An Approach to Diplomatic Translation

Криворот В.В., Белорусский государственный университет

Diplomacy is the art and practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of groups or nations. It usually refers to international diplomacy, the conduct of international relations through the intercession of professional diplomats with regard to issues of peace-making culture, economics, trade, and war.

Diplomatic translation is carried out within diplomatic missions, embassies or consulates. In certain aspects, we could relate this type of translation to that carried out within international bodies, in terms of the type of texts translated and the conventions established. However, diplomatic translation has its own rules and peculiarities. In the old days, interpreters working at embassies or diplomatic missions were called Dragoman (or Drogman), especially in the East Mediterranean region. In those days, however, they enjoyed a certain degree of protection. The biggest and most representative embassies have a team of professional translators/interpreters. They diversify their tasks and show a great degree of professionalism and specialization. In this sense, we could mention the case of the British Embassy, where there is a team of translators/interpreters, headed by a senior translator, specializing in press and chancery matters, plus two more people specializing in military and defense affairs.

It is important to outline some of the terms and concepts common to the diplomatic context. Firstly, it must be said that a very strict hierarchy governs the diplomatic world. It is important to know the different levels within the diplomatic strata, since each level deals with different aspects and has a different approach. Within the scope of diplomatic translation, there are two main groups of documents (although they are not the only ones): chancery documents and consular documents. The first group consists of texts or documents aimed to serve as a vehicle for diplomatic communication between the given diplomatic mission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and vice versa. Upon taking up his/her post, the Ambassador or Head of Mission hands over the Credentials or Style Copies to the President or Head of State of the host country. Before
presenting his/her Credentials, the diplomat must have previously received the *Agrément* from the host government, which states that there is no impediment to his/her taking up his/her mandate in the host country. Obviously, there is a widespread use of gallicisms in this type of translation. This is not coincidental, since French was for many years (and still is) the diplomatic language *par excellence*. Consular issues-related documents constitute a great deal of the bulk of translation work in an embassy. This is an extremely varied field, although highly related to the fields of legal and sworn translation. Thus, translators find themselves confronted by birth, marriage and death certificates, certificates of no impediment, divorce sentences, deeds, etc., together with other documents, mainly related to visas, passports, forensic death reports, assistance to arrested nationals, etc. Security and confidentiality are always crucial in professional translation, and in particular with regards to the client. Diplomatic translation is no exception to this. Furthermore, confidentiality is probably much more important and compromising in this field than in any other field of translation, as it involves the security of one or several countries. We are not saying here that the translator becomes a sort of James Bond. In any case, there are several degrees of confidentiality of diplomatic documents in English: unclassified, classified, in confidence, confidential, secret, Top secret. In many cases, the translator at a diplomatic mission is required to write economic, political (or other) reports about the host country. The work is varied and involves a high degree of difficulty and responsibility in many cases. Diplomatic translators must have a vast wealth of knowledge and be very familiar with international affairs and in particular with the political, social and economic situation of their own countries. The problem of the Diplomatic translation is constantly studied and discussed by the department of the Modern Foreign Languages of the Belarus State University.

**Пресса как одно из средств обучения иностранному языку**  
(на примере французского языка)

Левтеева Н.Н., ФМО БГУ

Использование периодической печатной прессы на занятиях по иностранному языку полностью отвечает требованиям современности, когда иностранный язык изучается в неразрывной связи с культурой страны. Прессе, как дидактическому материалу, присущ ряд преимуществ: доступность — благодаря развитию сети Интернет, обилие и разнообразие языкового материала (национальная и региональная пресса, специализированные газеты и журналы и т.д.), постоянное обновление материала, дополнительная лингвострановедческая информация.