

**COURSE
GUIDE**

**FRE 301
INTRODUCTION TO TRANSLATION**

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UNIT 1 DEFINITION OF TRANSLATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Definition of Translation
 - 3.1 Definition of Terms in translation
 - 3.1.1 *Thème* and *Version*
 - 3.2 Steps in translating
 - 3.2.2 Re-expression
 - 3.3 *Faux amis*
- 3.4 Self exercise
- 3.5 The need for good dictionaries
- 3.6 Computers and the internet
- 4.0 Conclusion
 - 4.1 Answers
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-marked assignment
- 7.0 References and other resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit introduces you to translation. You will read general notions or ideas on translation. You will learn the definition of translation and some basic terms in translation. Thus, you will learn some words that are related to translation.

2.0 Objectives

On the successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- define and explain what translation is
- define and explain what *langue cible* is
- define and explain what *langue source* is
- define and explain what *thème* and *version* are
- explain what literal translation is
- identify and explain what *faux amis* are
- give some examples of translations that are not word for word.

You will now appreciate the meaning of translation from a clearer perspective.

3.0 What is Translation ?

Translation deals with the transfer of a message from one language into another. In this course, the two languages involved are English and French. Catford, an English linguist and author of *A Linguistic Theory of Translation* (1965) defines translation as the “the replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language)”.

Two other well-known translators, Eugene Nida and Charles Taber, provide the following definition:

Translating consists of reproducing, in the target language the nearest equivalent to the message in the source language, in the first place in the semantic aspect and in the second place, in the stylistic aspect.

J. P. Vinay and J. Darbelnet give a rather simple definition: “le passage d’une langue A à une langue B pour exprimer une même réalité”. (“the passage of language A into language B to express an identical reality”).

Note that you translate a message or a text and NOT a language. Language is however the tool for translation. You go further to learn other basic terms in translation.

3.1 Definition of Translation Terms

Langue source and Langue cible

The source language (SL) or *langue source* is the language of the original text. The target language (TL) or *langue cible* is the language into which you translate the message. For instance, if the text is from French to English, French becomes *la langue source* (LS) and English *la langue cible* (LC). You may also use *langue de départ* (LD) to mean *langue source*. *Langue d'arrivée* (LA) has the same meaning with *langue cible*.

In order to be able to translate, you will need a good grasp of the two languages in question. That is one major reason you should take this course very seriously. If you master English and French, translation will not be a problem to you.

The definition provided by Nida and Taber shows that there are two major aspect of translation: the semantic aspect and the stylistic aspect. The semantic aspect simply refers to the meaning while the stylistic aspect points to the style. Style means the manner in which the author has written the text.

In translation, there are some very basic terms that you have to know. You should know the terms in English and their French equivalents. Note that as a student translator, you should be proficient in the two languages. When you write and speak two languages fairly well, you are called a bilingual person (*un bilingue*) Happily, bilinguals who are translators are in high demand and are highly paid.

3.1.1 *Thème and Version*

In some countries where teachers teach in their mother tongue, students translate from their mother tongue into the foreign language and vice versa. When you translate a text from your mother tongue into a foreign language, the translation exercise is known as *le thème*. But it is called *la version*, if you translate into your mother tongue from a foreign language.

To be able to translate properly you will need to know some steps that could guide you.

3.2 Steps in Translation

3.2.1 Reading and Comprehension

Translation involves some basic steps. The first step is your ability to read the text very well. You can only translate a text successfully if you can read it well. Of course, mere reading well is not enough. Good translation presupposes good comprehension. In other words, you can only translate what you understand. Understanding the text is very crucial to a good translation.

3.2.2 Re-expression

The final stage is re-expression or encoding. That is the stage of the actual translation. This implies that you can read and understand the text very well. Verify difficult words and tenses and cultural implications. Thereafter, you start the actual translation. That is to say you re-express or encode the message in another language.

Note that translation is an act of communication where you convey a message from one language into another. If you translate wrongly, two things are likely to happen:

1. you may communicate a wrong message
2. you may not be communicating at all.

Here are a few examples of wrong translations. You will study them under *faux amis*.

3.3 *Faux amis*

Read the following sentence

“I am going to the *library* to read”

The correct translation is “Je vais à la *bibliothèque* pour lire»

The tendency is for some students to translate « library » as *librairie*. Thus, some students may say “Je vais à la *librairie* pour lire ». That will be an erroneous translation. *Librairie* means bookshop in English. The temptation to use *librairie* is due to the visual similarity in the two words – *librairie* (in French) and library (in English). They do not, however, mean the same thing. There are many such words, or expressions in English and French. They may have a similar form, but they mean entirely different things. Such words are called “*faux amis*” or “false friends”.

Below is another example of *faux amis*.

May God bless you

The right translation is

Que Dieu vous bénisse or Que Dieu te bénisse

Here again, there is tendency to translate “bless” by using the French word “blessier”. *Blessier* in French means “to hurt”. So if you translate “May God bless you” as “*Que Dieu vous blesse*”, you will be saying an entirely different thing. You will be asking God to hurt the person you are praying for. So your prayer becomes a curse!

Read two more *faux amis* below

Le magasin	means	shop and NOT magazine
Eventuellement	means	possibly, should the occasion arise
		It does not mean eventually.

These two examples should make you to realize the need to ensure good translation.

3.4 Self-exercise

Translate the following sentences into French.

1. God has blessed this man
2. It is a store

3.5 The need for good dictionaries

In order to understand a text fully, you may have to consult good dictionaries from time to time. You look up for difficult words or expressions in the dictionaries. You may also verify the meaning of words that are not entirely new.

When you are in doubt as regards spelling or gender, you have recourse to a dictionary.

You need not only monolingual dictionaries, but also bilingual ones. A monolingual dictionary is a dictionary where the author or authors define the words in the same language. A bilingual dictionary involves two different languages e.g. French and English. It is advisable for you to have at least three good dictionaries:

- (1) an entirely English dictionary (*un dictionnaire unilingue anglais*)
- (2) a bilingual English-French Dictionary.
- (3) A unilingual French Dictionary (*un dictionnaire unilingue français*)

There is need, however, for you to be careful in the use of dictionaries. Good dictionaries give several options for the same word. You have to choose the right option in the light of the context.

3.6 Computers and the Internet

Computers and the Internet too can be very useful. Make good use of your computer, if you are computer-literate. Use computer and internet translations with caution. They often produce very bad translations but they offer relevant equivalent terms in isolation.

You may also need other documents such as encyclopedias and glossaries. As you make good use of these materials, your knowledge of French will improve rapidly.

4.0 Conclusion

In this unit, you have learnt what translation is. You can define translation in English and French. You have also learnt some important terms in translation. You know the steps in translation and the importance of dictionaries and other documents. You also know what *faux amis* are.

4.1 Answers to Self-exercise

1. Dieu a béni cet home
2. Il est dans un magasin

or

Il se trouve dans un magasin

5.0 Summary

This unit has equipped you with the basic steps in translation. You can readily identify some reasons why you need to translate correctly.

The knowledge you have acquired in this unit will be very helpful for the remaining units of the course. Read this unit over and over again and get all the facts at your finger tips.

6.0 Tutor-marked assignment

1. Define translation
2. What are langue source and langue cible?
3. What are the steps towards a good translation?
4.
 - a) Define *faux amis*
 - b) Give two examples of *faux amis* in English and French
5. Why do we need dictionaries while translating?

7.0 References

Nida, E. (1964) : *Towards a Science of Translating*. J. Breiden, Leiden.

Van, Hoof, H. (1989): *Traduire de l'anglais, théorie et pratique*, Paris : Editions Ducolot.

Vinay, J. P et Darbelnet, J. (1958) : *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, Paris : Didier Erudition.

UNIT 2

TECHNIQUES OF TRANSLATION

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Techniques of Translation
3.1	<i>La Traduction Directe</i>
3.2	<i>La Traduction Indirecte</i>
3.3	<i>La Traduction Littérale</i> (Literal Translation)
3.4	Self exercise
4.1	Answers
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References and Other Resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit will introduce you to a particular technique of translation called *la traduction littérale* (literal translation). It is one of the seven methods J.P. Vinay and J. Darbelnet have recommended. It is an easy way of translating.

2.0 Objectives

On successful completion of this unit, you should be able to :

- know globally the different techniques of translation
- embark on literal translation (*la traduction littérale*)
- know when you are advised against literal translation.

