

1- Introduction:

In the theory of language teaching, the teacher/instructor basically responds to the language policy and its administration in accordance to the characteristics of a given nation. Thus, the material they are provided with as means of language teaching generally varies between audio-visual equipments and textbooks. However, foreign language teaching, though fundamentally relying on these two, cannot mostly be restricted to the achievement of linguistic proficiency by enhancing the practice of the four skills that define language learning. A learner of a foreign language is undoubtedly asked to speak and pronounce correctly, to write grammatically well-structured sentences, and to reach the point of 'automaticity' in language use. However, when the teaching of foreign languages becomes strongly dependent on the educational and sometimes the social contexts, the afore itinerary is almost distorted. As a case study, our students at ENS Oran have reported throughout their research works at secondary schools a multitude of teaching situations in which English as a foreign language in Algeria is taught and learned quite differently in relation to the context. In the present work we expose as a problematics the uncontrolled use of language translation in the teaching of English as a foreign language, and propose cognitive translation as a substitute.

2- Development:

2.1 Foreign Language Teaching and Context

In Stern's description of language learning/teaching contexts, he distinguishes three types:

1/ '*The language context*', according to Stern (1983), at this definite level, the perception of foreign language in the view of the learner and the teacher will be shaped in the mirror of their first language (s). In this respect, political, social and cultural considerations will be attributed the position and the value of learning these two languages.

2/'*The educational setting*', in this respect, Stern implicates the educational value assigned to foreign language teaching, perhaps in comparison to other disciplines, beside the quantitative and the qualitative support of this kind of teaching.

3/ '*The language teaching background*', historical files, evolvments, and present-time settings of language teaching need to be pedagogically examined to take part in a language teaching theory.

Accordingly, when the notion of context is reflected in the teaching of English as a foreign language in some secondary schools in Oran, the situation certainly varies according to the interactants with their different attitudes, learning outcomes and abilities, psychological specificities, socio-economic and socio-cultural backgrounds, in addition to some political and administrative heterogeneities noticed from one high school to another.

Therefore, the present paper main interest in translation and more specifically cognitive translation could not be realized without prior reflection upon the environment that justifies its presence in its different aspects as a product.

2.2 The First Language(L1) and the Foreign Language (L3)

In the case of Algeria, Arabic is the first language; it is acquired at home as a mother tongue to constitute the means of daily life communication expressed in different regional dialects and accents, beside Berber varieties for Kabilyans. French is also partly used as L1 by individuals with different socio-economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds, in addition to other ideological and historical characteristics that again justify the use of French as a mother tongue. On the other hand, Arabic is educationally taught at schools from the age of six, however, this one is not almost identical to the mother tongue, it is known as Standard Arabic, a modern form of long earlier Classical Arabic. Accordingly, the extent of vitality that French has been able to gain among Algerian speakers has engaged the French language into a sociolinguistic and a psycholinguistic challenge particularly among learners. Both languages, English and French, are resorted to for scientific reasons and communicative purposes worldwide. However, for English language learners in high schools, the measuring of importance of one language over the other is not necessarily frequent, as at this level learning in general is evaluated and restricted to this evaluation. However, the situation does not exclude the usual learners' complainings about the difficulty of learning and understanding English, its 'complexity', its 'occasional

appearance' almost only in schools, and its 'oddness' as a language with particularities that are not usual to ear when compared to daily life languages. However, when English language learning becomes a question of carrier, the French language does scarcely challenge it, and in some instances it is considered as useless when compared to English.

Respectively, the use of translation for teaching purposes in secondary schools is the product of the position of languages in Algeria, and more importantly, the educational enterprise and the way it maintains its classical regard to the learning of foreign languages.

2.3 Translation and Foreign Language Teaching

Translation is a science and a discipline that is almost called upon to understand a message and to be informed about different subjects; sometimes it is useful for describing languages and comparing them.

In the field of education, this science is taught through the exploration of languages in relation to their original cultures and societies; its teaching is based on techniques and theories whose main objective is to realize a logical set of interpretations and translations. However, in the same domain, this science can be resorted to as a technique *per se*, especially for the teaching of foreign languages.

A long- dated debate about the function of translation in foreign language teaching/learning has become the undertaken occupation of a number of authors among whom linguists and specialists in translation studies who have provided the research ground with conflicting and generative ideas at the same time in order to highlight the technicality of translation as a mediating science between L1 and L2/L3.

In this respect, Lado (1964), disables the function of translation for teaching purposes by simply making a distinction between two completely different activities, one of teaching a language and another of translating. He says: « [it] is not a substitute for language practice... translation is more complex, than, different from, and unnecessary for speaking, listening, reading, or writing».

