PARAPHRASE

There are chiefly more than ten techniques a translator can use in interlingual translation, such as repetition, diction, omission, paraphrase, division, combination, negation, change of voice and so on. The more techniques he acquire, the better job he does in the translation field. Diction may be useful in translating files rich in emotion, culture context and so on.

Because each word when used in a new context is a new word. So what is a context? Everything in the society, nature and about human itself could be the context as language is a social phenomenon, material phenomenon as well as a tool for human communication and thinking. Then the diction technique comes in, where I will not spare more words.

During the four years of my study in college, a practical skill I learnt is paraphrase. When I was a junior, it is useful when I didn’t understand the words’ meaning in the text. My teacher paraphrased the words in various ways so that I caught the meanings and can even spoke out on my own two years later. Now it plays a vital role in my translation career.

Literally put, paraphrase is restatement of a text or passages, using other words. The term “paraphrase” derives via the Latin “paraphrasis” from the Greek “para phraseïn”, meaning “additional manner of expression”. The behavior of paraphrasing is also called “paraphrasis.” A paraphrase explains the text that is being paraphrased.

For example, “The signal was green” might be paraphrased as “The train
was allowed to proceed.” Paraphrase may try to hold the essential meaning of the material being paraphrased. Thus, the reinterpretation of a source to indicate a meaning that is not obvious in the source itself qualifies as “original research” and not as paraphrase.

Mostly in one language system, it has a large number of idioms that are difficult for outsiders to understand. However, there are many occasions when translators need to understand the meaning of an idiom, then find an equivalent so that target readers can understand. Here we take the interlingual translation between English and Chinese for example.

Except for the lexical gap, there is much for us to learn due to cultural difference expressed in language. From the following sentences, we can get an intuitive view of cultural diversity between English and Chinese. “Mr. Kingsley and his Red Brick boys will have to look to their laurels.”

Here, Red Brick does not mean red colored building material but the Red Brick Universities, referring to local universities outside of the University of Oxford and University of Cambridge. Those universities are built with red bricks instead of historical rocks like Oxford, and can only belong to the less famous universities. Therefore, Red Brick boys are the students from local universities.

There is another example provided here for a better understanding of paraphrase. “It’s not easy to become a member of that club- they want people who have plenty of money to spend, not just every Tom, Dick, and Bob.” If we translate the names with Chinese characters harmonious in tone, it becomes unprofessional.

As Tom, Dick, and Bob are rather popular as English names, they represent common people here, just like we use Zhangsan, Lisi, and
Wangwu indicating certain person in Chinese most of the time.

In conclusion, as a translator, before we locate an equivalent for a source word, understand it first under the source context, especially cultural, so that we can give an exact and accurate translation to the source word. Maybe reading the Grimm's Fairy Tales will give you some hints in future translation.