- Know some expressions in French: *porter de l'eau à la rivière, porter de l'eau à la mer, se vanter.*

3.0 Techniques of Translation

You need to know the techniques involved in the translation of texts. There are seven techniques – *la traduction littérale*, *l'emprunt* (borrowing), *le calque* (calque), *la transposition* (transposition), *la modulation* (modulation), *l'équivalence* (equivalence) and *l'adaptation* (adaptation).

These seven techniques or *procédés de traduction* are in two broad areas : *traduction directe* (direct translation) and *traduction indirecte* (indirect translation). *La traduction indirecte* is also called *la traduction oblique*.

There are two broad techniques of translation – direct translation (*la traduction directe*) and indirect translation (*la traduction indirecte* or *la traduction oblique*)

3.1 La traduction directe

La traduction directe covers the first three techniques – *la traduction littérale*, *l'emprunt* and *le calque*.

3.2 La traduction indirecte (la traduction oblique)

La traduction indirecte or *la traduction oblique* deals with the remaining four techniques – *transposition*, *modulation*, *équivalence* and *adaptation*.

These techniques are very crucial to your ability to translate properly.

You will now learn the first technique in detail.

3.3 La Traduction Littérale

La traduction littérale simply means literal translation or word for word translation (*la traduction mot à mot*). An example of literal translation is as follows.

Je parle français - I speak French

La traduction littérale is good as long as it successfully translates the message in a way that is acceptable in the target language. The translation must be accepted as idiomatic in the target language.

You reject *la traduction littérale* if it fails to convey the desired meaning, e.g.

- 1) chien méchant – beware of dog. Its literal translation which is “wicked” or “naughty dog” must be rejected because it is not idiomatic in English.
- 2) Porter de l’eau à la rivière
or
Porter de l’eau à la mer } carry coal to Newcastle.

You must have realized that the translation is a far cry from the literal meaning of the original. *Porter de l’eau à la rivière* literally means “carry water to the river” while “*porter de l’eau à la mer*” means “carry water to the sea.” The correct English equivalent is “carry coal to Newcastle”. The two expressions in the two languages are stock expressions (*expressions figées*) and must be maintained. You have to learn them as they are. In the course of your study you will learn many of such expressions.

As you have learnt, literal translations may be incorrect sometimes. You should reject them if you observe the following reasons:

- 1) when the translation gives a meaningless equivalent e.g.

The man talks big – “L’homme parle grand.”

The French translation is literal but meaningless. A Frenchman will rather say “*L’homme se vante*” (The man is boastful).

- 2) when the structure in the target language disallows it:

The Chinese have *priced us out* of that market.

Les bas prix pratiqués par les Chinois nous ont exclus du marché

English has particles such as out, up, down, etc which are used with verbs. French is different. It lacks particles. The result is that French finds another way of expressing the same idea.

3.4 Self-exercise

What is the difference between

- 1) la traduction indirecte and la traduction oblique ?
- 2) porter de l'eau à la mer and porter de l'eau à la rivière ?

4.0 Conclusion

You have learnt that there are two broad ways of translating – *la traduction directe* and *la traduction indirecte*. You have learnt specifically when to use *la traduction littérale*.

4.1 Answers

- 1) *La traduction indirecte* and *la traduction oblique* mean the same thing
- 2) Porter de l'eau à la mer and porter de l'eau à la rivière have the same meaning, that carry coal to Newcastle.

However, they have slightly different literal meanings *porter de l'eau à la mer* literally means carry water to the sea while *porter de l'eau à la rivière* means carry water to the river.

5.0 Summary

This unit has equipped you with the translation technique known as *la traduction littérale*. This chapter prepares you for more exciting techniques in UNIT 3.

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

Under what conditions will you avoid literal translation? Give two examples.

7.0 References and Other Resources

Van Hoaf, H. (1989): *Traduire de l'anglais*, théorie et pratique, Paris: Edition Ducolot.

Vinay, J. P et Darbelnet, J. (1958) : *Stylistique comparée de l'anglais*, Paris : Edition Didier

UNIT 3

L'EMPRUNT (BORROWING)

Table of Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Difference between Literal Translation and Literary Translation
- 3.1 *L'Emprunt* (Borrowing)
- 3.2 Self-exercise
- 3.3 Correct use of *emprunter*
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References

1.0 Introduction

This unit introduces you to another technique of translation called *l'emprunt* (borrowing). It will also teach you the difference between literal translation and literary translation. You will learn new words and expressions.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will help you to

- know the difference between literal translation (*traduction littérale*) and literary translation (*traduction littéraire*)
- know the translation technique called *l'emprunt* (borrowing)
- increase your vocabulary: *le congélateur, faire son shopping, prendre un drink*
- know the correct use of *emprunter*

3.0 Difference between Literal Translation and Literary Translation

In unit 2, you learnt *la traduction littérale* which means literal translation or word for word translation. You should know that literal translation is different from literary translation (*la traduction littéraire*). Literary translation has to do with the translation of a literary text like a novel, a play or a poem.

You should always remember the difference.

3.1 L'Emprunt (Borrowing)

L'emprunt or borrowing is a technique that is used all over the world. You resort to it (*l'emprunt*) when an equivalent word is non-existent in that language. For instance you are not likely to have the following Nigerian food items in French – garri, eba, fufu, gbegiri, osun etc. So what you do is to use the same words in French. You may put them in inverted commas or you write them in italics.

The French have borrowed many words from English and vice versa. You can hardly identify some of these words as borrowed ones. For instance *redingote* and *paquebot* in French. They came from “riding coat” and “packet boat” respectively.

You observe that the examples just cited look like original French words. That is because in borrowing, you take note of the phonology and orthography of the *langue cible* or target language.

There are however some borrowed words which are written exactly the same way as they are written in English. You can see such examples in the following expressions.

faire son <i>shopping</i>	-	to go shopping
prendre un <i>drink</i>	-	to take a drink

The French has perfect ways of expressing these same ideas if it wants to avoid *l'emprunt*

faire ses courses } to go shopping
faire ses emplettes }

prendre un verre - to take a drink

As you have seen, French has borrowed some words in English even though the former (French) has its own words for them. Here are some other examples.

le freezer - In French you can also say *congélateur*

le know-how - In French you may also say *savoir-faire*

Sometimes, the French borrow from English because they find that the English equivalent is easier to use. You can see that from the following examples.

le cash-flow - la marge brute d'autofinancement

le stress - le syndrome d'alarme

You see how long the original French equivalents are. You are perfectly right to use the borrowed English equivalents in French.

3.2 Self exercise

1. Give one good reason why French opts to borrow English words
2. What are the equivalents of cash-flow in French?

3.3 Correct Use of *Emprunter*

You have known the technique called *l'emprunt* (borrowing). At this point it is important that you use the verb *emprunter* (to borrow) correctly. Students often use it wrongly in relation to the preposition. You must be among those who will always use it correctly.

You will know it through the following translations.

- i) French borrowed the word football from English
Le français a emprunté le mot football à l'anglais

Note that you say *emprunter à* to mean “borrow from”

Read a second example:

- i) L'anglais a emprunté le mot coup d'état au français
- ii) English borrowed the word coup d'état from French

Remember that “au” stands for “à + le”

Remember always to say “emprunter a® ” and NEVER “emprunter de”

4.0 Conclusion

L'emprunt (borrowing) is an essential technique. This is because no language has words for all things and all cultural situations. You have learnt to always use “emprunter” correctly. Your vocabulary too has increased tremendously.

4.1 Answer

1. One good reason why French opts to borrow English words is that some French equivalents of English words are rather long. An example is cash-flow which is easier to say than *la marge brute d'autofinancement*.
2. The equivalents of cash-flow in French are le *cash-flow* and *la marge d'autofinancement*

5.0 Summary

You have learnt the difference between *la traduction littéraire* and *la traduction littérale*. You now know the technique called *l'emprunt*. You can also use its verb form – *emprunter* – correctly.

6.0 Tutor – Marked Assignment

1. Form **two** sentences involving the use of *emprunter à*
2. Give three examples of *l'emprunt* in French.

7.0 References

Van Hoof, H. (1989): *Traduire de l'anglais, théorie et pratique*, Paris : Edition Ducolot.

Vinay, J.P et Darbelnet, J. (1958) : *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, Paris : Didier Erudition.

UNIT 4

LE CALQUE

Table of Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Le Calque
- 3.1 Types of Calque
 - 3.1.1 *Calque d'expression*
 - 3.1.2 *Calque de structure*
- 3.2 Self exercise
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 4.1 Answer
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Other Resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit treats one of the direct translation procedures known as *le calque*. You will learn to define and use it. In addition, you will learn new words and expressions.

