

A number of explanations will help to clarify the text of this translation, which has tried to remain as close as possible to the immediate, unliterary flavor of the original. Malavoglia means "Ill-will", and this nickname bestowed by the community on Master 'Ntoni's family has, like all the important names in this carefully wrought novel, a consciously sought ironic overtone. I have retained the Sicilian forms of address Compare and Comare which are, respectively, a man or a woman who has acted as a godfather or a godmother at a christening or confirmation. They were kept not only for their musical value but also because they symbolize the close relationships that exist between most of Verga's characters in this novel.

(Giovanni Verga,
The House by the Medlar Tree,
 translated by Raymond Rosenthal)

All in all, translation and cross-cultural communication can and do take place rather successfully despite cultural gaps and differences, as is shown by the bulk and variety of material that is translated into a host of languages worldwide.

3.3. Context of Situation

The relationship between language use and the context of situation identified by Malinowski was further developed by the linguist, J.R. Firth, who saw linguistics essentially as the study of meaning in terms of how language functions in context. He therefore worked out a set of variables which he felt had to be present in the context of situation for meaningful interaction to take place: the participants in the situation, the action taking place (verbal and non-verbal), other relevant features of the situation and the effect of the verbal action.

A similar set of variables for describing the context of situation was proposed by Hymes in his work on the ethnography of communication: the form and content of the message, the setting, the participants, the intent and effect of the communication, the key, the medium, the genre, and the norms of interaction. Once again this view of language goes beyond its formal properties to include the context of situation and the participants in acts of communication. In order to communicate effectively language users need to produce utterances which are both linguistically correct and appropriate to the socio-cultural context. In other words, communication involves not only linguistic competence (an ab-

stract knowledge of the language system) but also the ability to use and interpret language appropriately in relation to the social context. This has been termed "communicative competence" and entails knowing "when to speak, when not and ... what to talk about with whom, when, where and in what manner" (Hymes 1972:277). Communicative competence is thus fundamental to both intralingual and interlingual communication. *Prego*, for instance, can express various functions depending on the context in which it is used. It can function as a polite conventional reply to *Grazie*, in which case it would be translated into English as either You're welcome or Not at all; it can also mean Here You are or There you are:

- *Potrebbe passarmi quel libro, per favore?*
- *Prego.*
- *Grazie.*
- *Prego.*

"Could you pass me that book, please?"

"Here you are".

"Thank you".

"You're welcome".

or it can be a request for the addressee to repeat what was said, that is, Sorry, what did you say?

- *Potrebbe passarmi quel libro, per favore?*
- *Prego?*
- *Vorrei che Lei mi passasse quel libro.*

"Could you pass me that book, please?"

"Sorry?"

"I said, 'Could you pass me that book?'"

or it can be a gesture of politeness, meaning After you:

- *Prego.*
- *Dopo di Lei.*

"After you".

"No, after you".

or it can function as the opening exchange of a service encounter:

- *Prego?*
- *Vorrei un libro di storia dell'arte.*

"Can I help you?"

"I'd like a book on history of art".

The intonation patterns of course change in spoken discourse.

If the intended meaning of a text is to be decoded effectively within the same language or across languages, account has to be taken of the socio-cultural context in which the language event takes place. Thus, the text is not purely a linguistic phenomenon but also a communicative event, a unit of language embedded in a given situation and part of a broader socio-cultural context. The translator's "communicative competence" is based on the ability to convey messages from the SL to the TL that are not only linguistically correct as regards the co-text but also appropriate to the context of situation and context of culture: *Pronto?* can be translated into English as Hello? or Ready? depending on whether the context is a telephone situation or seeking information about someone's state of preparation. The translator would not be able to disambiguate the meaning and therefore opt for one of the two alternatives in English without knowledge of the context, in the sense of the co-text and/or context of situation.

- *Pronto?*
- *Pronto. Parla Elena. Potrei parlare con Michele, per favore?*

"Hallo?"

"Hallo. This is Helen. Could I speak to Michael, please?"

- *Pronto?*
- *Sì, cara.*
- *Bene, allora possiamo andare.*

"Ready?"

"Yes, dear".

"Right, then we can go".

3.4. Register

The variables of a language event can also be looked at in terms of Halliday's *register*. As we have seen, a relationship exists between a given situation and the language used in it. Since people take part in a vast range of social encounters, different varieties of language are needed for different purposes. Register is related to the use to which language is put in a particular social context and is determined by the nature of the activity in which the language is functioning. We use register to say different things, to express different meanings according to the kind of social activity we are engaging in. So registers tend to reflect conventionally-accepted types of discourse, which differ from one another mainly in grammar and vocabulary.

Halliday distinguishes three main variables in the context of situation, and consequently in register: the *field of discourse*, the *tenor of discourse* and the *mode of discourse*.

3.4.1. The *field of discourse* refers to what is actually taking place (the event or activity), that is, to what the participants are doing with language, in a particular spatial and temporal setting. It also includes what the interaction is about (the subject-matter or topic) and what the participants know or do not know about it (shared and unshared knowledge).

