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## Lost in translation – caught between constraints

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A text is the outcome of a series of decisions made on different stages prior to (and of course including) final formulation: segmentation of the subject matter (“Gesamtvorstellung”), selection of information to be verbalized, structuring of the information to be conveyed, and linearization. In addition to conceptual categorizations induced by the lexicon of one’s mother tongue grammar plays a significant role in this process, determining what v.Stutterheim & Klein (2002) call speaker’s perspectivation. As far as the organization of discourse information is concerned, structural (i.e. grammar-induced) constraints interact with stylistic and rhetorical conventions of the language community in ways that are not yet fully understood. At any rate we may conclude that natural texts are language-specific products also in a non-trivial sense pertaining to the organization and flow of information at sentence and discourse level. Viewed from this perspective the translator faces an impossible task, caught as he is in a double bind towards source text on the one hand and target language constraints on the other hand. In my presentation I shall discuss some translation theoretic and methodological implications of this view, illustrating my points with examples from translations between German and English and/or Norwegian.