2.0 Objectives

As you successfully complete this unit, you should be able to:

- define and explain what *le calque* is
- identify and use it (*le calque*)
- know the different types of calque

- improve on your vocabulary: *donner du feu vert, mener une vie de chien, le gratte-ciel, la surprise partie.*

3.0 What is Calque ?

You may define *le calque* in two ways :

- A particular type of *emprunt* (or borrowing) or
- A literal translation of an expression or a structure that is foreign to the target language.

Both definitions have an element of borrowing. The difference between *emprunt* proper and *calque* is this: *calque* involves the use of the target language. You borrow the idea, word, expression or structure. You maintain the language into which you are translating.

3.1 Types of Calque

There are two types of *le calque*. They are *le calque d'expression* and *le calque de structure*.

3.1.1 Calque d'expression

In *calque d'expression*, you respect the syntax of the target language. However the idea you are introducing is new to it. For instance, in Canadian French, you often hear or read *Compliments de la saison*. This is a literal translation of “*Compliments of the Season*”. The expression is a calque to the extent that it is not original to French. The normal French expression for “season’s greetings” or compliments of the season is “*voeux de fin d’année*”. Other examples of *calque d’expression* are:

- to give a green light – *donner du feu vert*
- the man in the street – *l’homme de la rue*
- mener une vie de chien* – to lead a dog’s life

3.1.2 Calque de structure

Calque de structure is a construction that is new in the target language. For instance “Science fiction” is a normal English structure. The French borrowed it and writes *Science – fiction*. This structure is certainly alien to French. It is however perfectly accepted now.

A few examples are as follows:

1. scryscraper - le gratte-ciel
2. surprise party - la surprise-partie

3.2 Self exercise

What is the difference between calque and borrowing?

4.0 Conclusion

Calque is the third of the Direct Methods in translation. It means translating literally an expression or a structure. You have learnt new words and expressions.

4.1 Answers

The difference between the two is that, in calque, it is the idea or structure and not the word that is borrowed. On the other hand, borrowing means using the original word in its pure or deformed way.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt the two types of calque: *calque d’expression* and *calque de structure*. Both imply an element of borrowing (*l’emprunt*). You have also improved on your vocabulary.

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- 1) What do you understand by *le calque* ?
- 2) What is the difference between *calque d'expression* and *calque de structure*?
- 3) Give three examples each of *calque d'expression* and *calque de structure*

7.0 References

Van Hoof, H. (1989): *Traduire de l'anglais, théorie et pratique*, Paris: Editions Ducolot.

Vinay, J.P. et Darbelnet, J. (1958) : *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, Paris : Didier Erudition.

UNIT 5

LA TRANSPOSITION

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	<i>La Transposition</i>
3.1	<i>Transposition Obligatoire</i>
3.2	<i>La Transposition facultative</i>
3.3	Types of Transposition
3.4	Self exercise
4.0	Conclusion
4.1	Answer
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References

1.0 Introduction

This unit introduces you to a very important and commonly used technique of translation called *la transposition*. *La transposition* is one of the four indirect techniques of translation. You will recall that you have learned the direct techniques. They are *la traduction littérale*, *l'emprunt* and *le calque*. As you learn *la transposition* you will be able to translate better. Moreover, you will have a richer store of vocabulary and expressions.

2.0 Objectives

On the successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the meaning of *la transposition*
- give some examples of *la transposition*
- identify cases of *la transposition* wherever you see them.

- enrich your vocabulary and expressions: *menottes aux mains, défense de fumer, à vendre, sans cheveux, une fille-mère*

3.0 La Transposition

La transposition (transposition) simply means this: you replace a part of speech (or grammatical category) with another part of speech (or grammatical category). Examples of parts of speech are nouns, adjectives, verbs, prepositions and adverbs.

You use transposition and other indirect techniques of translation to avoid meaningless sentences.

You will now read a few examples of *transposition*:

for sale	-	à vendre
hairless	-	sans cheveux
handcuffed	-	menottes aux mains

You should be able to explain why these examples are transpositions. In the first example, sale is a noun in English while *vendre* is a verb in French. “Hairless” is an adjective but *cheveux* is a noun (and *sans* is a preposition).

There is something common to all the examples you have just read: none of them retains their part of speech in the target language. It is either a noun becomes a verb or an adjective becomes a noun. Or in the case of “handcuffed” and “menottes aux mains”, you see handcuffed which is a past participle (*participe passé*) being transformed into a noun.

Any time translation involves a change of grammatical category or part of speech, you simply recognize that transposition is at work.

3.1 La Transposition Obligatoire (Obligatory use of transposition)

The use of transposition is at times obligatory. That means, you just have to use it, you have no choice. Read the following examples:

Tunde se lave *la* tête – Tunde is washing *his* hair (head)

Il s'est coupé *les* doigts – He cut *his* hands.

In the examples just given, the definite articles *la* and *les* change to *his*, a possessive adjective. This is because, French uses the definite article in the place of a possessive adjective when the adjective has to do with the human body. Since English does not have the same rule, you can only translate *les* by the corresponding possessive adjective.

In such cases you talk of *la transposition obligatoire*. Remember that *obligatoire* means obligatory; you have no choice.

3.2 La Transposition Facultative (optional transposition)

There are times when *transposition* comes in simply as a choice. In that case you talk of *la transposition facultative*. You use it only if you want to. Here is an example:

Qui l'oblitère mérite la mort

Whoever destroys him deserves to die

The transposition here is “*la mort*” a noun which becomes “to die” (verb). The translator could, if he or she so desires, translate “to die” as “death”. This means that *la transposition* is replaced by *la traduction littérale* (literal translation)

3.3 Types of Transposition

noun		verb
no smoking	-	défense de fumer
for sale	-	à vendre

past participle**noun**

handcuffed - menottes aux mains
 unwed mother - une fille – mère

adverb**noun**

He speaks *well* of his brother - Il dit *du bien* de son frère
 He came *early* this academic year - Il est venu *au début* de l'année
 scolaire.

adverb**adjective**

Il *sécoua* spasmodiquement - He made a spasmodic shake

In this example, “*sécoua*” (verb) becomes a noun in English; and *spasmodiquement* (an adverb) becomes an adjective.

3.4 Self exercise

Categorize the following transpositions according to their parts of speech:

(a) être sans appui - to be friendless, unprotected
 (b) avoir un argent fou - to have tons of money

4.0 Conclusion

A knowledge of transposition is crucial to your ability to translate. Transposition entails a change in grammatical categories. For instance a verb may be transformed into a noun and vice versa. You have also acquired more vocabulary and expressions.

4.1. Answers

- a) Etre sans appuis is noun, but to be friendless is adjective.
 b) Avoir un argent fou is adjective, but to have tons of money is noun

5.0 Summary

As you have learned, transposition is very important. It is one of the indirect techniques. Its use in translation is indispensable. You recognize it very easily because it simply involves a change in parts of speech during translation.

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

What do you understand by *la transposition*?

When do you consider *transposition* to be optional or compulsory?

Give five examples of transposition under different parts of speech.

7.0 References

Van Hoof, H. (1989): *Traduire de l'anglais, théorie et pratique*, Paris:

Editions Ducolot.

Vinay, J. P. and Darbelnet, J. (1958): *Stylistique comparé du français et de l'anglais*, Paris : Marcel Didier.

UNIT 6

LA MODULATION

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	<i>La modulation</i>
3.1	<i>La modulation obligatoire</i>
3.2	<i>La modulation facultative</i>
3.3	Examples of Modulation
3.4	Types of Modulation
3.5	Self exercise
4.0	Conclusion
4.1	Answers
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References and Other Resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit will introduce you to the translational technique known as *la modulation*. Some experts believe that *la modulation* is the most important technique involved in translation. You can therefore appreciate why you must master it at all cost. *La modulation* is modulation in English.

You will observe instances of transposition built into modulation as you go on. You will find, from time to time, a change of parts of speech.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will help you to:

- define and understand modulation

- distinguish compulsory modulation from optional ones
- give many interesting examples of modulation.
- enrich your vocabulary and expressions: *nom de guerre*, *pompier*, *sapeurs-pompiers*, *sel blanc*, *encre de Chine*, *pisciculture*, *filer à l'anglaise*.

3.0 Modulation

La modulation is a variety of *la transposition*, but it operates at the level of the message. When two languages express the same idea from different perspectives, you recognize it as *la modulation*. You have earlier seen (in Unit 1) *chien méchant* and “beware of dogs.” While the French seems to be making a simple observation *chien méchant* (ie savage or wicked dog), the English is in fact warning you (beware of dog).