We can therefore speak of technical, scientific and legal registers, the language of sport, institutional registers (classroom discourse) and so on. Consider the following examples.

Il CERN (Centro Europeo Ricerche Nucleari) si propone di diventare un punto di riferimento sempre più agguerrito per gli scienziati di tutto il mondo. Nel capitolo di ricerca avanzata che riguarda le particelle elementari, la chiave di tutto sono i acceleratori: per la fisica di oggi hanno la funzione dei telescopi per gli astronomi. Senza telescopi non c'è astronomia.

(Carlo Rubbia, "Verso il Duemila")

CERN (European Centre for Nuclear Research) aims to become an increasingly important focal point for scientists all over the world. In advanced research into elementary particles, accelerators are the master key. They represent a breakthrough in modern physics on a par with the telescope in astronomy. Without telescopes there would be no astronomy.

I compiti deferiti alle organizzazioni internazionali non governative possono ben essere, evidentemente, i più vari, in dipendenza del volere degli Stati contraenti. I più comuni consistono, indubbiamente, nella esplicazione di attività di natura consultiva, che è connessa, di sovente, all'azione svolta dalle organizzazioni internazionali intergovernative. ... L'articolo 71 dello Statuto delle Nazioni Unite e quelli similari delle altre organizzazioni internazionali intergovernative pongono il fondamento giuridico dello statuto consultivo accordato alle organizzazioni internazionali non governative, statuto consultivo che viene poi più specificamente regolato da una normativa di attuazione stabilita autonomamente dalle organizzazioni intergovernative stesse e costituente parte del loro "diritto interno".

(Paolo Benvenuti, "Natura e caratteri delle organizzazioni internazionali non governative")

The tasks entrusted to international non-governmental organisations can clearly be the most varied, depending on the will of the contracting States. Undoubtedly, the most common task consists in the carrying out of activities of a consultative nature, which is often connected with the role played by international inter-governmental organisations. ... Article 71 of the United Nations Charter as well as similar ones of other international inter-governmental organisations form the legal basis for the consultative status accorded to international non-governmental organisations. Consultative status is then more specifically regulated by a set of implementing rules independently laid down by the inter-governmental organisations themselves and constitutes part of their "internal law".

Since the first game in 1967, there have been a total of twenty-three Super Bowl contests. The television audience has fluctuated to sometimes include close to half of the nation's television sets, which today comes close to an estimated 130 million people. The first ticket sales at \$10 at Super Bowl I amounted to over \$600,000; today the gate receipts are more than \$7,000,000 with tickets priced over \$100 each.

(Anthony De Stefano,
"The Legendary Super Bowl")

Dal primo incontro nel 1967 ci sono state 23 finali di Super Bowl. Il pubblico televisivo ha avuto delle fluttuazioni fino ad includere alle volte quasi la metà degli spettatori televisivi nazionali, per un totale che oggidi si stima intorno a 130 milioni di persone. La vendita dei biglietti da 10 dollari in occasione del Super Bowl I ammontò a 600.000 dollari; oggi gli incassi superano i 7 milioni di dollari con biglietti che costano oltre i 100 dollari.

The field of discourse can be identified most readily in the collocation of lexical and grammatical items. In English, for instance, *absolve* will point to a religious register and is likely to co-occur in the same text as *confessional*, *priest*, *go in peace*, *let us pray*; *acquit* will indicate a legal register and will collocate with *charge*, *court*, *I rest my case*. In translations from Italian into English, therefore, the choice of whether to translate *assolvere* by *absolve* or *acquit* will entail considerations of register. The range of meaning of *assolvere* overlaps with that of *absolve* and that of *acquit*: thus, while *Il prete l'ha assolto dai suoi peccati* = The priest absolved him of his sins, *La Corte l'ha assolto dall'imputazione* = The Court acquitted him of the charge.

There may often be more in common between certain registers in different languages than between different registers in the same language. It is often easier, for example, to translate scientific discourse interlingually than to "translate" it intralingually for a layman: *neonate* is closer to *neonato* than *newborn baby*.

Shared and unshared knowledge about the topic of interaction is also a component of the field of discourse. The following text shows how writers can exploit shared knowledge to make their point more effectively. It plays on the reader's presumed intertextual knowledge and childhood memories:

IF YOU GO DOWN
TO THE WOODS TODAY
YOU'RE IN
FOR A BIG SURPRISE

(picture of devastated woodland)

TO STOP THIS DESTRUCTION WE NEED YOUR HELP TODAY!
The Woodland Trust.

The effectiveness of this appeal depends on the reader's ability to recognise the children's song that talks about going down to the woods to see the teddy bears having their picnic. It contrasts the idyllic and sheltered setting of the song with the destructive and threatening reality of the Woodland Trust pamphlet.

3.4.2. The *tenor of discourse* refers to the role relationships that exist between the participants in a communicative event. The level of formality of language is greatly influenced by the social situation in which it is produced and the status of the participants. What is acceptable and appropriate in one situation is not necessarily so in another. Martin Joos has defined five levels of formality, which can be seen as a continuum: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, intimate (Joos 1961:11). This is illustrated below (Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens 1964):

- frozen – "Visitors should make their way at once to the upper floor by way of the staircase"
- formal – "Visitors should go up the stairs at once"
- consultative – "Would you mind going upstairs right away please?"
- casual – "Time you went upstairs, now"
- intimate – "Up you go, chaps!"

