

# 7 TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES TO FACILITATE YOUR WORK

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Let's talk about translation techniques. Just as there are different types of translation and different methods of translation, there are different techniques of translation.

What is the difference between a translation method and a technique? It is quite simple: a translation method is applied to the entire text to be translated, while a translation technique may vary within the same text on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific verbal elements to be translated. The classical taxonomy of translation procedures dates back to 1958, thanks to the work of J. P. Vinay and J. Darbelnet. It consists of seven categories:

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## 1. BORROWING

Borrowing is a translation technique that involves using in the target text the same word or expression found in the original text. The word or expression borrowed is usually written in italics. This is about reproducing an expression in the original text as is. You might say that it is a translation technique that does not actually translate...

Example: The gaucho was wearing a black sombrero and a worn bombacha.

## 2. CALQUE

When translators use a calque, they are creating or using a neologism in the target language by adopting the structure of the source language.

Example: The German word handball is translated into Spanish as balonmano. Or the English term skyscraper is gratte-ciel in French or rascacielos in Spanish.

## 3. LITERAL TRANSLATION

A literal translation is a metaphor. This means a word-for-word translation, achieving a text in the target language which is as correct as it

is idiomatic. According to Vinay and Darbelnet, a literal translation can only be applied with languages extremely close in cultural terms. It is acceptable only if the translated text retains the same syntax, the same meaning and the same style as the original text.

Example: Quelle heure est-il ? ⇒ What time is it?

#### 4. TRANSPOSITION

Transposition involves moving from one grammatical category to another without altering the meaning of the text. This translation technique introduces a change in grammatical structure.

Example: The President thinks that ⇒ Selon le Président

#### 5. MODULATION

Modulation is about changing the form of the text by introducing a semantic change or perspective.

Example: Maybe you're right. ⇒ Tu n'as peut-être pas tort.

#### 6. EQUIVALENCE

This is a translation technique that implies using a completely different expression to reformulate and transmit the same reality. Through this technique, names of institutions, interjections, idioms or proverbs can be translated.


Example: Chat échaudé craint l'eau froide. ⇒ Once burned, twice shy.

#### 7. ADAPTATION

Adaptation, also called cultural substitution or cultural equivalent, is a cultural element that substitutes the original text with one that is better suited to the culture of the target language. This results in a more familiar and comprehensive text.

Example: baseball (US culture) ⇒ football (France culture)

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