An emergent question from Lado's proclamation (1964) is attempted to know the applicability framework of translation and its limitations, in other words, if language learning is based on the four skills; listening, speaking, writing and reading; will translation as a technique be applied at all four levels, and in case it will be, will teachers proceed to the same 'form' of translation, or may be to different forms. Another major query is to weigh up the degree of importance of integrating translation in the teaching of languages. In this sense, can one realize the prevailing of language learning in all its aspects over text understanding in a different language. Hence, cognitively speaking, will the learner arrive at storing more language knowledge than shaping ideas with the intervention of L1 and some occasional forms of vocabulary memorization. In this regard, E.V.Gatenby (1967) says:

« Translation... is often no test at all of comprehension.... And there is another reason why testing by translation is bad pedagogy. We as teachers are trying to bring our pupils to use English without translating in their own minds, to say without hesitation the right thing on the right occasion... Our aim is to get our pupils... to the stage where they can use English without having to think ».

Gatenby by this proclamation will have joined Palmer's 'automaticity' in language learning whose idea as reported in Stern's is that :

« the language learning process had a natural basis in man's 'spontaneous capacities for acquiring speech' (Palmer 1922/1964)... This had to be combined with the use of 'studial capacities', i.e., deliberate, cognitive, co-operative learning. Palmer was firmly convinced that the learning processes most appropriate for language learning are those that lead to habit formation and 'automatic', unconscious use rather than those that lead to concept formation and systematic thought. »

One underlying point that prevails in this situation is the integration of a whole discipline (translation) for teaching purposes. Teaching which is another different discipline will, in the present case, have bearings on knowledge about language and about translation

techniques and sometimes theories. Undoubtedly, the learner will lose focus on the most systematic description in language learning to lean to the most meaning-based way of learning. Hence, automaticity at this level is still possible but more exceptionally for vocabulary learning, or parrotly shaped grammatical structures with no referential distinctions as to tense and subjects; a form of systematic thought which overgeneralizes rules leading to unskilled learning and language misuse. As an instance, the translation of words like 'good' in French is 'bien'... Respectively the translation of 'vous -sentez-vous bien?' might be for the learner, 'Do you feel good?' 'feel you good?', while the word 'well' is, out of systemic thought, not grasped as a logical word when provided by the teacher.

On a second opposing side to anti-translation instrumentalization, a group of researchers have sustained the use of translation for language teaching/learning under other revealing data.

Kopczynski (1983) in this respect lists a group of pro-translation outcomes. According to him, translation in teaching a foreign language permits the control of the language in question through conscious learning. This assumption focuses on the parallelism realized by translation between the meaning of segments and their position in a given structure. According to Kopczynski, interference between the native and the foreign languages is ultimately reduced or avoided when adopting translation. He assumes that languages properties will be made apparent and distinct when one form or meaning are provided in a different language. In another point in the list, Kopczynski focuses on the kind of learning offered by translation. The point is that learners, being able to understand, become active participants in the class, while simultaneously not precluding automatic habits. The idea of translation, in Kopczynski seems to be the product of this logic of the existence of a prior knowledge of language, one of the native tongue. The constant and unconscious reference to one's native language once facing another different has brought some scholars to think about the systematization of this mental process. The procedure has then been adopted by translation.

The option of translating for language learning purposes still needs evidence to attain applicability and resonance. However, cognitive translation in the present paper has been proposed as a substitute for language translation to be used as an instrument in favour of mental interpretations while preserving the learning of the foreign language by maintaining the right to fully access the knowledge and the use of the four skills. In other words, language translation is perceived to be that form of translation which heavily evokes the use of the first language in the teaching/learning of foreign languages. While cognitive translation is importantly based on learning both the foreign language and the language translation through mediation in this language.

In the present study, mediation is the act of transmitting ideas and information in the same language taught with a well-defined connection to the teacher's (and the learners') sociocultural environment(s), ideological beliefs, and current knowledge about the target language culture(s). The main aim is one of shaping interactive images in the learners' minds under cognitive interpretation. At this receptive level, cognitive translation is intentionally provoked by the teacher after cognitive interpretation would have taken place.

2.4 Mother Tongue Interference in Language Teaching: The Case of Secondary Schools in Oran

The interference of the mother tongue in the teaching of foreign languages is sometimes the product of a variety of factors characterizing the whole community in question.

In some pre-teacher dissertations conducted by some students at ENS Oran, the issue is initiated by the different attitudes and positions attributed to the different languages in Algeria. Among them the percentage of learners who prefer learning other languages than English, 45.71% of pupils preferring the Arabic language, 28.55% of pupils prefer the French language, while 25.71 of pupils at this school prefer the English language.