A simpler working division for translation purposes might be: formal, neutral, informal. Above all, it is essential when translating to ensure that the tenor of the text is consistent, which means that all the grammatical and lexical elements should belong to the same level of formality. Our next door neighbour popped off last week may, for instance, be acceptable in informal discourse but is highly inappropriate in a stylistically more formal context where *died* or the somewhat euphemistic *passed away* would be used. Here is just a sample of some informal expressions and their formal equivalents:

<i>informal</i>	<i>formal</i>
a lot of	much / many
to start with	first, firstly
on top of that	moreover / furthermore
what's more	in addition
anyway / anyhow	however
talking about	as for / as to

Closely related to the degree of formality is the degree of familiarity that exists between participants related to social status and rank, or to the politeness strategies they wish to adopt. Although English does not have the dual form of address to be found in Italian (*tu/Lei*), it still has ways of showing the relative distance between addresser and addressee so that an equivalent pragmatic effect can be achieved. In the following example consider the way a servant in Victorian times addresses his master:

... he woke up in a better frame of mind. As men will, he gave his hangover its due, and stared awfully at his haggard face and peered into his parched and acrid mouth; and then decided he was on the whole rather well able to face the world. He certainly faced Sam when he came in with the hot water, and made some sort of apology for his bad temper of the previous night.

"I didn't notice nuffink, Mr Charles."

"I had a somewhat tiresome evening, Sam. And now be a good fellow and fetch me up a large pot of tea. I have the devil's own thirst."

Sam left, hiding his private opinion that his master had the devil's own something else as well.

(John Fowles,
The French Lieutenant's Woman)

... al risveglio era in una disposizione d'animo migliore. Come tutti, rese il dovuto omaggio ai postumi della sbornia, fissando inorridito il proprio volto emaciato e osservandosi la bocca riarisa e inacidita. Poi decise che tutto sommato era abbastanza in grado di affrontare il mondo. E comunque affrontò Sam, quando costui entrò con l'acqua calda, presentandogli delle specie di scuse per il suo malumore della notte precedente.

"Io non ho notato niente, Mr Charles."

"Avevo avuto una serata un po' faticosa, Sam. E adesso sii buono e portami una bella tazza di tè. Ho una sete del diavolo."

Sam se ne andò, tenendo per sé la sua opinione personale secondo la quale il padrone aveva anche qualcos'altro del diavolo.

(John Fowles,
La donna del tenente francese,
translated by Ettore Capriolo)

The use of Mr with a Christian name, Charles, is indicative of the role relationships that hold between addresser and addressee.

Another aspect of tenor concerns the attitude and stance of the addresser to the message itself, which may be detached, assertive, tentative, committed and so on. A number of linguistic forms can be used to express these modal meanings, ranging from nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs, to the modal verbs themselves. Since all discourse is characterised by modality to a greater or lesser extent, translators need to identify the overall tenor of the ST as signalled by modal items and then to reproduce it in the TT by means of pragmatically equivalent TL forms.

Writers may not, for instance, wish to make a forthright statement regarding their message and prefer to remain cautious or non-committal – a phenomenon known as *hedging*. Constructions that serve this purpose in English are ones like: *it + passive + that-clause* using verbs like *allege*, *assume*, *believe*, *consider*, *expect*, *fear*, *hope*, *know*, *observe*, *presume*, *prove*, *report*, *say*, *show*, *suggest*, *suppose*, *think*, *understand*; and *personal subject + passive + infinitive*:

It has been reported that homeopathic remedies are very effective.

Homeopathic remedies have been reported to be very effective.

Some of Cavour's love letters have been found and published. Others, especially those written late in life, were destroyed by his heirs who bought them after his death at a high price; because it was thought that their indelicacy of language, if generally known, would damage his reputation. Much later in the 1890s, when another collection of his correspondence surfaced in Vienna, King Humbert found the money to purchase them after bribing their Austrian owner with an Italian title; they were said to be very shocking, and the king agreed after reading them that they too should be burnt.

(Denis Mack Smith,
"Cavour and Women")

Alcune delle missive amorose di Cavour sono state pubblicate; altre, in particolare quelle scritte in età matura, vennero distrutte dagli eredi che le avevano comprate a caro prezzo dopo la sua morte, poiché si ritenne che il linguaggio sconveniente in esse usato, se reso noto, avrebbe nuociuto alla reputazione del parente scomparso. Quando, nell'ultimo decennio del secolo scorso, saltò fuori a Vienna un'altra raccolta di lettere, re Umberto trovò i mezzi per acquistarle corrompendo il proprietario austriaco con un titolo nobiliare italiano; sembra che il loro contenuto fosse sconvolgente e, dopo averle lette, il re acconsentì a far bruciare anche quelle.

