble examples and what they demonstrate, may be able to choose the best new methods linked the globalization culture and the e-services, and the e-governments that are in need of sight translation services in public Institutions, whatsoever the device of the SL is. It may be electronic and not a sheet of paper. Knowing the methods, the pros and cons, the analytical methodology the sight translator will manage the situation and fulfil, perfectly, the duty.

The methodology used in this study aims at: (1) to determine the status of the methods of sight translation and their fitness to the needs of the client, and how they are still used in the profession and not deviated to simple grammatical rule; and (2) discuss the amenability and effectiveness of these methods in English/French/Arabic.

Further researches may use empirical studies and instrument to measure certain information and data to be collected through investigating descriptive examples based on quantitative and qualitative data obtain from about six to ten determined sight translators. The purpose should be to see the effect through tangible results.

In a way or another the approach of the present study sets out hereinafter targets to giving answers to the study questions raised herein in connection with sight translation.

### **7. Study Questions**

- What are the challenges and problems the interpreter encounters while sight translating a text?
- How the relationship between written translation and sight translation could be developed for the benefit of the interpreter and sight translation?
- Can the methods of written translation be the only of use during the process of sight translation or should the interpreter have recourse to interpretation strategies and techniques to fulfil the job?
- What will happen in case the interpreter of drops the rules of translation and replaces them by literal translation ones during a sight translation process as stated in this study?
- What are the results to obtain when the interpreter focuses, only, on interpreting methods at sight translation processes?
- Is sight translation going to be replaced by sight interpreting or is it going to continue keeping its appropriate methods and techniques in community interpreting or PSI?

### **8. Discussion**

In the coming section the author will treat sight translation in the light of the translation and interpreting techniques and methods.

For so doing, the author will develop and describe the themes that results from this process governed by two pillars:

- a) The qualities of the interpreter. That is to say, is he/she trained enough to fulfil the job or is he/she a professional, an amateur, a volunteer of the concerned public service or a freelancer?
- b) The context of the public institution in which the translation is done. To be more precise, let us say, for instance, are the premises of a certain service, such as courts, where the process is done, the text and the whole environment respond to the requirements of the job?

To develop and explore such an issue, the author will give examples on the linguistic and translation problems that may rise once the interpreter is faced and jeopardised in his/her work while he/she is sight translating a text.

## 9. Sight Interpreting and Community Interpreting

The examples given hereunder are imaginary, invented by the author to explain the deviations that may hinder sight translation work. These examples concern three fields: Health, the legal, and finance fields.

Generally speaking, the problems of sight translation that may rise refer to the translation done in the public institutions such as courts and the buildings or premises of the legal field, police stations, health institutions such as hospitals, banks or sea ports where there are contacts with people coming from all over the world, etc. There may be a problem to sight translate a text with equivalent units that differ from language to language and/or from one culture to another of the three languages of study. Here are some examples of the problems that the interpreter may encounter while interpreting in some major public services:

### 9.1. Sight Translation and Lexical Problems of Texts in the Field of Health

#### 9.1.1. Lexical problems

Let us take random and imaginary examples, For instance

The following written English sentence:

- Take a spoon of this syrup at lunch and before going to bed!

In French, the sight translator has to focus on the size of the spoon, even not specified in the English sentence:

- 'cuillère à soupe', the big spoon, and 'cuillère à café', the small one.

In the Arabic language, the sight translator should differentiate between, what we may call a big 'spoon' and small one, in general:

- 'ملعقة صغيرة' / ml 'agt saġiraṭi/ و 'ملعقة كبيرة' / ml 'agt kabiraṭi/

Without these distinctions which refer to the culture of each of the three languages, there may be harm. Imagine that a patient takes a 'cuillère à soupe' which is a big one instead of a 'cuillère à café', he/she may have dangerous side effects due to the inadequate term given by the sight translator.