In another question, the importance to study the English language in Algeria shows an apparent variation from those who evaluate its communicability in the society (37.14%) to others who

find it universal (52.85%), while others estimate that it serves merely nothing (10%). However, the recent ministerial proclamation that tends to promote the English language especially at the level of Algerian universities would probably bring better results as to its usefulness in Algeria and its future status beside the newly challenging debates about the French existence.

In a different work conducted by ENS Oran students on “The Interference of the Mother Tongue in the Learning of Foreign Languages”(2020), 60% of secondary school teachers declare their tendency to use the Arabic language when teaching English. The same teachers reveal that by way of translating or switching to Arabic, pupils find it easy to grasp the meanings. They add that, sometimes by means of evoking some knowledge about French words and expressions, pupils may understand similar items in English. In the same work, another question intended to understand the attitudes of teachers towards translation or code switching while teaching English as a foreign language. The answers were mostly inclined towards rejection as in their words, these intermediary techniques for teaching impede the learning process. Others estimate that basically a foreign language should be internally and mentally processed in order to become independent. However, not an easy task it is to obtain freedom from language interference through translation and switching since the process of successful teaching/learning implicates both learners and teachers.

Very recently, another pre-teacher dissertation under the title of “Attitudes towards Foreign Languages: Tensions and Convictions Among Algerian Secondary School Teachers and Learners” have been conducted by ENS students, providing optimistic results about the way English is being perceived among learners as future university students, especially after the initiative made by the Ministry of Higher Education concerning the importance of English for the future of Algeria. In this concern, the present work on the integration of cognitive translation will inevitably provide successful results for the learning of English.

2.5 The Methodology of Cognitive Translation

In the different approaches to the integration of the cognitive theory to translation and interpretation, Presentaciòn Padilla et.al. (1999) in their *Proposal for a cognitive theory of translation and interpreting. A methodology for future empirical research* has stated a number of levels that encounter the most important steps of the process of the cognitive formation of concepts and ideas, these are:

a) 'Phonological and orthographic analysis of the input received'. According to the author, this analysis should come before accessing the comprehension of the source text.

b) What should come after is the 'lexical and semantic representation of the perceived word', At this level, the recipient is expected to understand the word with its possible meanings.

c) As a next level, the teacher will have to analyse longer units in the source texts.

d) 'It is necessary to create a propositional structure. In other words, the propositions must connect to form an integrated and coherent representation of the text'.

e) After a series of microstructures shaping the propositional text, a higher level of the representation is shaped by the macrostructure of the text.

A series of macro processes acts to achieve: relevant previous knowledge stored in long-term memory is recovered, following the "theory of schemata, micro propositions of lesser importance are eliminated, a summary is made of the main part of the text and inferences are made.

The presentation of the translational and interpreting cognitive process in Padilla's proposal follows a series of levels and considers the linguistic and the psycholinguistic measures that settle ground for comprehension. The present proposal follows the same itinerary but by 'mediating' in the same language. In other words, mediation shapes the series of propositions which represent the source structure in a different form while respecting the same meaning. In this respect, it

simply displays an explanatory act. In the same token, some psycholinguists and translation theorists like (Langacker 1987; Johnson-Laird 1983; Kintsch and Van Dijk 1978; Kiraly 1995) in Padilla et.al.(1999) do not seem to agree on stages of comprehension in cognitive translation /interpretation, they assume that the recipient/mediator should understand subjects through the 'construction' of the message. Hence, what is being processed, in another sense, is the shaping of a mental model of the structure which becomes more and more clear as long as the evolution of explanation through examples, signs, and selected key words take place, hence the mediating structure is progressed by linguistic, psycholinguistic and sign representations.

Accordingly, when more emphasis is put on the explanation of the source structure, teachers act as mediators and transmitters with explanation being progressively achieved in different structures of the same language. This mediating structure is characterized by:

1/ Its simplicity: a mediating structure in the same language can rely on synonymous words, explanations, body language, mnemonic, and imitations.

2/Its details: These are supported by examples referring to the local context of teaching and learning; to mean the different social and sociolinguistic characteristics of the Algerian society, in addition to the context of the target language community; in this concern, some sociolinguistic, cultural and social features that are proper to the British and the American societies can be called upon.

3/ the attempt to vehicle cognitive interpretation and translation by correct knowledge/use of grammar.