Writers may also indicate their point of view, be it tentative or assertive, committed or detached, by means of attitudinal adverbs like *admittedly*, *certainly*, *doubtfully*, *evidently*, *fortunately*, *frankly*, *obviously*, *naturally*, *surely*, *surprisingly*, etc.

Obviously, a trained eye can distinguish between a neoplastic formation and an ordinary mole without hesitation.

È chiaro che un occhio addestrato distingue senza indugio una formazione neoplastica da un semplice neo.

Note that *surely* is not a synonym of *certainly* although they both correspond to the Italian *certamente* / *sicuramente*. While *certainly* expresses certainty on the part of the writer, *surely* is used to express disbelief, surprise or doubt, or to invite agreement from the addressee, ruling out a negative response. *Surely* is therefore marked for attitude.

... la "morte del bosco", della Selva nera e di tante altre foreste ... avrà certo rovinose conseguenze, se continuerà ad estendersi col ritmo attuale.

(Claudio Magris, "Al capezzale
del Grande Bosco che muore",
Il Corriere della Sera, 15 marzo 1986)

... the "death of the wood", of the Black Forest, and of many other forests ... will **certainly** have disastrous effects if it goes on spreading at the present rate.

Prima che l'Eden cominciasse a funzionare ci sarà pur stato un istante – un secondo, un millennio – durante il quale tutto era fermo, e Qualcuno avrà pur esaminato se il modello degli animali e degli alberi era giusto ...

(Giorgio Manganelli,
Corriere della Sera, 17 ottobre 1981)

Before Eden began functioning, there must **surely** have been an instant – a second, a millennium – in which everything was still, and Someone must **surely** have checked whether the model for the animals and the trees was right ...

A further means writers have of expressing varying degrees of certainty, possibility, obligation, permission, volition is provided by modal verbs. Modals can be used either to express the writer's attitudes and opinions regarding the truth or reality of a proposition (epistemic modality) or to indicate some kind of control over actions and events (root and deontic modality). Since the same modals cover more than one function and semantic area, care should be taken when translating to avoid creating ambiguity.

Il paziente può essere dimesso.

This is an ambiguous utterance since it can be taken to mean either that it is possible for the patient to be discharged, in the sense that the patient's condition permits him or her to be discharged or that permission is being granted for the patient to be discharged.

At times, even the immediate context will not suffice to disambiguate the meaning and some kind of clarification is needed. In English the ambiguity persists if the utterance is translated as:

The patient can be discharged.

While a different kind of ambiguity arises in English if it is translated as:

The patient may be discharged.

This utterance can now mean either that it is possible that the patient will be discharged or that permission is being granted for the patient to be discharged (the difference from can being that permission is granted more formally).

The examples demonstrate the need to ensure that the appropriate semantic area of modality is activated in the TT if equivalence in pragmatic effect is to be maintained.

We shall now consider some of the modal forms and meanings that may cause difficulties in translating between Italian and English.

The Italian *dovere* covers a wide range of semantic areas, for instance, as can be seen from the following examples:

Quel ragazzo deve essere ammalato: è così pallido.

Here *dovere* signals a confident conclusion or deduction (logical necessity: from the evidence or data available I conclude that) and is translated by epistemic must:

That boy must be ill: he looks so pale.

This area of meaning can be expressed in other ways in Italian:

Prima che l'Eden cominciasse a funzionare ci sarà pur stato un istante – un secondo, un millennio – durante il quale tutto era fermo, e Qualcuno avrà pur esaminato se il modello degli animali e degli alberi era giusto ...

(Giorgio Manganelli,
Corriere della Sera, 17 ottobre 1981)

Before Eden began functioning, there **must** surely **have been** an instant – a second, a millennium – in which everything was still, and Someone **must** surely **have checked** whether the model for the animals and the trees was right ...

In the next example *dovere* can be translated as either must or should. In English must indicates a relatively forceful means of expressing necessity and is therefore used sparingly in written discourse. The tendency is for writers to use must when actually wanting to show authority or strong involvement and to opt for should when wishing to tone down the effect. Although should seems less overtly forceful, therefore, it often retains its meaning of necessity rather than a moral obligation or duty.

If you are the Beneficiary of a Funds Transfer, we will not be required to give you next day notice that we have received the Funds Transfer. However, we will tell you that we have received such Funds Transfer in the periodic statement we send you...

You agree to be bound by any Funds Transfer, whether or not authorized, which is issued in your name and accepted by us in compliance with the security procedure chosen by you. Therefore, you should exercise special care when so choosing a security procedure.

You must keep the security procedure chosen by you confidential, and must not reveal the security procedure to any person, other than to a person you have authorized to make Funds Transfers on your behalf.

L'idea che l'autorità dello Stato si debba fondare sul diritto naturale per trovare legittimazione e consenso nella collettività, non è l'unica eredità che la cultura classica abbia trasmesso alla società medievale. Ma dalle epoche e dalle civiltà che lo precedettero, dalla stessa cultura greca (che pur aveva introdotto un atteggiamento più razionale nei confronti della natura) e dai misteri e culti orientali diffusi in periodo ellenistico nell'impero romano, il Medioevo ricevette anche un vasto repertorio di rituali magici e di scienze occulte.