3.1 Modulation obligatoire

La modulation obligatoire implies that there is a stock expression in use as the only correct form of translation. This happens when the distinctive character of the language insists on it. The following example is bound to interest you:

Filer à l'anglaise – to take a French leave. You will observe that the literal translation of *l'anglaise* is English, yet you translate it as *French* in this context because that is the way the Englishman uses his language.

3.2 Modulation Facultative

In the case of *la modulation facultative* (optional modulation) you have a choice among other possibilities.

3.3 Examples of Modulation

le nom de guerre	-	pen name
quinze jours quinze	-	fortnight, 14 days
huit jours	-	one week
lit de la chambre d'ami	-	spare bed
terrain sans herbes	-	clean land
sans barbe ni moustache	-	clean-shaven
le pompier	-	fireman
le sapeur-pompier	-	fireman
les sapeurs-pompiers	-	the fire-brigade
l'anglais usuel	-	everyday English
connaissances usuelles	-	knowledge of everyday things
le rouge lui monta au visage	-	blood rushed to his face
sel blanc	-	table salt

3.4 Types of Modulation

You can group modulation into various types e.g. geographical modulation, popular /scholarly modulation and part/whole modulation. There are modulations also where a part represents another part in the translation.

You will see some examples right away:

Geographical modulation

Indian ink	-	encre de Chine
to take French leave	-	filer à l'anglaise

Popular/Scholarly modulation

Fish-breeding	-	la pisciculture
Leaf green	-	la chlorophylle

Part/whole modulation

Breastfeeding	-	Allaitement maternel
All hands on deck	-	Tout le monde sur le point

Maternel means “motherly”. You observe that breast is just a part of the mother. In the same vein “hands” are parts of the body. Hence part/whole modulation.

You will see another set of examples. They are the ones where **a part** represents **another part** in the translation:

He is wet to the <i>skin</i>	-	Il est trempé jusqu’aux <i>os</i>
He clears his <i>throat</i>	-	Il s’éclaircit <i>la voix</i>

The literal meaning of skin in French is *la peau*; and throat means *la gorge*. *Os* in English is bone and *la voix* is voice. You see that a part represents another part.

3.5 Self exercise

Explain why the following words and their English equivalents are considered to be modulations:

breastfeeding	-	allaitement maternel
to take a French leave	-	filer à l’anglaise

4.0 Conclusion

Modulation operates at the level of the message. Transposition, on the other hand stops at the level of parts of speech. Languages say and view the same things in different ways. Modulation is very important in translation.

4.1 Answers

They are considered as modulations because the two languages present different points of view. The two languages view the same idea from different perspectives.

5.0 Summary

Modulation is an unavoidable technique of translation. It shows how languages view the same ideas from different perspectives. You have learnt many words and expressions too.

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- Define modulation
- Give two examples of modulation.
- Mention three types of modulation
- Explain why *huit jours* which means one week is an example of modulation.

7.0 References

Van Hoof, H. (1989): *Traduire de l'anglais, théorie et pratique*, Paris: Editions Ducolot.

Vinay, J.P et Darbelnet, J. (1958) : *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, Paris : Marcel Didier.

UNIT 7

L'EQUIVALENCE

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	<i>L'Equivalence</i>
3.1	Types of Equivalence
3.2	Self exercise
4.0	Conclusion
4.1	Answers
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References and Other Resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit introduces you to the concept of *l'equivalence*. It is an interesting technique of translation. As you learn it, you will also enrich your vocabulary tremendously. That will in turn make you better prepared for translation.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will help you in:

- understanding *equivalence*
- discovering many examples of equivalence
- enriching your vocabulary

3.0 Equivalence

L'Equivalence is closely linked to *modulation*. Its meaning is similar to that of modulation. The two concepts – equivalence and modulation – are

similar in the sense that they both express a change of point of view. However, you use equivalence when you are translating idiomatic expressions, clichés, proverbs and other stock expressions. The examples you see hereafter are either idioms, proverbs, clichés or other types of stock expressions.

3.1.1 Proverbs

- Qui se ressemble s'assemble - Birds of the same feather flock together
- Il est parti sans qu'on ait le temps de faire ouf } He was off before you
or } could say Jack
Il est parti sans qu'on ait le temps de dire ouf }
- Ventre affamé n'a pas d'oreilles - A hungry man is an angry man
- On aurait entendu trotter une souris - You could have heard a pin drop
- Qui paye a bien le droit de choisir - He who pays the piper calls the tune
- Chat échaudé craint l'eau froide - Once beaten twice shy

3.1.2 Idiomatic expressions

- to be at someone's beck and call - obéir à quelqu'un au doigt et à l'œil
- Il pleut des hallebardes - It is raining cats and dogs
- Les bras m'en tombent - I am dumbfounded
- Je le vois tous les trente-six du mois - I see him once in a blue moon
- Cherchez midi à quatorze heures - to look for difficulties where there are none; to miss the obvious.
- J'ai faim de loup - I am very hungry
- Crier sur le toit - to proclaim something from the housetops
- Vous l'avez échappé belle - You have had a narrow escape
- l'échapper belle,
échapper comme par miracle - to have a hairbreath escape

3.1.3 Military Expressions

Fixe - eyes front !

tête (à) droite - eyes right !

3.2 Self exercise

Why do we say that modulation and equivalence are similar in meaning ?

4.0 Conclusion

Equivalence is similar to modulation. You have recourse to it when you are translating stock expressions like proverbs and idiomatic expressions (*idiotisme*)

4.1 Answers

They are similar in meaning because both of them express a change of point of view.

5.0 Summary

A grasp of the concept of equivalence is a good way of enriching your vocabulary. Equivalence implies change of point of view. You use the technique however, when you are dealing with stock expressions. Learn to use the new words and expressions you have acquired.

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- 1) What is equivalence?
- 2) Give five examples of *l'équivalence*
- 3) What is the difference between modulation and equivalence?

7.0 References

Van Hoof, H. (1989): *Traduire de l'anglais, théorie et pratique*, Paris: Editions Ducolot.

Vinay, J.P and Darbelnet, J. (1958) *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, Paris : Marcel Didier

UNIT 8

L'ADAPTATION

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	<i>L'adaptation</i>
3.1	Self exercise
4.0	Conclusion
4.1	Answers
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References and Other Resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit introduces you to the last of the four techniques of indirect translation. Indeed, it is the seventh and last of the techniques of translation. You will recall that Vinay and Darbelnet were the authors of the seven techniques of translation.

2.0 Objectives

As you successfully conclude this unit, you will have a complete idea of all the techniques of translation. This unit specifically prepares you to:

- identify the technique of *l'adaptation*
- use adaptation in translation
- have a broader view of translation
- acquire new vocabulary

3.0 L'adaptation

You use adaptation in instances where you do not have an equivalent expression or word to express the message.

In the absence of an equivalent word in the target language, the translator may use *adaptation*. For instance you may find it difficult to translate Nigerian dishes into French. You may take the following examples: gari, amala, tuwo, akpo□

To translate these words you may have recourse to *emprunt* (borrowing). But you will find it difficult to convey the message. You can therefore turn to *adaptation* by using French meals that are popular.

Rice is a common meal in France just as gari, eba or tuwo are in Nigeria. So you may translate amala or eba with “du riz”.

In the same way food like “bœuf sale” and “chou” may be translated as amala, akpo□, agidi or tuwo. The translation will depend on the Nigerian language or culture you are translating into *adaptation*.

You cannot use this technique indiscriminately. In the class you use it sparingly; use it only when it is absolutely necessary.

There are other instances where adaptation will be necessary. The following joke will require a minor adaptation if it is to be properly translated:

Abou: Voilà *une* animal qui arrive

Alabi : Non, c'est un animal. (Alabi essaie de corriger son ami)

Abou : Oh, comme tu as de bons yeux de pouvoir voir ça !

Proposed Translation

Abou : There comes *a* animal

Alabi: No, it's an animal (Alabi tries to correct his friend)

Abou: How good your eyes must be to have seen that!

The idea here is that it is wrong to say *une animal*, since *animal* in the sense used here is masculine. Alabi therefore tries to correct his friend. Abou replies by implying that Alabi's eyes must be so good as to see the masculine indefinite article an in the animal. It is a joke because there is no way you can see the "an" in the animal.

You see that there is no way this joke can be translated literally. You therefore use "a animal" and "an animal" in order to retain the joke. You may also use adaptation for a whole book. e.g. a difficult literary text can be adapted entirely for children.

