End of Chapter Exercises – Chapter 3

1. Choose one English word and find its first dictionary equivalent in your target language. Make a list of some common collocations of the English word. Make an independent list of the most typical collocations of your target-language equivalent. Compare the two lists and comment on the differences and similarities in the collocational patterning of the two items.

2. Make a list of some common collocations of an English word of your choice.
   (a) Suggest some common collocations in your target language which convey similar meanings to those of the English collocations. Comment on any difference in meaning.
   (b) If there are no common collocations in your target language which express meanings similar to those conveyed by the English collocations, suggest circumlocutions which can be used either as paraphrases or footnotes to convey the meanings of the English collocations in question (if necessary) to a target reader.

3. Make a list of some English idioms with which you are familiar and which have close counterparts in your target language. Comment on any differences in meaning, form or context of use between each English idiom and its ‘equivalent’ in your target language.

4. Make a list of some common English expressions or idioms that you feel would be difficult to translate into your target language, for example because they relate to specific English habits or social occasions. Try, to the best of your ability, to paraphrase each expression twice: the first time as briefly as possible so that it can be inserted in a text, and the second time more elaborately so that it can be included as a footnote to a text.
5. Try your hand at translating this challenging title and header which introduce an article promoting visits to the Dead Sea. The article appeared in a Wonderlust Guide to Jordan, published in 2010 (p. 22). The caption under ‘Mud, glorious mud’ reads: ‘As every schoolchild worth their salt knows, the Dead Sea is the briniest lake on earth. But its waters and mud offer unique spa experiences, as Gail Simmons discovers.’
6. *The Chronicle Review*, a section of the US-based *Chronicle of Higher Education*, published an article by Evan Goldstein on the renowned, outspoken historian Tony Judt on 6 January 2010. Entitled ‘The Trials of Tony Judt’, the article begins by explaining that ‘a little more than a year ago, Judt was diagnosed with a progressive variant of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as Lou Gehrig’s disease, a fatal condition that gradually destroys a person’s ability to move, breathe, swallow, and talk’.

Imagine that you have agreed to translate this article for one of the many activist websites that provide multiple translations of such material. The full article is available at http://chronicle.com/article/The-Trials-of-Tony-Judt/63449/. Comment on any collocations in the following stretch that might prove difficult to translate into your target language and the strategies you have used to overcome these difficulties, paying particular attention to the play on life/death sentence at the end of the second paragraph.

At bedtime, having been maneuvered from his wheelchair to his cot and positioned upright, his glasses removed, Judt is left alone with his thoughts. In recent months, they have turned to his youth – the charms of a
In one moving essay, recently published in *The New York Review*, Judt addresses directly his life with ALS. ‘Helplessness,’ he writes, ‘is humiliating even in a passing crisis – imagine or recall some occasion when you have fallen down or otherwise required physical assistance from strangers. Imagine the mind’s response to the knowledge that the peculiarly humiliating helplessness of ALS is a life sentence (we speak blithely of death sentences in this connection, but actually the latter would be a relief).’

7. Imagine that you have been asked by a client to translate the following text into your target language. The text appeared in *The Economist* (UK Edition, 6–12 February 2010, p. 68). Your target reader works in the banking business and needs to follow international developments in this field.

How firms fool equity analysts
Stockpilers suckered

NEW YORK
Chief executives pull the wool over analysts’ eyes, again

How do you pump up the value of your company in these difficult times? One tried and tested way is to hoodwink equity analysts, according to a new study of 1,300 corporate bosses, board directors and analysts.

The authors found that chief executives commonly respond to negative appraisals from Wall Street by managing appearances, rather than making changes that actually improve corporate governance: boards are made more formally independent, but without actually increasing their ability to control management. This is typically done by hiring directors who, although they may have no business ties to the company, are socially
close to its top brass. According to James Westphal, one of the study’s co-authors, some 45% of the members of nominating committees on the boards of large American firms have ‘friendship’ ties to the boss – though this varies widely from company to company.

…

Why do analysts swallow this self-interested narrative? Respondents acknowledged that social ties could undermine independence, but most said they do not have the time to look into such issues. …

Depressingly, these market-distorting shenanigans are part of a pattern. An earlier study found that public companies enjoy lasting share-price gains from plans that please analysts, such as share buybacks and long-term incentive schemes for executives, even when they fail to follow through on announcements.

When you have translated the text, comment on the strategies you used to deal with various collocations such as pump up value, tried and tested, managing appearances, top brass and swallow a narrative, including register-specific collocations such as share buybacks. Comment also on your strategy for translating the idiom in the subtitle (pull the wool over analysts’ eyes).

8. Try your hand at this challenging extract from an Austin Rover brochure (Today’s Cars, 1989). Imagine that you have been asked to translate the passage below into your target language, for distribution in your local market. Do not be distracted by unfamiliar car terminology; this is not the object of the exercise. If necessary, leave a gap if you cannot find an equivalent for a specialized term.

You will note that the passage includes several idioms and is highly informal in style. Whatever strategies you decide to use in translating it, remember that idioms are not just used for the meanings they convey but also for the effect they produce on the reader, for their stylistic value.

METRO SPORT

The new Metro Sport. Terrific looks. Loads of go. For a lot less than you think.

The Sport looks just what it is – a hot little hatchback that knows how to handle itself. With an aerodynamic

Routledge
tail spoiler;
all-white sports wheel trims; and special graphics and paint treatment.

Under the bonnet is a 73 PS1.3 engine with a real sting in its tail. (Relax – it’s also remarkably economical.)

You won’t have to put up with a spartan cockpit in return for sparkling performance. Just try those stylishly trimmed sports seats for size.

Now tune into the electronic stereo radio/stereo cassette player. Four speakers, great sound. And a built-in security code theft deterrent.

There’s a wealth of driving equipment too – including a tachometer of course.

Right up your street? Choose your Sport in one of five selected colours. And paint the town red.

When you have translated the text, comment on any difficulties involved, the strategies you used and any change in the level of informality in your target version.