(Valerio Castronovo,
"Se tutto manca c'è sempre il mago",
La Repubblica, 13 ottobre 1981).

The idea that State authority **should** be founded on natural law to become lawful and acceptable to the community is not the only legacy bequeathed to Medieval society by classical culture. The Middle Ages also received a vast repertory of magic rituals and occult sciences from the ages and civilisations that had come before it, from Greek culture itself (which had, however, introduced a more rational attitude towards nature) and from the oriental mysteries and cults which had spread in the Roman Empire in the Hellenistic period.

A very important distinction should be noted regarding the negative of *dovere* in English: must not expresses a prohibition, while do not have to / do not need to indicate the absence of necessity.

Non devi fare tardi.

You **mustn't** stay out late.

In Gran Bretagna non si deve andare a scuola di sabato.

You **don't have to** go to school on Saturday in Britain.

Translating *potere* into English appropriately may also pose problems. Consider the following example:

Al di sotto delle diverse lingue sta comunque una lingua "fondamentale" che Freud ha chiamato "sapere originario" e che Ernst Jones ha chiamato le "idee primarie della vita", in cui tutti gli uomini potrebbero riconoscersi...

Non mi meraviglierei però che un giorno si scoprisse che le idee primarie della vita (le quali parlano nei nostri sogni) costituiscono qualcosa in cui tutti gli uomini possono riconoscersi parlati da una lingua unica.

(Franco Fornari,
"Freud e la lingua cinese",
Corriere della Sera, 21 maggio 1985)

The choice is whether to select could or might and can or may to express possibility in this context. Although a certain amount of overlap exists between these modals, could indicates that the possibility exists (it is possible for...) while might / may signal the writer's

committal to what is stated (it is possible that ...). Thus

Underlying the various languages there is, however, a "basic" language which Freud called "original knowledge" and which Ernst Jones called the "primary ideas of life", in which all men **could recognize** themselves....

I would not be surprised, however, if one day it were discovered that the primary ideas of life (which speak in our dreams) constitute something in which all men **can recognize** themselves as being "spoken" by one common language.

Might also expresses a more tentative meaning than **may** and therefore signals a weaker committal to the truth or reality of the proposition.

In both amphibian and vertebrate models, prostaglandins elicit a dose-related increase in bicarbonate secretion and it has been suggested that this process **may play** an important role in the buffering of luminal acid. Schiessel et al. demonstrated an increase in chloride transport in amphibian mucosa and suggested that this **might occur** in exchange for extracellular bicarbonate, providing an additional mechanism for intracellular buffering.

The fact that the writer has used both **may** and **might** in discussing the topic indicates differences in point of view. It suggests that the writer is more committed to the former possibility (**may play**) than the latter (**might occur**).

When *potere* signals permission the choice is once again between **may** and **can** depending on the degree of formality that the speaker intends or the situation requires:

Posso entrare?

May/Can I come in?

Potere also covers the semantic area of "ability". In the following cases the translator needs to assess whether the action was carried out (was/were able) or whether it was potentially possible (could):

Potrebbe vincere l'incontro.

He could win the fight.

Ha potuto vincere l'incontro.

He was able to win the fight.

Most texts display a combination of all the markers of modality we have been discussing and they interact with one another to produce the overall tenor of the discourse. A careful evaluation of the tenor of the ST and a sensitivity to how writers can indicate their varying attitudes towards their message are essential components of the translation process.

3.4.3. The *mode of discourse* refers to the part language itself is playing in the situation. It therefore concerns the medium that is chosen, (spoken, written, written to be spoken, etc.) and the channel through which the communication takes place (essay, letter, lecture, telegram). It also includes such variables as monologue, dialogue, etc.

Although a large number of texts that are translated are in the written-to-be-read mode, variations are by no means lacking: written lectures that are destined for oral presentation, dialogues in narrative texts, adverts with a strong phonological component.

An informal text that is written to be spoken requires the use of ellipsis, contracted forms, idioms, and all other features that are proper to the register. The most typical example of this mode of discourse is dialogue:

"Hallo, Professor Zapp," he said, drawing level. "Are you taking a stroll?"

"Oh, hi, Percy. No, I'm on my way to visit my old landlord. I spent six months in this place, you know, ten years ago. I even thought of staying here once. I must have been out of my mind. Do you know it well?"

"I've never been here before, but I have an aunty living here. Not a real aunty, but related through cousins. My mother said to be sure to look her up. I'm on my way now."

"A duty call, huh? I take a right here."

Persse consulted his map. "So do I."

"How d'you like Rummidge, then?"

"There are too many street-lights."

"Come again?"

"You can't see the stars properly at night, because of all the street-lights," said Persse.

(David Lodge, *Small World*)

"Salve professor Zapp.." disse, raggiungendolo, "sta facendo una passeggiata?"

"Oh, ciao, Percy. No, sto andando a trovare il mio vecchio padrone di casa. Ho passato sei mesi in questo posto, dieci anni fa. Una volta avevo pensato persino di stabilirmi qui. Deve essere stato un momento di follia. Conosci bene questa zona?"