Example 2:

The same comments can be said as regard to the tablets, and pills, or medicines in general. Here the problem is not the size of the device used to take a medication or drugs, but rather the kind or type related to them.

In the Arabic language, many people use the equivalents of the words 'pill', 'tablet' etc. to denote all the type of medicine taken or swallowed either a pill, capsule or tablet, and say: 'حبة' /ḥabbaṭi /; instead of specifying if it is a 'pill', 'كبسولة' /kabswlaṭi/ and 'tablet' 'قرص' /qurṣi/.

The problems may be grammatical.

#### 9.1.2. Grammatical Problems

These problems are related to the place of the verb and the predicate, and that of the adj. etc.

It may appear as a simple idea to speak of the words order in a sentence. However, the eye-tracking and passing from language to language the place of a verb creates literal translation, if not respected, in the Arabic language. E.g. If the sight translator, professional or amateur, has the following, imaginary, text to translate into French and Arabic the result will explain the idea of the author according to the translation process and theories.

**a) In the English Language**

*'The doctor's prescription specifies to take one pill per day; to swallow it, with a full glass of water. Then, to take a large glass of tea, sugar free, or at least with two pieces.'*

**b) In the French Language**

*'L'ordonnance du médecin précise de prendre une pilule par jour. De l'avalier avec un grand verre d'eau. Puis, de prendre un grand verre de thé sans sucre ou, à la rigueur, avec deux morceaux.'*

The English imaginary text written by the author maybe of the same word number compared to the French translation, similar order and, of course, the same alphabet, despite the differences in the pronunciation of the words in the two European languages. It is known that the English language is Germanic, and the French is a Roman language, like the Spanish and the Italian languages. Nevertheless, the sight translation process, due to the eye-tracking of the text, is easier compared to that in case of the Arabic language which is written from the right to the left and is considered as a Semitic language.

**c) In the Arabic Language**

The example given in the English language necessitate some analysis. The sight translation may yield a text like the following, given hereunder. It is obvious as we stated here above, that the output in sight translation is oral. However, the author gives here above and hereunder a written text to show the possible shortcomings, potential mistakes and the expected errors. These mistakes which are the most frequent, grammatical or lexical, could be evaluated later by the reader and the sight translator or interpreter, in consequently, may be lessened or avoided by him/her.

وصفة الطبيب (روثة) تحدد تناول حبة واحدة في اليوم. ابتلعها مع كوب كامل من الماء. ثم خذ كوبًا كبيراً من الشاي بدون سكر أو على الأقل بقطعتين منه.

First: The many of translators begin an Arabic sentence with the same order as that of an English sentence. This is, may be, an effect from the journalism field: e.g.

- *The doctor's prescription specifies ...*

- وصفة الطبيب تحدد

While it is preferable in the Arabic language to start with the verb as follows:

- تحدد وصفة الطبيب ...

**Second:** The part of the sentence '*... with a full glass of water*', may be ambiguous in the Arabic language. According to the context it should be clear: no one will swallow a glass.

The English preposition 'with', rendered in the French language by 'avec', is to denote how to 'use' and not to express the idea of 'accompanied with' '*L'accompagnement*'.

In the Arabic language the sight translator has to be precise and uses the adequate equivalent to the English units: '*using a full glass of water*', by the use of the term 'مستعملاً' /must'milan/. Or he/she uses the Arabic preposition 'ب' and say 'بكوب' /bikwb/ and not 'مع كوب' /m'kwb/. thus the mentioned Arabic preposition will not be ambiguous in all contexts.

**9.2. Teaching Sight Translation and the Legal Field**

Generally speaking, without making the present study as descriptive or empirical or conducted upon investigation in courtrooms, it is known that there are legal errors in sight translations in some courtrooms or police interrogation locations. These errors may be designated as due to lack of training or lacunae in one of the working languages of translators and interpreters. Whoever, the

author will presume that the sight translator is aware of his/her career and tackles the given text with profession. Despite the good will the sight translation of documents in the courtrooms, and the judiciary Departments points out some linguistic and translation shortcomings similar to those explained in the previous section on the health field.