Cognitively speaking, the learners as receiving actors will themselves organize messages or ideas according to the cognitive knowledge they have developed from the key elements (linguistic/ideational/sociocultural,gestural) introduced in the teacher's speech. However, after cognitive interpretation will have been achieved in the learner's minds with different rates of understanding (or misunderstanding) the teacher may enhance the cognitive process by asking the learners to translate to their first

language. The present proposal might wish to challenge the persistence of first language interference in secondary schools, and keep translation a final act whose function is to confirm understanding and leave larger space for the inculcation of the English language.

2.6 Cognitive Translation/Interpretation and Grammar

In its very broad definition, the grammar of a language may comprise a set of definite rules that are open to overgeneralization. These like the transfer of an active sentence into a passive one in the English language. However, still in English and in all languages worldwide, some exceptions in grammar do not always adequately apply to apparently similar forms and actions. The progressive form of the verb 'to like', I am liking*, does not apply to the English language under the argument of listing it among many sensory verbs that obey to the same rule.

Accordingly, the idea of implicating the knowledge of grammar for the realization of a good learning of a foreign language has come to provide the other units within the learning task (reading, understanding, using, speaking, writing, producing, etc .) with a basis without which the logic that serves the building and the shaping of images related to acts cannot be realized.

The teacher of English as a foreign language will not be able to use a mediating structure to explain a text, a sentence, an idea, etc. without making certain the seizure of grammatical homogeneities and heterogeneities by their learners. It is then for the opposite reason that some teachers may avoid cognitive translation for the promotion of language translations. The latter has become an easier solution for the teaching of English in Algeria.

Undoubtedly, the learning of vocabulary largely depends on frequency in use, however, the knowledge of words and their meanings will never suffice for the learning of language as a whole. The learner is expected to understand whole structures and texts, and to be able to write and express long stretches in this language. It is then the grammar of the language that is making sense to its learning.

3. Conclusion

Though the attempt of the present proposal does not completely exclude (especially under extreme necessity) the integration of the mother tongue in the teaching of the foreign language, it plans at involving the learner within a foreign language atmosphere at least inside the classroom. With more persistence, authority and responsibility, cognitive translation through mediation will inevitably raise more consciousness about the importance and the value of foreign languages. Teachers at secondary schools might face more difficulties when using the mother tongue than when approaching mediation in foreign languages. The reason is primarily due to the set of differences between Arabic and English in this case. Further, in the data obtained from the same research works conducted by ENS Oran students, some pupils tend to use Arabic to answer exam questions and homeworks. The same issue can be repaired by responsabilizing pupils outside the classroom environment, by asking them to act as mediators *per se* to report a process, a description, a narration or a definition using the foreign language only. Their different acts can be exposed inside the classroom at least through a brief moment of time. As future perspectives, a more detailed methodology for the practice of cognitive translation will be administered to teachers at secondary schools within another future research work conducted by our students at ENS Oran under ENS teachers supervision.

References:

- Gatenby E.V., (1967), "Translation in the Classroom": in W.R. Lee (ed.), *E.L.T. Selection 2: Articles from the Journal 'English Language Teaching'*, Oxford University Press, London, pp. 66-73
- Lado R., (1964), *Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach*, New York, McGraw-hill, Inc.
- Madani, K. ; Laidani, F. (2020), *The Interference of Learners' Mother Tongue in the Learning of English. The Case of Algerian Secondary School Learners*. Supervised by Dr. K. KISSI (ENS Oran), June 2020.

- Miloud Ameer B. ; Medjahed, A. (2020), Attitudes Towards Foreign Languages: Tensions and Convictions Among Secondary School Teachers and Pupils. Supervised by Dr. K. KISSI (ENS Oran), June 2020.
- Ouzani F. ; Essiaf, I. (2019), Major Factors Affecting the Learning of English as a Foreign Language in Algeria. A Case Study of First and Third Year Students at Colonel Lotfi and Pasteur Secondary Schools. Supervised by Dr. K. KISSI (ENS Oran), June 2019.
- Padilla, P. ; Bajo, M. T.; Padilla, F., (1999), "Proposal for a cognitive theory of translation and interpreting. A methodology for future empirical research", in: *The Interpreters' Newsletter n. 9/1999, Trieste, EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste*, pp. 61-78
- Randaccio, M., Translation and Language Teaching: Translation as a useful teaching Resource. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org>
- Stern, H.H., (1983), Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching. Oxford University Press
- Vermes, A., (2010), Translation in Foreign Language Teaching: A Brief Overview of Pros and Cons.
- Zhu Lin, (2011), "A Cognitive Investigation Into Translation Thinking and Translation Instruction", *redit n°6*, 21-38.