

## كيف ينبغي للمترجمين أن يمارسوا أدوارهم في العالم الحديث؟

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### المخلص

عندما تسأل نفسك ما هي أدوار المترجمين، قد تتوصل إلى إجابة بسيطة: وهي تحويل النص من اللغة المصدر إلى اللغة الهدف. وسوف تفاجأ عندما تكتشف أن هناك ما هو أكثر من ذلك بكثير. وفي الآونة الأخيرة، تغير المعنى ووسائل الاتصال بشكل كبير، ووجد المترجمون أنفسهم يتحركون في اتجاه جديد، حيث يقومون بتكييف أهدافهم ورؤيتهم المهنية لتعكس قدوم مجتمع عالمي جديد. ولأن تكنولوجيا اليوم تجعل التواصل اليومي بين الثقافات أمراً شائعاً. ونتيجة لذلك، لم يعد المترجمون يعتبرون أنفسهم أشخاصاً معزولين، بل سفراء عالميين يخدمون عدداً متزايداً من المجتمعات. وتتبع هذه الدراسة من أن الترجمة تتطلب مترجمين ذوي مؤهلات عالية قد يعملون كوسطاء، ومحررين، وقراء، وكتاب، وخبراء تقنيين وغيره من الأعمال لتقديم خدماتهم للتواصل اليوم. وأظهرت النتائج زيادة أهمية الطبيعة المتعددة لدور المترجمين لدرجة لا يتمكن القارئ أو المستمع من أن يشعر الفرق بين الأصل والترجمة، بل يقرأها أو يسمعها كما لو كانت الأصل.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** طبيعة دور المترجمين، التكنولوجيا اليوم، التواصل اليوم، العالم الحديث.

## How Should Translators Go About Their Roles in the Modern World?

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### **Abstract**

When one considers the roles of translators, a simplistic answer might be that they convert text from a source language to a target language. However, the reality is far more complex. He/she will be surprised to discover that there is much more to it than that. In recent times, the meanings and tools of communication have changed mainly, and translators have moved in a new way, adjusting their professional aims and vision to mirror the next age of a new international society. Technology makes everyday cross-cultural communication commonplace today. Consequently, translators no longer think of themselves as lonely persons, but as international ambassadors who serve an increasing number of communities. This study stems from the fact that translation requires highly qualified translators who may act as mediators, editors, readers, writers, localization experts, etc., to serve today's communications. The results showed an increasing importance of the multi-faceted nature of the translators' role so that the reader or the listener cannot feel the difference between the original and the translation, but rather read or heard it the same as the original .

**Key Words:** Translators' Roles, Today's Technology, Communication, Modern World.

### 1. Introduction

We live in an era dominated by increasing communication, where the continuous flow of information is vital. Information and communication have always been crucial, but their importance and the methods of production, collection, processing, and dissemination have evolved over centuries. Modern society relies heavily on information for business, industry, education, and more. Communication can be classified in various ways, such as conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional, and interpersonal or mass communication. This discussion focuses on intentional, conscious, mass communication—specifically translations (Rodica et al., 1841-1401)

In industrial applications, translation tools are often employed under the simplistic notion that translation is merely a word-substitution task. However, translation theories since the 80s have highlighted that translators are, in fact, communicators whose responsibilities extend beyond simple word replacement. Translators aim to convey meaningful communication. Translation tools complicate this process, reverting translators to the linguistic equivalence models of the 60s. The role of translators has evolved over time due to technological advancements and globalization. The relationship between translators and their clients, as well as their working methods, have transformed because of the increased volume of information being translated and the development of translation tools. While studies suggest that translation tools can enhance the efficiency and focus of translation efforts, they also introduce challenges. These challenges will need to be addressed as part of the overall solution. (Bedard,2000)

Technology enhances human capabilities. Broadly speaking, technology comprises various tools, some of which affect our communication and, consequently, translation. Printing technology has reinforced the concept of the final text since the 15<sup>th</sup> century and, therefore, the final translation, establishing notions of equivalence between fixed texts. In this context, translation tools will be explored to enhance translators' capabilities, primarily influencing communication (Esselink, 2000).