### 9.2.1. The Errors and Linguistic Mistakes Due to:

- a) Language deficiency and gaps in knowledge about the legal system.
- b) Inability to communicate regarding the concerned persons who are present in court.
- c) Literal translations, as demonstrated in the problems that may appear in health field, given as examples here-above in this study. The sight translator has to focus on the nominalization and verbalization issue in each language, mainly in the Arabic language, and not to follow the word order of the SL or that of the TL. Each language has its specific means and methods of expression and communication.
- d) The false friends that may exist while converting a text through sight translation into the TL.
- e) The intervention of different witnesses, the legal proceedings, the cross-examination sessions, or the legal procedures etc.

### 9.2.2. Problems of Translating Fixed Phrases

E.g. words such as: Act – law, regulations, rules, etc. have to be managed with high care by the sight translator. They have narrow synonyms, mainly in Arabic. As well, words such as: 'Accused', 'suspect', 'condemned' and 'criminal' have different meanings and don't constitute a synonymous relationship.

Other terms such as: 'verdict', 'sentence', 'jailed', 'arrested', should also be treated with close attention. It worth mentioning that there are terms related to the American English. Some have different meanings other than those found in the British English.

On the grammatical level, some devices such as 'shall', have specific usages. There is no obligation in the use of 'shall' in sentences like:

'The court shall hear the parties on Monday.'

In the section of advocacy, there are sentences and expression described as Fixed phrases' or in French 'expressions figées' or in Arabic: 'تعايير اصطلاحية أو جامدة'.

Examples are:

- **In the field of the Judiciary and Advocacy:**
  - a) Before me I, X, judge of the court...
  - b) In witness whereof, ... thereof ...
  - c) Advocate and commissioner for oaths ... Notary public ....
- 'Given under my hand on ...'; which means under my signature'
- I the undersigned ...'.

In the eastern Arabic States, one uses the following fixed expression:

'أنا الموقع أدناه'.

Which is a suitable equivalent.

However, an Arabic expression used in Syria, according to their local culture gives the following:

- أنا الموقع بذيله

Literally, this expression gives in English: 'I who signed with my tail (his tail)'. Which is a meaningless translation.

And in French: '*Moi qui a signé avec ma queue (sa queue).*'

It should be understood that the signature is at the bottom of the page. So 'بذيله' is an expression referring to the page, as the footnotes. Signature done at 'بأسفل الصفحة' the bottom.

- In French : 'en foi de quoi'; 'lu et approuvé...' etc.

To convert such expressions, the sight translator has to look for the equivalent and the fixed expression in the TL.

### 9.3. Sight Translation and the Field of Finance and Economics

It worth mentioning that all the problems in this field may relate to figures and terminologies, as well as grammatical and cultural.

One important example extracted from the daily life expressions is the translation of the following, imaginary example:

#### 9.3.1. Problems of Translating Grammatical Conjunction 'and':

1. In English:

'The one billion dollars and which has not yet been paid back, is not registered in the book of account.'

2. In French:

*'Le milliard de dollars et qui n'est pas encore remboursé, n'est pas enregistré dans le cahier des comptes'.*

As known in English and French grammars, 'and', and its equivalent in French 'et', are used as conjunctions and to indicate that there are things to be added or as an inclusive device.

The sight translator has to be very aware of these grammatical use of the conjunctions as well as of the other rules of grammar as, briefly spoken of by the author here-above. In fact, in Arabic, a sight translator may convert the previous English sentence of the field of finance as follows:

المليار دولار المبلغ المحول والذي لم يسدد بعد لم يسجل في دفتر الحسابات.