"Non ci sono mai stato prima, ma ho una zietta che vive qui. Non proprio una zia vera, ma solo imparentata per via di cugini. Mia madre ha detto che dovevo assolutamente farle visita e ora ci sto andando."

"Visita di dovere, eh? Io giro qui a destra."

Persse consultò la sua pianta. "Anch'io."

"Che te ne pare di Rummidge?"

"Ci sono troppi lampioni."

"Come?"

"Di notte non si possono vedere bene le stelle, a causa di tutta quell'illuminazione stradale." rispose Persse.

(David Lodge,
Il Professore va al Congresso,
translated by M. Buckwell
and A. Palazzi)

There are, however, other instances where a text is in a written mode but is intended to be spoken. Although the following text has been written down, the writer's intention is to present it orally at a medical convention. It therefore contains all the markers of direct speech and the deictic forms (e.g. references to slides) refer to the context of situation in which the talk will be delivered:

(first slide, please) Surgical treatment of aneurysms of the abdominal aorta consists in replacing the dilated aortic tract with a synthetic graft.

(next slide) Aneurysms are clinically evident at diagnosis, as you can see from the pulsating expansile abdominal mass shown in this slide.

(next slide) The diagnosis is subsequently confirmed by laboratory tests.

(next slide) This digital subtraction angiography shows a large abdominal aneurysm,

(next slide) which is again clearly visible in this CT-scan image.

(next slide) Both these exams show that the neck of the aneurysm is close to the origin of the renal arteries.

The next text has been written for a scientific journal. In other words, it has been written to be read, not spoken. It is therefore more formal, makes use of intratextual cohesive devices and more complex sentence structure. If a text thus structured were to be read aloud, its communicative force would suffer greatly.

Developments in reconstructive surgery of the trachea have led to the identification of specific indications for tracheal resection and reconstruction, to the standardization of surgical techniques and to the selection of suture materials. These advances have markedly reduced the complications connected with tracheal surgery. However, tracheal resection and reconstruction remains a demanding and sophisticated area of surgery where the minutest diagnostic and technical details contribute towards a successful outcome. The rarity of surgical tracheal cases, moreover, makes the learning period for such surgery lengthy and experienced centres throughout the world are comparatively few and far between. Even today, therefore, any impromptu attempts at tracheal surgery in non-specialized centres are bound to expose the patient to a high risk of complications.

Register, therefore, refers to how meanings are activated and how language functions in a given situation. It distinguishes one passage from another since it defines the substance of text. Identifying register is essential to processing a text: the translator can reconstruct the context by analysing what has taken place (field), who has participated (tenor) and what medium has been selected (mode).

It is, however, rather difficult to provide precise boundaries for any given register as they tend to overlap. It is more profitable to think of register as a cline or continuum, ranging from closed registers to more open ones. At one extreme there is restricted language, like the International Language of the Air, in which only a certain number of fixed messages are possible. Air crews all over the world have to learn this special variety of language in order to communicate with ground control. The language is so conventionalised that only close adherence to it will ensure effective communication and therefore safety. Failure to use it correctly could lead to misunderstandings between the pilot and air traffic control and even to plane crashes, as the following article shows.

NEW YORK – Sembra incredibile ma è proprio così: un mese fa il Boeing dell'Avianca che è caduto a pochi chilometri dall'aeroporto Kennedy di New York uccidendo 73 dei suoi 161 passeggeri, è rimasto senza carburante perché il secondo pilota ha dimenticato di pronunciare la parola «emergenza» nei ripetuti appelli ai controllori del traffico aereo...

... 50 minuti prima di schiantarsi tra le ville di Cove Neck, il comandante del Boeing Laureano Caviedes chiede al secondo pilota (entrambi periti nell'incidente) di avvertire i controllori che sono a corto di carburante. Il secondo esegue, ma la torre ordina al jet di restare in «parcheggio». Perché? Perché, spiegano le autorità federali, i piloti «non hanno usato la fraseologia standard».

In nome di questioni di linguaggio sono state combattute battaglie spesso assurde; l'Italia, Paese attentissimo ai nominalismi, ne sa qualcosa. Ma nessuno aveva mai pensato che un problema di lessico potesse uccidere. Nel mondo congestionato e delicatissimo del trasporto aereo dove la sicurezza è affidata alla precisione dei costruttori, delle squadre di manutenzione e dei gestori degli aeroporti, anche il meccanismo delle comunicazioni deve certamente funzionare come un orologio.

(Massimo Gaggi, "Tragedia aerea per una parola sbagliata", *Il Corriere della Sera*, 23 febbraio 1990)

Such fixed registers do not pose much of a problem to translation. The language is so conventionalised that translators simply need to find the equivalent conventional forms in the TL. The only setback is when no such conventions exist in the TL.

The language of legal documents and religious observance is also highly conventional. More open-ended registers include verses on greeting cards, official forms, weather bulletins.