This study addresses the question: How should translators fulfill their roles in modern communication?

## 2. Literature Review

Theoretically, translators can work with clients worldwide, leveraging time zones creatively. They can list their names, language pairs, and specializations on various websites that facilitate connections with clients. However, translation still depends mainly on trust between the translator and client. High-paying jobs often come from unseen clients, and fees vary widely by country. Additionally, electronic communications pose increased security risks. Translators frequently handle non-public material, which necessitates strong trust relationships. Electronic communications facilitate the distribution of large translation projects across multiple intermediaries. For example, a client who wants to market a product in 15 European languages might appoint a marketing company, which in turn appoints a language-service provider, brokers, translation companies, and finally, individual translators. As a result, the translator's produced text often differs from the final used text, complicating copyright claims. In software localization projects, translators may only see lists of phrases and glossaries, which can feel isolating and dehumanizing. However, electronic communications have also enhanced collaboration among translators through online forums, where they share advice, tips, and support (Lockwood, 2000: 187-202).

Technology is essential in today's professional world, with nearly all translating aided by computers. Everyday tools not intended for translation like internet search engines, spell checkers, search and replace functions, and revision tools, have revolution in written communication. The benefits of technology are too significant to ignore. What allows translators to focus on the creative aspects of translation is the translator tools that can handle repetitive tasks. Intelligent use of machine translation ensures that human efforts are directed to where they are needed most. However, translators must be aware of technology limitations which are not perfect. Each new technology requires investment in both tools and training. The return on this investment should exceed the costs. Electronic communications also enhance translator collaboration through professional forums, where translators exchange advice, tips, and discuss their work (Megal, 2004).

Alan Duff describes translation as a highly communicative activity that conveys messages across linguistic and cultural barriers. The 20th century, known as the age of communication, is also called the age of translation, highlighting translation's central role in this dynamic process.

Translation differs from general communication models, which involve encoding, sending, transmission, reception, and decoding. Translation by its nature involves transferring from a source language to a target language, impacting the target audience. This process has historically shaped cultural and literary characteristics, exemplified in Roman times when translations were integral to acquiring and disseminating wisdom and shaping poetry (Rodica et al., *ibid*)

Given that translations are a crucial part of communication, several questions arise: How should texts be translated for successful communication? Should translation be a mechanical or creative process? Experts have various opinions, but all agree that truth is essential for effective communication. For Susan Bassnett, translation includes converting a source language text into the target language while ensuring surface meaning similarity and maintaining structural without distorting the target language. This brings us to the concept of equivalence, an ideal but elusive and unachievable due to the natural losses in translation, as Newmark points out.. Losses can range from over-translation to under-translation. Minimizing these losses requires finding appropriate equivalence levels, such as context, semantics, grammar, or lexis. Different linguists have proposed various classifications of equivalence and translation types. Communication involves exchanging information using a general system of symbols, achieved through oral and non-verbal means. Communication can be automated, where information is encoded and transmitted, or interactive, involving continuous participant engagement. Language communication can be monolingual or multilingual, re-encoding specific information from the source language to the target language. Understanding inter-language communication involves recognizing language as a system of signals, a concept advanced by Baudouin de Courtenay and Ferdinand de Saussure. Inter-language communication reorganizes information from one linguistic system to another (Rodica, 2006).

The translation process inevitably involves losses. Translation strategies aim to minimize these losses while producing an equivalent target text that maintains the source text's dominant function. Ideally, translation focuses on the target text's purpose rather than a strict adherence to the original text. The fidelity/betrayal ratio, a long-debated topic among translators, has evolved to emphasize eliminating unnecessary constraints (Munday, 2001).

### **3. Methodology**

The data utilized in this study indicate that the translator occupies a central role in the translation process, making his/her responsibilities pivotal. For convenience, the researcher examines the translator's role from five perspectives: reader, writer, mediator, editor, and localization expert. He/she considers that having the ability in one aspect only is a bad matter; therefore it is preferable to have complementary roles among others. This research is based on this division of these five roles. It states that each role complements the other. Being able to play only one role is bad; Therefore, it is preferable to have complementary roles to achieve a high communication process.

