

CURRENT ISSUES OF TRANSLATION STUDIES

Akbarova Saidaxon Akmalxon qizi

Student of CSPU

“English language theory and practice” department

e-mail: s.akbarova.30.a@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The field of Translation Studies has changed over the years by incorporating different methods, theories and practices. This work looks at modern problems in Translation Studies, especially with cultural aspects, technology, and changing approaches to translation. The project analyzes the contribution of translation studies to the problems and demonstrates that interdisciplinary approaches have much to offer. Moreover, it also addresses issues of machine translation and localization which brings new challenges and opportunities in terms of accuracy and quality. Globalization has increased the complexity surrounding intercultural communication, and, as a result, translators are expected to ‘manage’ linguistic, cultural and contextual factors adeptly. This paper contends that translation practice must be approached in a more flexible manner, taking advantage of technological advances while harnessing human knowledge for the best results in translation.

Keywords: Translation studies, translation theory, cultural implications, machine translation, translation accuracy, interdisciplinary approach, localization, cross-cultural communication.

Translation studies have emerged as an area of concern in Interdisciplinary Studies. This new field of study concentrates on the practice, theory, ethics, and cultural aspects of translation from one language to another. The practice of

translation has changed, as it has become more complex with the emergence of machine translation techniques and a greater emphasis on ethics in translation. Although the basic concepts of translation have not changed over the years, the sociocultural discourse that we live in, together with globalization and advancing technology, have transformed the landscape of translation studies. Today, it is more about dealing with technology and ethical issues than just changing one language into another. The phenomenon of globalization has had a drastic impact on the translation process, which is why it has required greater attention in recent years. Nowadays, business, culture and politics are accessible to everyone on a global scale, which means that translation is more in demand than ever before. Everyone can see the effects in international trade, governments conducting business globally and the rapid dissemination of news across the web. At the same time, globalization is creating a need for greater cultural sensitivity. A translator cannot afford to overlook cultural issues when translating if the meaning is to be retained rather than getting misrepresented. A politically sensitive text can be an excellent basis for understanding how someone might perceive it based on their personal historical background or political sentiments. The sociocultural context behind the text plays a pivotal role in translation which has been revived by globalization. One of the many consequences of globalization is the emergence of a new type of expert: a translator is not only a linguist, but a culture broker who serves as a bridge between people of different cultures. This is particularly important in sensitive translations such as literature, religion, and news, where accuracy in translation matter for what is understood by entire communities of people. Now more than ever, due to the pandemic, there are global news networks and social media that demand accurate and context friendly translations because information is disseminated in a matter of seconds.

In today's world, it is extremely easy for people and businesses to communicate with one another due to the ongoing process of globalization. This can be attributed to tools such as Google Translate and DeepL, which efficiently translate texts in different languages. These technologies have definitely improved accessibility, but

have raised the concern of whether human translators would become obsolete. Some experts believe that language automation will provide a serious threat to the translation sector while other believe that post machine translation jobs can become a rejuvenating activity for substitute employees to get into the field. Academics frequently argue that non-skilled work of professional translators, especially with repetitive duties, gets supplemented with machine translations. For example, translators adapting machine translations to be accurate while correcting them is the norm now. However, like anything else, there are benefits and shortcomings with using machine translation. In this case, a significant effort would still need to be invested by humans in order to guarantee that the proper context, emotions, and tone are expressed on a cultural basis. This is especially true for translations of creative and literary works, where a prominent emphasis must be placed on feelings and style of the original document.

There are also ethical issues in employing machine translation for sensitive documents, such as legal, medical, or proprietary text, where a simple misstep can be extremely detrimental. For example, a carelessly done translation on medical documents can compromise the patient's treatment, while defective translation of a legal document can create problems in international relations. Translation studies have turned to incorporate issues of identity, culture, politics, and even power, and so, by virtue of technological changes, there have been – among other things – emerging focus on gender. In certain societies, people are moving towards greater acceptance of non-binary gender identities and a translator's challenge becomes how to negotiate language within this reality. A relevant example is the English language where singular they is a used gender-neutral pronoun, unlike many other languages where such pronouns do not exist and the existing ones are gendered. Therefore, Should a translator perpetuate the rule bound nature of grammar or inflict meaningful change to challenge society's perception of identity? While these questions may seem trivial, they greatly affect the ethical perception of being an allowed image of society.

A contemporary field of translation studies recognizes the impact of post-colonial narratives upon translation.

Many researchers of this field have pointed out the manner in which translation serves to sustain or contest colonialist stereotypes, especially in relation to translations from previously colonized countries. The translation of literature, for example, tends to be analyzed as an issue of power relations, as the language of the colonized is deemed superior and imposed through the translated work. Throughout history, translation has served as a means of cultural subjugation, and this is where many postcolonial scholars diverge as they argue that a great responsibility lies with a translator who attempts to “decolonize” the interpretation. This involves choosing to maintain the original culture of a given text, as opposed to framing it with a Western perspective. A greater global perspective of literature can be achieved when translators begin tackling the issue of historical power concentration within societies. Translation also raises ethical questions, such as those associated with the dichotomy of “literal” versus “loose” translation. These two perspectives are critical to the study of translation and defining the core problem of translation practice and theory. The translation that is “faithful” to the original text tries to preserve its overall message and structure while “free” translation is more focused on the target audience. In certain instances, the translator may incorporate their preconceived beliefs into their translation that put out a more ‘enhanced’ or ‘loosened’ text. This raises crucial ethical concerns regarding how deep the appropriation of a text should go and whether such alteration modifies the original intent behind the text. The ethical dilemmas arise the most in the case when the translation touches on social justice issues, where the advocate to such issues is not the sole claimant to the narrative but where the translator bears responsibility to the accuracy provided in the translation.

Consequently, there are many ways that globalization and everchanging technology can benefit translation studies and practice, sociocultural structures and globalization because they offer new expectations and new boundaries. As

globalization and technology progresses, so does the need for translation to serve as a bridge between cultures. Whether the effects of globalization on culture, the issue of gender and identity, the advantages and shortcomings of automated translation, it is undeniable that it is an important resource in cross-cultural communication. More importantly, translators have to be conscious of the fact that their decisions will affect other spheres of people's lives therefore a broader understanding of their work and its impact is needed.

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