American Airlines Credit Card Application		If you are a member of AAdvantage Please provide AAdvantage membership number.		NON OFFICER USE ONLY 0 1 4 0 1 5 0 2 8		A. APPLICATION SOURCE B. C.	
HAVE YOU APPLIED BEFORE? <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES		ACT. 2001-					
Applicant (Please Print All Information)							
NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE INITIAL)		SOC. SECURITY NBR.		DATE OF BIRTH			
PRESENT HOME ADDRESS (STREET)		APARTMENT		AREA CODE		HOME PHONE NBR.	
CITY		STATE		ZIP		HOW LONG OWN <input type="checkbox"/> RENT <input type="checkbox"/> PARENTS <input type="checkbox"/>	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS (STREET)		CITY		STATE		ZIP	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS (STREET)		CITY		STATE		ZIP	
OTHER NAMES UNDER WHICH YOUR CREDIT HISTORY CAN BE OBTAINED:		CO-APPLICANT:					
Employment and Income							
EMPLOYER (IF SELF-EMPLOYED, NATURE/NAME OF BUSINESS)		OCCUPATION & TITLE					
BUSINESS ADDRESS		AREA CODE		BUSINESS PHONE & EXT.			
CITY		STATE		ZIP		HOW LONG YEARLY INCOME	
PREVIOUS BUSINESS OR EMPLOYER		OCCUPATION & TITLE					
BUSINESS ADDRESS		CITY		STATE		ZIP	
BUSINESS ADDRESS		CITY		STATE		ZIP	
OTHER INCOME: Alimony, child support or separate maintenance income (need not be reported if you do not wish to have it considered as a basis of income).		SOURCE OF OTHER INCOME		AMOUNT OF OTHER INCOME		DWT FL.	
APPLICANT		CO-APPLICANT		\$		DWT FL.	
Credit Information							
CREDIT CARDS		ACCOUNT NUMBER		BANK/ALTO LOANS		ACCOUNT NUMBER	
<input type="checkbox"/> MASTERCARD				<input type="checkbox"/> MASTERCARD			
<input type="checkbox"/> VISA				<input type="checkbox"/> VISA			
<input type="checkbox"/> AMERICAN EXPRESS				<input type="checkbox"/> AMERICAN EXPRESS			
<input type="checkbox"/> SEAME				<input type="checkbox"/> SEAME			
<input type="checkbox"/> J.C. PENNEY				<input type="checkbox"/> J.C. PENNEY			
<input type="checkbox"/> LERNER				<input type="checkbox"/> LERNER			
<input type="checkbox"/> DISCOVER				<input type="checkbox"/> DISCOVER			
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHERS				<input type="checkbox"/> OTHERS			
Co-Applicant (Must Live At Same Address As Applicant)							
NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE INITIAL)		SOC. SECURITY NBR.		DATE OF BIRTH			
EMPLOYER (IF SELF-EMPLOYED, NATURE/NAME OF BUSINESS)		OCCUPATION & TITLE					
BUSINESS ADDRESS		AREA CODE		BUSINESS PHONE & EXT.			
CITY		STATE		ZIP		HOW LONG YEARLY INCOME	
IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF AADVANTAGE PLEASE PROVIDE MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				RELATIONSHIP OF CO-APPLICANT		<input type="checkbox"/> SPOUSE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER	
Signatures							
The signer of this application certifies that the above information is true and complete and hereby requests AMERICAN AIRLINES ("Issuer") to open an account and to issue one or more credit cards in applicant's name and (if applying for a joint account) one or more credit cards in co-applicant's name. Each signer authorizes Issuer to obtain a consumer credit report and if the application is opened and (if one or more credit cards) are issued in response to this application, use of such credit cards by any signer or by anyone authorized by any signer shall constitute acceptance of the credit agreement accompanying such credit cards when issued. If you are accepted for a joint account, or if you are accepted for an account on the basis of the income of a co-applicant, both of you will be responsible for the payment of all charges on the account, but principal and co-applicant shall be jointly and severally liable for all obligations incurred in the account.							
PLEASE SIGN HERE IN INK		Applicant's Signature		Co-Applicant's Signature		Date	
Applicant, & Co-Applicant, If Any							
If approved, a copy of the Retail Installment Credit Agreement will be sent to you with the card.							



Cards

MODULO DI RICHIESTA PER DIVENTARE TITOLARE DELLA CARTA AMERICAN EXPRESS VALIDA IN ITALIA E ALL'ESTERO

UPPERMAG UN
SERVIZIO
9401514

Con la presente richiesta in grado di rilasciare a mio nome la Carta American Express, valida in Italia e all'estero, alle condizioni del vigente Regolamento Generale, coadiuvando, e ritenendo, a discrezione del primo edo atto come, la quota di iscrizione "una tantum" (Lire 35.000) e quella associativa annuale (Lire 120.000). Prendo atto che la Carta Supplementare per un componente del mio nucleo familiare costa annualmente in tutto Lire 70.000.