### **4. Data Analysis**

Since the translator is the pivot in any translation process, his role will be pivotal in linguistic communication. In addition, he requires the following roles to carry out communication today:

#### **4.1. Translator as a Reader**

To comprehend a text fully, one must engage in both general and close reading. While general reading aids in grasping the overall meaning, close reading involves meticulously examining words in and out of context, particularly for challenging texts. Everything that does not make sense in context must be looked up (Victoria, 2005).

Whenever we engage with a text, we are both reading and interpreting. There are various ways to read, and no two people will interpret a text identically. The process begins with reading the original text for two purposes. Firstly, to understand the original text's subject. Secondly, to analyze it from a translator's perspective, which differs from that of a linguist or literary critic. The translators must decide their intention and writing style to choose the appropriate translation style and determine specific problems. Generally, readers ask, "What does the text mean?" Answering this question reduces the possible interpretations to a single answer. However, translators shift the question to "What does the text mean?" This change in perspective redirects reading techniques. Semantic parameters constantly change, making it difficult to determine the exact meaning of a word. Moreover, no two words have exactly the same meaning, and when words are placed next to each other, their original features begin to change (Mullamaa et al., 2006).

Translation thinking contributes significantly to reading by treating words not as isolated units but as links to other words. To grasp the author's overall intent, the translator reads horizontally through the text (Newmark, 1988). When translator's view is applied to reading, it transforms the static print on the page into a dynamic network of semantic connections. Words are only a reflection of the meaning intended by the author. Words are seen as vehicles for conveying meaning by the translator/reader, and their final interpretation extends beyond static formulations. Reading, For translators, is an ongoing process of exploring new semantic interactions and connections. Translation does not provide definitive answers, but rather attempts to solutions in response to the doubts arising from the interaction of the semantic fields of words. Each reader and translator reconstructs these connections differently, leading to diverse interpretations of the same text (Newmark, 2005).

### **4.2.Translator as a Writer**

The final stage in the translation process involves writing the target text, which reproduces the source text's message in the target language. At this point, the translator's writing skills are crucial; the translator functions as a writer and crafts the text in the target language. Success at this stage relies heavily on the translator's writing ability. Any awkwardness in the translation language can negatively impact the entire translation. The term "writing" in this context encompasses two distinct areas: writing knowledge and writing skill. Writing knowledge is essential in the intermediate stage, where the translator moves from the source text to the target text. This requires familiarity with target language conventions and various genres. Writing skill, on the other hand, is the ability to produce a well-structured text in the target language. At the final translation stage, the translator must write a fully developed text in the target language.

The translator as a writer bridges the gap between those who study translation and those who produce translations. Essays by well-known translators discussing their work as a unique creative literary practice illustrate this. Translators essentially act as writers or rewriters, creating works that can be enjoyed by a new audience. Literary texts, such as poetry, short stories, novels, and plays, are often allegorical, metaphorical, and connotative, focusing on the mind and imagination. Non-literary texts, which are more factual and report-based, are literal, objective, and denotative. A thorough understanding of the target language's writing

system and its genres helps the translator choose the best approach to convey the source text's message in the target language (Schulte, 1985).

#### **4.3. Translator as a Localization Expert**

The relationship between technological advancements and cultural changes have been studied by some translation scholars extensively. They point out that computers have turned how we write, read, and think, leading to conceptual shifts that defy traditional definitions of translation. Technology brings deep conceptual changes, affecting various tasks, including localization. This process takes advantage of new media, tools, and skills. Scholars suggest that translators do not simply transfer language elements to paper; rather they are leveraging technology to venture into new ways such as multimedia, software, video, and websites. However, they do draw a line at programming, and tend to make their view more compatible with documentation engineers or managers. They conclude that although localization results from technological changes, it remains firmly rooted in the technology.