3.1 Self exercise

Using the technique of adaptation translate the following French words into your language: la saucisse (sausage); le hamburger (hamburger)

4.0 Conclusion

You have recourse to adaptation to avoid a complete loss of socio-cultural elements of language. You use it to preserve the cultural flavour of the original. Its use may go beyond a word or sentence. You can even use it for a whole book.

4.1 Answers

In both examples simply give snack items involving meat in your language. For instance, in the case of le hamburger, you may use "suya"

5.0 Summary

You have learnt the meaning of *l'adaptation*. Adaptation is the last of the translation techniques. You use it in the absence of equivalents in the target language. Its use will create a similar socio-cultural environment in the target language.

6.0 Teacher-Marked Assignment

1. Why is adaptation necessary in translation?
2. Give some examples of adaptation
3. Give three food items in your language and try to replace them by having recourse to adaptation.

7.0 References

Van Hoof, H. (1989): *Traduire de l'anglais, théorie et pratique*, Paris: Editions Ducolot.

Vinay, J. P. and Darbelnet, J. (1958) *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, Paris : Marcel Didier.

UNIT 9

EN AS AN ADVERBIAL PRONOUN

Table of Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 *En* as an adverbial pronoun
 - 3.1 Translation of sentences
 - 3.2 Self exercise
 - 3.3 *En* as a preposition
- 4.0 Conclusion
 - 4.1 Answers
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-marked assignment
- 7.0 References

1.0 Introduction

This unit introduces you to translation proper. You will for the meantime just translate sentences involving *en*. The use of *en* in French is very important. You must master it immediately because you are bound to see it in texts frequently. You will also need to use it often.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will teach you the important use of *en*

- as an adverbial pronoun
- to mean of it, about it, from there etc.
- through translation

3.0 En as an adverbial pronoun

You are going to study *en* as an adverb which functions as a pronoun ; hence the name adverbial pronoun. It is a pronoun in the sense that it refers to a place (noun) that has been referred to earlier.

You will observe that to use *en* as a pronoun, you normally have *de* (i.e from or of) embedded in the meaning, e.g.

I am coming *from* London – Je viens *de* Londres.

You now replace *de Londres* with *en*. Thus you write or say *J'en viens* (I am coming from there).

To be able to know the correct use, you should first understand how you will replace the place or noun. Read the following examples:

Ma femme sort *de la mosquée*= My mother is coming out of the mosque
(My mother is leaving the mosque)

De la

You replace *de la mosquée* with *en*:

Ma femme *en* sort.

You can also use *en* to mean out of it, of it, of her, of him, of her of them, with it, with them, about it, about them.

Read the following sentences and replace the italicized words with *en*

Je doute *de son intelligence* – I doubt his/her intelligence

J'*en* doute – I doubt it

Il est certain *de cette histoire* – He is sure of the story.

Il *en* est certain – He is sure of it

3.1 Translation of sentences.

You will now read five sentences involving the use of *en*

Selon les rumeurs, toute la ville parlait *de cette affaire*. Mais, moi, je *n'en* savais rien. Je ne sors guere. D'ailleurs, j'ai voyagé *en* Europe. *J'en* suis revenu il y a 8 *jours*.

The translation is as follows :

According to the rumours, the whole town was talking *about* this affair. But, as for me, I knew nothing *about it*. I hardly go out. Moreover, I travelled to Europe. I just returned *from there a week* ago.

The italicizing of the crucial areas of the short passage just read should be useful to you. Examine carefully the way they have been translated.

Remember the use of modulation. *Huit jours* (which literally means eight days) is a week in French. You know, in English a week is seven days.

You can also use *en* to mean some or any, or express quantity. Remember that *en* can also be used as a partitive article. Read the following sentences:

Je veux *du pain*. Oui, j'*en* veux. J'*en* ai vraiment besoin
I want some bread. Yes, I want some. I really need some.

3.2 Self exercise

Translate into French

1. I want some water. Yes I want some
2. Give me some salt. I need it.

3.3 En as a preposition

En can also function as a preposition. It means *to* note the two examples:

1. J'ai voyagé *en* Europe – I travelled to Europe
2. Je vais *en* France – I am going to France

Know that you use it before feminine nouns only.

For a masculine country, you will use *au*, e.g. Je vais *au* Ghana

4.0 Conclusion

You have learnt the important use of *en* as an adverbial pronoun. You have also learnt *en* as a preposition. Your knowledge of *en* will be a great asset in your translation.

4.1 Answers

1. Je veux de l'eau. Oui, j'en veux
2. Donnez-moi du sel. J'en ai besoin

or

Donne-moi du sel

5.0 Summary

Your mastery of *en* is to some extent an evidence of how good you are in French. Having known its various uses, use it practically as often as you can.

You will translate it well when you meet it in a context.

6.0 Tutor-marked assignment

Translate into English

Ma sœur veut se marier bientôt, mais mon père n'en est pas content. Il dit qu'elle est trop jeune. Mais ma sœur sait ce qu'il faut faire. Mon père est friand de louange. C'est vrai, il en est friand. Ma sœur va le louer, et il va changer d'attitude !

7.0 Reference

Ojo, S.A. (2002) : A Comprehensive Revision Handbook of French Grammar, Ibadan : Signal Educational Services Ltd.

UNIT 10

THE USE OF *Y*

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Un dialogue
3.1	The use of <i>Y</i>
3.2	<i>Y</i> as an adverb
3.3	Self exercise
3.4	Model translation
4.0	Conclusion
4.1	Answers
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-marked assignment
7.0	References

1.0 Introduction

You will translate a dialogue in this unit. In the process of translating you will learn the use of *y*. The use of *y* is crucial in French. Like *en*, it must be mastered once and for all. *Y* is an adverbial pronoun.

You will see it in translation passages from time to time.

2.0 Objectives

The main objective of this unit is to teach you to translate sentences involving the use of *y*. In the process you will also learn the following words and expressions: le sort, redevable, uncle par alliance, le sort, à l'étranger.

Now, read the passage that follows:

Try and translate the passage. Make use of the notes to help you in your translation. Of course, you should remember the use of your dictionaries.

3.0 Un dialogue

Caro: Bonjour, mon cher ami

Baba : Bonjour, comment va la famille ?

Caro : Elle va très bien, et la tienne ?

Baba : Elle va bien aussi

Caro : J'ai appris que tu étais parti en Russie

Baba : C'est bien vrai, j'y étais pour un mois. C'était une occasion pour me reposer un peu. Je compte y aller encore l'an prochain.

Caro : Encore ? Tu n'aime plus notre cher pays ?

Baba : Si, j'y pense toujours lors de mes séjours à l'étranger. Mon oncle par alliance est l'ambassadeur du Nigeria en Russie. Mais as-tu vu tes cadeaux ? Je les ai mis sur ta table.

Caro : Comme tu es gentil ! Je les y ai trouvé ce matin. J'en suis très, très redevable. Que le bon Dieu te bénisse !

Baba : Il n'a y a pas de quoi. Tu étais à l'église hier ?

Caro : Non, je n'y étais pas.

Baba et Caro (en même temps) : A la prochaine.

3.1 The use of Y in French

You use *y* to replace *à, au, aux*. You also use it to replace prepositions like *dans, sur, derrière, devant* + noun. You use it to replace inanimate nouns. **NOT** persons or living things.

You use it to replace the indirect object of a verb.

Read the following examples:

1. Je pense à *cette histoire* – J’y pense
I am thinking of the story – I am thinking of it

2. J’ai participé activement aux activités - I participated actively in the activities
J’y ai participé activement - I participated actively in them.

3. Je m’intéresse à *ton sort* - Je m’y intéresse
I am interested in your fate - I am interested in it

4. Je pense *au travail* - J’y pense
I am thinking of the work - I am thinking about it.

You observe that in the examples you have just read, the verbs are followed by the prepositions *à*, *au* and *aux*.

3.2 Y as an adverb

You will now see some examples where *y* replaces *ici* (here), *là* (there). Remember its use extends to prepositions such as *sur*, *dans*, *devant*, *derrière* etc. Read the example that follows.

Je les ai mis sur la table – I put them on the table
Je les y ai mis – I put them on it.
Y in this context means on it.

Je vais régulièrement à l’église – I attend church regularly
J’y vais régulièrement – I go there regularly

3.3 Self exercise

Translate into English

Je participe aux activités; j'y participe

3.4 Model Translation : A dialogue

Caro : Good morning, my dear friend

Baba: Good morning, how is the family?

Caro: It's very fine, and yours?

Baba: It's fine also.

Caro: I learnt that you went to Russia

Baba: That's very true, I was there for a month. It was an opportunity for me to rest a bit. I intend to go there again next year.