I MIEI DATI PERSONALI (CARTA PERSONALE BASE)

Nome		Cognome		Nazionalità*	
Indirizzo		Cap		Località	
Tel. ufficio ()		Tel. casa ()		Forse riceverò una telefonata da American Express per ulteriori informazioni prima dell'emissione della Carta.	
Comune di nascita		Data di nascita		Cod. Fiscale	

Nome della mia banca		Località	
Agenzia		N° Conto	
		Addebito diretto <input type="checkbox"/> Sì <input type="checkbox"/> No	

La richiesta di addebito diretto in conto si perfezionerà con l'invio da parte di American Express di un apposito modulo.

Datore di lavoro		Indirizzo	
Cap		Località	
		Allego in busta chiusa: <input type="checkbox"/> cedola stipendio <input type="checkbox"/> Dichiarazione del redditi con eventuale ricevuta di pagamento effettuato	
Qualifica			

LA CARTA SUPPLEMENTARE PER UN MIO FAMILIARE

Desidero ricevere la Carta Supplementare per il seguente componente del mio nucleo familiare:

Nome		Cognome		Grado di parentela	
Comune di nascita		Data di nascita		Cod. Fiscale	

LE DUE FIRME INDISPENSABILI PER LA VALIDITÀ DEL MODULO

Ho letto attentamente il regolamento generale sul retro a firma due volte accanto alle X, per esteso e in modo leggibile.

LA MIA FIRMA X	LA FIRMA DEL MIO FAMILIARE X
<small>Il sottoscritto dichiara di approvare espressamente la firma e per i proffici di cui agli artt. 1311 e 1342 del C.C. che le seguenti clausole del presente Regolamento: Art. 1 Approvazione della domanda - Art. 7 Validità della Carta - Art. 3 Uso della Carta - Art. 4 Pagamento dell'addebito - Art. 8 Pagamento per mezzo del pagamento - Art. 9 Contratti con gli agenti - Art. 11 Periodo, rinnovazione e rinnovo della Carta - Art. 14 Carta Supplementare - Art. 15 Esenzioni - Art. 17 Uso di macchine automatiche - Fiancheggiamento - Art. 18 Sostituzione - Art. 19 Contratti con l'American Express - Art. 20 Acquisto di Regolarità - e sottoscrive la presente richiesta e non imputa la Carta American Express ad essere per l'acquisto di tutti il suo e per ottenere servizio di contante in valuta e equipio di servizio. In occasione del massimale stabilito per ogni rapporto dalle norme relative più sopra riportate, in cui non si sono massimale l'importo di esenzioni della Carta di pagamento unitaria.</small>	
LA MIA FIRMA X	LA FIRMA DEL MIO FAMILIARE X
DATA	

* Se non italiano, o italiano nato all'estero, allegare certificato di residenza in Italia e indicare lo Stato di nascita al posto del Comune.

IL SOCIO PRESENTATORE

Ho proposto, senza alcuna responsabilità, la Carta American Express Personale Base al richiedente che ha sottoscritto la presente domanda. Il mio nome è (scrivere in stampatello):	DATI DEL TITOLARE PRESENTATORE	
	Le suggeriamo di compilare questa parte prima di consegnare il Modulo alla persona che vuole segnalare, in modo che i dati del richiedente ci giungano in via assolutamente riservata.	
Questo Modulo prevede premi solamente per l'emissione di Carta Personale Base.	Cognome e nome	
	Indirizzo	
FIRMA:	Tel. ()	
	Cap	
Desidero ricevere:	Città	
	N° della Carta American Express	
<input type="checkbox"/> PIATTINO DA SCRIVANIA 73		
<input type="checkbox"/> BUONO DA CONSERVARE 86 PER ALTRI PREMI		

Weather.

Cloud, bright spells. Chance of showers in south-west. Winds E or SE, moderate to fresh. Outlook: fresh south-easterly air-stream will persist. Misty start, cloudy with long sunny periods.

Tempo previsto.

Sulla Sicilia e la Sardegna molto nuvoloso. Su tutte le altre regioni generalmente poco nuvoloso. Temperatura in lieve diminuzione. Mari generalmente mossi. Venti da est-sudest: moderati sulle regioni meridionali, deboli sulle altre zone.

Then there are what are called transactional registers, like those of buying and selling.

"Can I have a pound of oranges please?"

"Yes, anything else?"

"No, that's all, thanks".

"That'll be 65p."

"Thanks".

"Thank you, madam".

At the other extreme there is spontaneous conversation, although even this is still not completely free. It is characterised by certain features which enable participants to orientate themselves to what is happening, make predictions and subconscious guesses about what is going on so as to make sense of the interaction and adapt their discourse to the registral restrictions of field, tenor and mode.

This is what the translator must do *consciously*. Identifying the register of a text is an essential part of discourse processing and provides a framework for ST analysis. As reader of the ST, the translator reconstructs the context through an analysis of what has taken place (field), who has participated (tenor), and what medium has been chosen (mode). Together the three variables provide the basic conditions for communication to take place and by identifying them in the ST the translator will be able to relay the intended message appropriately in the TL.

Register is according to Halliday one of two broad categories of language variation and is *use-related*. The other category, broadly defined as *dialect*, comprises the *user-related* varieties of language.