Other scholars, who take a narrower view of localization as the adaptation of a text (or product) for a local audience, do not see deep conceptual changes but emphasize that translators need new skill sets. Translators must bridge the gap between technical experts who lack cultural awareness and translators who lack technical knowledge. Scholars also explore the relationship between translation memories, localization, and traditional translation. They see localization as a branch of translation that requires a basic understanding of translation theory but involves a more complex activity because of its technical aspects. While the core concept of adapting to the local target audience remains constant, the extent of technical knowledge required has increased. Their definition of localization emphasizes new technology and internationalization. They focus on that internationalization should be centralized, with the source text viewed as a draft to be efficiently converted into a localized final version. They claim that localization is a translation for the modern age. It does not fundamentally change the concept of translation, but rather expands it. The evolution of technology has changed the industry, necessitating the combination of traditional translation skills with technical abilities. Consequently, translators must be familiar with the latest technologies (Schulte, 1985: *ibid.*).

### **4.4. Translator as a Mediator**

Translation is not merely the conversion of words, despite the fact that the final product appears as words and sentences. Words are fragile entities, with each person developing unique connotations for them. Therefore, it is essential to understand the magnetic field of words and their semantic fields, both historically and presently. Often, we need to trace a word back to its origin when it was closely linked to its visual image, as some of this visual energy diminishes over time. We miss the original power and purpose of words.

To translate a text accurately from one language to another, a deep interpretation and understanding of the text is crucial. Many translation errors occur because translators do not fully comprehend the text they are translating. Misunderstanding a text is not usually due to unfamiliarity with individual words but rather a lack of understanding of words as structural elements in a specific context. Words have clearly defined boundaries of meaning, but they are imprecise; no word can consistently convey exactly the same conceptual boundaries. Each person connects with words differently, creating varying conceptual and emotional resonances.

Given the fragile nature of words, we cannot take them at face value. We must view words as markers pointing to a situation that we need to reconstruct. Translators often speak of transferring cultural attitudes between languages, but this assumption is rarely examined in depth. No two words in the same language have exactly the same meaning, and correspondences between words from different languages can only be similar, never exact synonyms. Extending this to cultural situations, it becomes clear that the exact nature of a situation, whether emotional, social, or psychological, cannot be perfectly transferred to a new language. There is always something lost, creating a new foreignness in the translation that corresponds to the original situation's magnetic field.

Translation thinking and research train us to navigate complex situations comfortably. Translators relate the internal movement of words to similar but different movements in another language. This constant back-and-forth creates an associative way of thinking that acknowledges the impossibility of precise correspondences. Complex situations are dynamic, constantly evolving and affecting those involved. Translators, more than any other professionals, possess the tools to establish cross-cultural interactions while understanding translation's limitations. By their nature, translators exist between two realities: the source language and

the target language's possibilities. Through translation, they open the door to "dialogue," a crucial task in today's world where nations increasingly build walls instead of embracing other cultures. (Tonkin and Frank, 2009)

#### **4.5.Translator as an Editor**

The release process prioritizes terminology over form. Editing involves ensuring the correct terminology is used, which requires searching for any suspicious or unfamiliar terms, often using online resources or specialized dictionaries, and making necessary corrections. This typically involves using the Track Changes feature in Word, and sometimes comments are added through the Comment tool. In both cases, the translator/editor suggests changes to address errors. CAT tools are frequently employed because incorrect terms can recur throughout the text and need consistent replacement.

For a true professional, translation is primarily an art. It is challenging, requiring various skills, and the translator must perform multiple roles to convey the original message accurately in the target language. The goal is for the reader or listener to experience the translation as if it were the original, without sensing any difference. (Tonkin and Frank, 2009:ibid.)

#### **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

In conclusion, the constant acceleration of information flow, driven by advancements in communications and technology, underscores the evolving and multifaceted role of translators, ensuring that they carry the same emotional and persuasive impact as the original and convey the cultural nuances of the source language.

It is recommended that to address their roles in communication today, translators must be well trained on how to develop the strong connection between good writing skills and good translation, how to be as curious about words as they are about facts, how to be as adept at browsing as scanning, how to be free from any of the prejudices of the two cultures, and finally how to be familiar with the latest technologies.

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