Caro: Again? You don't like our dear country any more?

Baba: Yes, I think of it always during my stay abroad. My uncle by marriage is Nigeria's ambassador to Russia. But, have you seen your gifts? I put them on the table.

Caro: How kind you are. I saw them there this morning. I am very, very grateful.

Baba: Don't mention. You were in the church yesterday?

Caro: No, I wasn't there.

Baba et Caro (at the same time). Be seeing you!

4.0 Conclusion

You have learnt the use of *y*. Translating the text will further help you to master it. You use *y* to replace, *ici, là*.

4.1 Answers

I am participating in the activities; I am participating in them

5.0 Summary

Y is very important. You will have cause to use it very frequently. Hence its importance. Read the examples patiently. It is easy to understand. You use it to replace, *à*, *au* or *aux*. You also use it in the place of *ici* and *là*.

6.0 Tutor-marked assignment

Translate the following sentences into English

1. Je l'y ai mis
2. J'y suis
3. J'y vais
4. Vous y êtes ?
5. Je n'y pense plus

7.0 Reference

Coffman, M.E. (1973): *French Grammar*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Ojo, S.A. (2002) : *A Comprehensive Revision Handbook of French Grammar*, Ibadan : Signal Educational Services Ltd.

UNIT 11

UN MERVEILLEUX ANNIVERSAIRE

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Un merveilleux anniversaire
3.1	Vocabulary
3.2	Self exercise
3.3	Venir de
3.4	The use of <i>on</i>
3.5	<i>Tantôt... Tantôt</i>
3.6	<i>Bien que</i>
3.7	Model Translation : A Wonderful Birthday
4.0	Conclusion
4.1	Answers
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-marked assignment
7.0	References and other resource materials

1.0 Introduction

This unit deals with a wonderful birthday celebration. Read the text carefully, assimilate and enjoy it.

2.0 Objectives

On successful completion of this unit, you should be able to

- know more new words e.g. *une vingtaine, retardataire, le décor, le gâteau d'anniversaire*

- know more new expressions such as *tantôt...tantôt*
- know the use of *bien que*.
- Know the use of *on*.

Read the following text entitled *Un merveilleux anniversaire*. Consult your dictionary and grammar books if the need arises.

3.0 Un merveilleux anniversaire

Aujourd'hui, c'est l'anniversaire de Mademoiselle Ebiere Ogbowei, architecte de nationalité nigériane, qui vient de terminer ses études en Angleterre. Elle a vingt deux ans et elle invite une vingtaine d'amis intimes.

Son petit salon est déjà plein de visiteurs bien que la plupart des invités ne soient pas encore là. Le retard des amis s'explique facilement : le mariage de deux autres copains est aussi prévu pour aujourd'hui.

Mais on ne va pas attendre les retardataires. On commence alors le programme. On commence par rendre grâce à Dieu et puis on écoute la musique : tantôt un disque de Fela, ce fameux chanteur nigérian, qui n'est plus, tantôt une chanson d'amour.

L'anniversaire est merveilleux. Le gâteau d'anniversaire, entouré de belles fleurs, est mis sur la table. Le décor est formidable

3.1 Vocabulary

You will now see some of the difficult words and expressions. Learn and keep them at the tip of your fingers.

une vingtaine – about twenty, twenty or so.

Similarly, trentaine, quarantaine, centaine etc. mean about thirty, about forty, about hundred respectively.

Le retardataire – late-comer

rendre grace à – to give thanks to (before or after a meal)

tantôt...tantôt	–	sometimes ...sometimes
entouré de belles fleurs	–	surrounded by beautiful flowers.

If there are still words that are strange to you, look them up in your dictionary.

3.2 Self exercise

Translate the following sentences into French.

1. There are about fifty students in the class
2. The woman is surrounded by good friends

3.3 Venir de

You should know the use of *venir de*. You use it to express the past recent (*le passé récent*), that is, an action that has just taken place. Read the following sentences as examples:

Je viens d'arriver	–	I have just arrived
Je viens de manger	–	I have just eaten
Elle vient de finir son travail	–	She has just finished her work

3.4 Bien que

Bien que is ...You always use *le subjonctif* (subjunctive mood) with it. Any time you use *bien que* you must put the verb in the subjunctive.

Take a cue from the sentence in the passage:

...bien que la plupart des invités ne soient pas encore là
 ...even though most of the invited guests are not yet there

You must have learnt *le subjonctif* in your grammar courses. You conjugate the present tense of *être* in *le subjonctif* as follows:

bien que je sois là	–	even though I am there
bien que tu sois là	–	even though you are there
bien qu'il soit là	–	even though he is there

bien qu'elle soit là – even though she is there
bien que nous soyons là – even though we are there
bien que vous soyez là – even though you are there
bien qu'ils soient là – even though they are there
bien qu'elles soient là – even though they are there

There are other words or expressions that take *le subjonctif*. Examples are *quoique* (although) *afin que* (in order that), *avant que* (before)

3.5 The use of on

On is an important word. Master its use. It is an indefinite pronoun (*pronom indéfini*). It means one of the following: someone, you, one, we, they. The context will determine the meaning.

In the context of the passage you have read, you can translate *on* as we. Read the following examples.

- 1) Chez nous, on mange beaucoup de riz - We eat a lot of rice in our family
- 2) En France, on mange beaucoup de pain - In France, they eat a lot of bread.

3.6 Tantôt...tantôt

As you have seen earlier *tantôt...tantôt* means “sometimes...sometimes”. Read the following examples:

Tantôt il est gai tantôt il est triste - He is sometimes happy and sometimes sad.

Read the example in the passage to be translated:

Tantôt un disque de Fela...tantôt une chanson d'amour.

Now translate the text

Translate the text. Make use of your dictionary. Consult also your grammar books if the need arises.

3.7 Model Translation: A Wonderful Birthday

Today is the birthday of Miss Ebiere Ogbowei, an architect of Nigerian nationality who has just finished her studies in England. She is twenty two years old and she invites about twenty intimate friends.

Her little sitting is already full of visitors, even though most of the guests are not there yet. The lateness of friends can easily be explained: the marriage of two other friends *is* also scheduled for today.

But we are not going to wait for late-comers. Therefore the programme starts. We start by thanking God, and then listen to music: sometimes a disk of Fela, the famous Nigerian singer who is no more, sometimes *a* love song.

The birthday is marvellous. The birthday cake, surrounded by beautiful flowers, is placed on the table. The décor is fantastic.

4.0 Conclusion

You have been able to translate a passage on a birthday celebration. In the process you have acquired new words. Your knowledge of grammar has improved also.

4.1 Answers

- 1 Il y a une cinquantaine d'étudiants dans la classe
2. La femme est entourée de bons amis.

or

La femme est entourée de bonnes amies.

5.0 Summary

You have known more words like *le retardataire* and *une vingtaine*. Your knowledge of French grammar too has improved. You must be enjoying your translation more and more.

6.0 Tutor-marked assignment

A. Translate the following sentences into French

1. My friend is sometimes very talkative and sometimes very taciturn.
2. What a wonderful birthday.
3. We are going to wait for our friends
4. The birthday cake is surrounded by friends
5. Her little parlour is full of friends.

B. Translate the following sentences into English

1. Amoo vient de terminer ses études en Amérique
2. Le gâteau d'anniversaire est beau
3. On chante tantôt une chanson de Sonny Okosun, tantôt une chanson de James Brown
4. J'attends les retardataires
5. J'ai une cinquantaine d'amies !

7.0 Reference

Berchie, Y et al (2000): *Cours de la Sorbonne, langue et civilisation française*, Paris : CLE.

UNIT 12

LE NIGERIA

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	<i>Le Nigeria</i>
3.1	<i>Le Passé Simple</i> (Past Historic)
3.2	Self exercise
3.3	<i>Le Passif</i> (Passive Voice)
3.3	Vocabulary
3.4	<i>Faux Amis</i>
4.0	Conclusion
4.1	Answers
5.0	Summary
6.0	Teacher-Marked Assignment
7.0	References and Other Resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit will introduce you to a passage on Nigeria. It is very informative. You will learn some vocabulary related to the history and geography of Nigeria. This unit will teach you the conjugation of the *passé simple* (past historic tense). You will also learn *le passif* (passive voice). You will recall the use of *on* and *en*

2.0 Objectives

When you successfully complete this unit, you should be able to:

- read and translate the passage

- identify some grammatical elements in the passage
- acquire new vocabulary: *la superficie, l'embouteillage, déplacer, monoexportateur*
- recall *faux amis*
- recall the use of *on* and *en*
- identify and use le *passé simple* and le *passif*.
- use comma and full stop properly in French in relation to figures.