The underlined term raises the problem of shortcoming in the daily life Arabic translation. Almost everybody precedes the relative pronoun 'الذي' /aladi/ in the modern Arabic language, by a 'واو' /waw/ the equivalent of 'and', in English. In fact, this changes completely the meaning of the sentence. Once there is 'واو' /waw/ (and) in the Arabic sight translated sentence or unit, there will be a new meaning: as if one speaks of two billion dollars: one transferred as stated in the beginning of the English example given here-above, and another caused by the 'واو' /waw/ (and) due to a misleading translation in Arabic. Thus, the back translation process of the Arabic sentence will be as follows:

'The one billion dollars and the other which has not yet been paid back, is not registered in the book of account.

So, the sight translator has to be careful as regard to:

- a) The writing system of the languages engaged.
- b) The Grammar.
- c) The legal system.
- d) The medical ethics and system of his/her working languages.
- e) The cultures of his/her working languages.
- f) All his/her working languages fields not mentioned here as examples but he/she has to deal with.

#### 10. Findings and Recommendations

- Deep linguistic knowledge and cultural background helps the interpreter in sight translating public services texts.
- When the translation process concerns sight translation which engages written translation and interpreting techniques, there are problems related to grammar, lexis and terminologies as well as the culture of the concerned languages.
- Good training of interpreters to sight translate different types of texts will help in community interpreting.
- Rich memory of the interpreter related to the major fields of his/her working languages will help in real situations of sight translation.
- The interpreter has to avoid translation methods such as rewriting the text in the SL and reading

it to the client.

- Errors and mistakes of an interpreter in some fields as shown here-above can be fatal.
- The languages of the same alphabet are somewhat easy to sight translate from one to the other, compared to those of different alphabets.
- Languages of the same family will be easier to sight translate.
- To sight translate a text in the Arabic language requires from the interpreter to have a deep knowledge of its grammar, mainly the place of the verb, that of the adjective etc.
- Some false fiends in the French language may produce a catastrophic result as seen here-above.
- The same term may cover, in a given language, a series of ideas. So, the interpreter has to know that synonyms have degrees of differences in meanings. Consequently, the result, as a choice of preferring one term over another, should be merely scientific governed by the context and not due to the form of the word.

### **11. Suggested Solutions**

1. Those who work in community interpreting locations should either be sight translators or those who accept to receive, at least non-exclusive training on the skills and techniques of interpreting in general and in on sight translation, in particular.
2. The interpreter should be part linguist: to know at least three languages.
3. The interpreter should, also, have the ability to read, with the eyes and reproduce orally a speech simultaneously, with high professionalism.
4. While reading a text with the eyes, as mentioned here above, the interpreter has to respect the rules of grammar and words order of the SL and that of the TL.
5. In case the Arabic language is the TL, the eye-tracking of the sight interpreter has to look for the verb in the English language. Then to decide to begin the Arabic version, with a verb in case of the verbal sentences, or the noun, in the nominal ones.
6. This dual operation where a combination of two different languages, may be of different origins involves different rules of grammar, deliverance speed, tone, register etc. In consequence, different skills should be present or we will have a bad input which means a bad translation in the TL.
7. Avoid literal translations, such as those seen in the health field section here-above or the foxed expression in the legal field.
8. In respect of human rights, and as the community or public services interpreting concerns immigrants or citizen who cannot express themselves in their mother tongue or a foreign language, trained professional interpreters should be appointed in the major important public services where communication in some languages in potential and community interpreting is necessary, e.g. courts, maritime and sea ports and hospitals.

### **12. Conclusion**

The difference in the alphabet of the studied languages, the literal translations, the false fiends or 'Faux amis', the fixed expressions and phrases, the problems of over-translation and the other translation and interpreting techniques all participate in the lacunae of the process of ST. The study concludes that sight translation could enhance the linguistic skills of trainee interpreters once introduced in the programmes of colleges and schools of interpreting.

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<sup>i</sup>- The international standard ISO 233 establishes a system for Romanization of Arabic. It has been supplemented by ISO 233-2 in 1993