3.0 Le Nigeria

Le Nigeria a une superficie de 942.000 kilomètres carrés. Au moment de l'indépendance, le Nigeria *n'avait que* trois régions. En 1963, une nouvelle région fut créée. Mais aujourd'hui, on ne parle plus de régions. On parle plutôt des Etats. En 1967, le pays fut découpé en 12 états. Aujourd'hui, on en compte 36.

Lagos est l'ancienne capitale du Nigeria. Le gouvernement fédéral décida de déplacer la capitale fédérale à Abuja. Abuja est donc la capitale actuelle de notre pays... Abuja est une belle ville, bien planifiée. L'embouteillage que connaissait Lagos ne se pose pas à Abuja.

Le Nigeria produit le pétrole qui joue un rôle déterminant dans l'économie. Mais le Nigeria ne veut pas être un pays monoexportateur, dépendant entièrement du produit pétrolier. Le gouvernement fait tout pour assurer la diversification, car un jour les champs pétrolifères seront vides.

3.1 Le Passé Simple (Past Historic)

You must have observed the use of the past historic (*passé simple*). You use the *passé simple* to take the place of the *passé composé* in a historic situation.

In this story the *passé simple* is used in two ways – as the main verb or as an auxiliary.

eut	-	had
décida	-	decided
<u>fut</u> créée	-	was created
<u>fut</u> découpé	-	was divided

Eut is the third person singular of *avoir* in the *passé simple*. You conjugate the *passé simple* of *avoir* this way. Note that the complete sentence is to help you.

J'eus du pain	Nous eussions du pain
Tu eus du pain	Vous eussiez du pain
Il eut du pain	Ils eurent du pain

You conjugate *décider* in the *passé simple* as follows: The complete sentence provided here is a way of helping you to make good sentences on your own.

Je décidai de venir	-	I decided to come
Tu décidas de venir	-	You decided to come
Il/Elle décida de venir	-	He/She decided to come
Nous décidâmes de venir	-	We decided to come
Vous décidâtes de venir	-	You decided to come
Ils décidèrent de venir	-	They decided to come

3.2 Self exercise

Translate the following sentences. Use the past historic

1. I decided to eat
2. He decided to run

3.3 Le Passif (Passive Voice)

The second set of examples involving le *passé simple* are in the form of *le passif* (passive voix).

In the passive voice you use only the auxiliary *être*, but the verb that follows is in the *participe passé*. You can see the examples in the text: fut créée, fut découpé, fut lancée.

You need to ensure agreement with the subject because of the use of “être”. Remember *fut* means was and it is a form of *être* (to be). Read the example from the passage.

Une nouvelle region fut créée.

Note, however, that the following sentence has no problem of agreement.

En 1967, le pays fut découpé en 12 Etats. In the sentence just cited, *le pays* is the subject and is masculine. There is therefore an agreement already.

You must know why the subject agrees with the *participe passé*. It is because the sentence is in the passive voice.

So the following sentences will be rejected:

Elle a mangée

Nous avons mangés

They are not in the passive voice. Rather they are in the active voice.

You should therefore write

Elle a mangé

Nous avons mangé

3.4 Vocabulary

With this exercise, you now see the need for a good French grammar book. You also need a book that treats the conjugation of verbs. You should refer to these books from time to time when the need arises.

You will now have the meanings of some of the words or expressions that may appear difficult.

la superficie	- surface
kilomètres carrés	- square kilometers
déplacer	- to change the place of someone or something
l'embouteillage	- traffic jam, congestion (of traffic)
le pétrole	- petroleum, (mineral) oil
pétrolier	- of (mineral) oil
le produit pétrolier	- petroleum product
monoexportateur	- having only one major crop or valuable thing for exportation
pétrolifères	- oil-bearing
champs pétrolifères	- oil fields

Pétrolier and *pétrolifères* are adjectival forms of *pétrole* (petroleum oil).

Learn also the following expressions or sentences

Ne... que	- only
Il n'a que deux enfants	- He has only two children
Nous ne sommes que trois	- We are only three
dépendre de	- to depend on
Cela dépend <i>de</i> toi	- That depends <i>on</i> you
You write dépendre <i>de</i> and NOT dépendre sur	

You should also take note of the figure 942.000 when dealing with the numbers. The French uses a full stop where the English would use a comma. The English figure will be 942,000

3.5 Model Translation: Nigeria

Nigeria covers an area of 942,000 square kilometers. At independence, Nigeria had only three regions. In 1963, a new region was created. But today, we do not talk of regions anymore. We rather talk of states. In 1967, the country was split into 12 states. Today, we can count 36.

Lagos is the former capital of Nigeria. The Federal Government decided to transfer the Federal Capital to Abuja. Abuja is thus the capital of our country. Abuja is a well-planned beautiful town. The traffic hold-up experienced in Lagos does not exist in Abuja.

Nigeria produces petroleum oil which plays a vital role in the economy. But Nigeria does not want to be a country that exports only one major item, that depends entirely on petroleum product. The Government is doing all it can to ensure diversification, for, one day the oil fields will be empty.

3.6 Faux Amis

Did you observe some *faux amis* in the text? There are at least two of them. They are *le pétrole* which means “petroleum oil” and NOT petrol. The French equivalent of petrol is *l’essence* (feminine)

Actuelle is the second example. “*Capitale actuelle*” means the present or current capital and NOT the actual capital. Remember that *actuelle* is the feminine form of *actuel*.

Refresh your mind with the meaning of *faux amis* (false friends). They are words that have similar spellings but different meanings.

Examples:

une phrase	-	a sentence
sympathique	-	nice, friendly

4.0 Conclusion

The text helps you to know more words and expressions. You realize the need to master your conjugation. You now have an idea of *le passé simple* and *le passif*. You have known more facts on Nigeria through translation.

4.1 Answers

1. Je décidai de manger
2. Il décida de courir

5.0 Summary

The passage has treated interesting words like *le pétrole*, *l'embouteillage* and others. As you learn and use them, your knowledge of translation will improve. You will also discover improvement in the other French courses.

6.0 Tutor – Marked Assignment

Translate the following passage:

Le Ghana

Le Ghana est un pays africain. Il n'est pas aussi grand que le Nigeria. Il eut son indépendance en 1957. La capitale du Ghana est Accra. Accra est extrêmement belle. Le gouvernement ghanéen fait tout pour assurer la beauté de cette ville. Le Ghana n'a pas de pétrole en quantité commerciale. Le Ghana dépend de l'or.

7.0 References and Other Resources

Ojo, S.A. (2002): *A Comprehensive Revision Handbook of French Grammar*, Ibadan: Signal Educational Services Ltd.

Coffman, M.E. (1973): *French Grammar*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

UNIT 13

LES JEUX OLYMPIQUES I

Table of Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 *Les Jeux Olympiques (I)*
- 3.1 Vocabulary
- 3.2 Use of Dictionaries
- 3.3 Self exercise
- 3.4 Model Translation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 4.1 Answers
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-marked assignment
- 7.0 References and other resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit introduces you to more practical translation. You will translate a text. The text treats the Olympic games. It is just an introduction.

2.0 Objectives

As you complete the text successfully, you will know

- many common words in sports e.g. *course, saut à la perche, saut en hauteur* and *lutteur*
- some expressions like *avoir lieu, se préparer avec acharnement*

- new words of great interest e.g. *Athènes, l'argent, hymne national* and *lauréat*.

You will enjoy the text as you understand the words and expressions.

Read the text below. Try to translate it on your own.

3.0 Les jeux olympiques I

Les jeux olympiques ont pour origine Athènes, la capitale de Grèce. Aujourd'hui les jeux olympiques constituent une véritable rencontre internationale. Ils ont lieu dans tous les quatre ans. Les athlètes se préparent avec acharnement. Tout athlète a une ambition : celle de remporter un prix. De temps à temps, les participants établissent des records. Les trois meilleurs athlètes obtiennent des médailles. Le meilleur athlète mérite le prix d'or. L'argent et le bronze sont réservés à la deuxième et troisièmes places respectivement.

Les gagnants sont des sources de fierté pour leurs pays. Après chaque victoire, l'hymne national du pays gagnant est chanté.

Les activités sportives sont nombreuses : course, saut à la perche, saut en hauteur et saut en longueur. Il y a aussi des boxeurs et lutteurs entre autres.

3.1 Vocabulary

Below are some of the words which may seem difficult. You can see their meanings written out. Do study them. Understanding them will assist you greatly in translating the text.

Athènes	-	Athens (capital of Greece)
une véritable rencontre	-	a real gathering or meeting
tout athlète	-	every athlete
une médaille	-	a medal
l'argent (feminine)	-	silver

L'argent in this context means silver and *not* money. Remember that some words have different meanings (polysemy). It is the context that will determine the appropriate meaning.

Les gagnants (masc)-		the winners
l'hyme national	-	national anthem
la course	-	running
le saut à la perche	-	pole vaulting
le saut en hauteur	-	high jump
le saut en longueur	-	long jump
le lutteur	-	wrestler

You also need to know the following expressions

avoir lieu	-	to take place
se préparent avec acharnement	-	prepare relentlessly ; prepare with determination

The dictionary is also useful for cross-checking spellings and genders of nouns.

3.2 Use of Dictionaries

You should know all the words and expressions listed above. If there are other words you do not know, you should hasten to look them up in the dictionary and know them.

You realize the need for good dictionaries. Try and buy them immediately if you have not bought yet. Remember, you need three dictionaries. Two monolingual dictionaries. That is, an entirely French dictionary and an entirely English dictionary. You will also need a bilingual dictionary (French/English). Practise the use of the new words through writing sentences and short essays. A rich acquisition of vocabulary is an asset in translation.

You need to know one interesting word. It is *tout*. In the passage *tout* means every and NOT all. *Tout* in this context is an adjective.

Remember to use the words according to the context in which you find them. Some words are polysemic i.e they have different meanings in different contexts. L'argent which you have known is a typical example.

3.3 Self exercise

How many types of dictionaries do you need?

3.4 Model Translation: The Olympic Games (I)

The Olympic Games have their origin in Athens, the capital of Greece. Today the Olympic Games constitute a real international gathering. They take place every four years. Athletes prepare relentlessly. Every athlete has an ambition: that of winning a prize. From time to time, participants make records. The three best athletes obtain medals. The best athlete merits the prize of gold. Silver and bronze are reserved for the second and third places respectively

The winners are sources of pride to their countries. After each victory, the national anthem of the country that wins is sung.

The sporting activities are many: running, pole vaulting, high jump and long jump. There are also boxers and wrestlers among others.

You can also translate the first sentence this way: The Olympic Games originated from Athens. Here, you see an example of transposition. In “les jeux olympiques ont pour origine Athènes...”, *origine* is a noun; *originated* is a verb; hence the transposition.

Try and translate the passage. Where you have difficulties, make use of your dictionaries and grammar books.

4.0 Conclusion

You have learned many expressions and words like *les jeux olympiques*, *course*, *se préparer acharnement* and many others. Make use of them often – at the slightest opportunity.

4.1 Answers

I need three types of dictionaries: a French monolingual dictionary, an English monolingual dictionary and an English/French bilingual dictionary.

5.0 Summary

The words and expressions you have learned are very important. Use them often in sentences as you write and speak French. Translation becomes exciting when you have a good command of vocabulary.

6.0 Teacher-marked assignment

Translate the following sentences into English or French as the case may be

- 1) Les sportives se préparent avec acharnement pour obtenir des médailles
- 2) De temps en temps les sportifs battent leurs propres records. J'en connais certains cas.
- 3) The national anthem of Nigeria is sung.
- 4) The sporting activities are very interesting.
- 5) Gold is reserved for the best athlete.

7.0 References and other materials

Adam, Yvon (1979): *Le sport dans la vie des soviétiques*, Moscou : Edition du Progrès.

UNIT 14

LES JEUX OLYMPIQUES II

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	<i>Les Jeux Olympiques</i> (II)
3.1	Vocabulary
3.2	Grammar
3.3	Use of Dictionary
3.4	Self exercise
3.5	Model translation
4.0	Conclusion
4.1	Answer
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-marked assignment
7.0	References and other resources

1.0 Introduction

This unit is a follow-up of the translation on the Olympic Games. This unit will further help to enlarge your horizon on the Olympic Games. Naturally you will enrich your vocabulary through the text you will be translating.

2.0 Objectives

On successful completion of this unit, you should know among others.

- words and expressions relating to sports e.g. *entraînement, supporter, remporter une victoire, les sportifs, les perdants, les gagnants*

- the following expressions : *jouir de, lors de, être en proie à*

Read the following text. Try to understand it. It is on the Olympic Games.

3.0 Les jeux olympiques (II)

Remporter une victoire dans les jeux olympiques n'est pas facile, car il s'agit des sports de haute compétition. Pour atteindre les sommets de victoire, il faut des efforts assidus des entraîneurs et des sportifs bien expérimentés.

Les jeux olympiques jouissent d'une popularité internationale. Lors des jeux, tout le monde – surtout les supporters – semble être en proie aux tourments. Le suspense ne manque pas. Ce qui est sûr c'est qu'il y a toujours des gagnants et des perdants.

Mais à la fin des jeux, on n'a pas une véritable impression de perdant. C'est le monde entier qui est le vrai gagnant. Tout le monde est ému par la beauté et la gloire représentées par le défilé des sportifs et autres activités de clôture.

3.1 Vocabulary

You will need to know the apparently difficult vocabulary. Below are some of them and their meanings.

remporter une victoire	-	to win a victory
l'entraîneur (masc)	-	trainer
l'entraînement (masc)	-	training
les supporters (masc)	-	supporters
les sportifs (masc)	-	sportsmen and women
les gagnants et perdants	-	winners and losers.
les défilés des sportifs	-	marching of sportsmen and women.
activités de clôture	-	closing activities

Retain all these words in your memory with great enthusiasm. Anytime you have sporting activities, quickly recall these words and other relevant ones to memory. Where you forgot, hasten to recall them by revising the notes or by having recourse to a dictionary.

Remember that you can enjoy translation only when you know the meanings of words and expressions. That is why you must know the following expressions in the passage:

jouir de	-	to enjoy
Ils jouissent d'une popularité internationale	-	They enjoy international popularity.
Être en proie à	-	to be prey to
Tout le monde semble être en proie aux tourments	-	Everyone seems to be a prey to torments Torments prey on everyone

3.2 Grammar

There is an important point of grammar that you need to know. You can see one in the use of *beauté et gloire représentées par...* (beauty and glory represented by...)

Note that the participe passé (*représentées*) which is playing the role of an adjective is in the plural. The reason is that it qualifies two nouns – *beauté* and *gloire*. Both are feminine nouns. The agreement must reflect this.

3.3 Use of Dictionary

Read the text again. Use your dictionary if you still have problems understanding some words. Remember the importance of contextual meaning and polysemic words. Polysemy means multiple meaning; but the context determines the desired meaning.

As you use the dictionary, take note also of the genders of words if they are nouns.

Now make an attempt to translate the passage fully. You will certainly enjoy it if you have followed all the steps systematically. Compare with the model translation that follows.

3.4 Self exercise

When do you say a word is polysemic?

3.5 Model Translation: The Olympic Games (II)

Obtaining victory at the Olympic Games is not easy, for it has to do with sports that are keenly contested. To attain the heights of victory, there is need for painstaking efforts on the part of trainers and sportsmen. For the trainings, you need highly experienced sportsmen.

The Olympic games enjoy international popularity. During the games, everyone – especially the supporters – seems to be prey to torments (During the games, torments seem to prey on everyone – especially the supporters). Suspense is not lacking (There is much suspense). What is certain is that there are always winners and losers.

But at the end of the games, you do not have a real feeling of losers. It is the whole world that is the real winner. Everyone is moved by the beauty and glory represented by the marching of sportsmen and women and other closing activities.

Alternative translations are put in bracket. This goes to remind you again that a text or passage may have many versions.

If you translate *le suspense ne manque pas* as “suspense is not lacking” you have a literal translation. But if you opt for have a modulation “there is much suspense”, you have a modulation.

4.0 Conclusion

You are certainly getting into the exciting work of translation. Your vocabulary is increasing with such important words and expressions as *les sportifs, remporter une victoire, jouir de* etc.

4.1 Answer

A word is polysemic when it has more than one meaning.

5.0 Summary

Through the translation of the passage, your French must have improved tremendously. Do all you can to retain the new words and expressions in your memory. Use them often.

6.0 Teacher-marked assignment

Make two short sentences each with the following expressions *jouir de* and *être en proie à*

Translate the following sentence:

Tout le monde est ému par l'honneur, la gloire, la joie et la beauté représentées dans les jeux.

7.0 References and other resources

Adam, Yvon (1979): *Le sport dans la vie des soviétiques*, Moscou, Edition du Progrès.