

عمل المترجمين: مزيج من الأنشطة اللغوية والتواصلية والوساطة

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الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة التفاعل بين الأنشطة اللغوية والتواصلية والوساطية في الترجمة، مُسلطة الضوء على التحديات التي يواجهها المترجمون، ومقدمةً استراتيجيات لتجاوزها. تُعدّ الترجمة عملية متعددة الأوجه، تتضمن تجاوز الحواجز اللغوية (اختلافات المفردات، والغموض، والمصطلحات التقنية)، والحواجز التواصلية (الفروق الثقافية الدقيقة، والتعبيرات الاصطلاحية، والنبرة والأسلوب)، والحواجز الوساطية (الوساطة الثقافية، والفهم السياقي، والوساطة البراغماتية). من خلال منهج نوعي، يُحلل هذا البحث المفردات والتعبيرات المترجمة (من الإنجليزية إلى العربية ومن العربية إلى الإنجليزية) وفقاً لفرضية وانغ (2022) بأن الترجمة نشاط متعدد الأوجه يجمع بين العناصر اللغوية والتواصلية والوساطية لنقل المعنى بدقة عبر اللغات والثقافات. وتكشف الدراسة أن على المترجمين توظيف استراتيجيات متنوعة، تشمل البحث والتكيف الثقافي والخبرة في الموضوع، لتجاوز هذه الحواجز وإنتاج ترجمات دقيقة ومراعية للثقافة وفعالة في نقل الرسالة المقصودة. الكلمات المفتاحية: الترجمة، الحواجز اللغوية، الحواجز التواصلية، استراتيجيات الترجمة.

Translators' Work: A Combination of Linguistic, Communicative, and Mediation Activities

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Abstract

This study provides insights into linguistic, communicative and mediation activities in the translation process, illuminating the obstacles in the way of translators and providing avenues to overcome such factors. Translation is an intricate process that entails the negotiation of linguistic barriers (vocabulary differences, ambiguity, technical terminology), communicative barriers (cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, tone and style), and mediation barriers (cultural mediation, contextual understanding, pragmatic mediation). This qualitative study analyzes translated terms and expressions (English-Arabic and Arabic-English). It is based on Wang's (2022) assumption that translation is a multifaceted activity that combines linguistic, communicative, and mediative elements to convey meaning accurately across languages and cultures. The findings of the study suggest that translators need to adopt a multilevel approach, incorporating different strategies like research, cultural adaptation, subject-matter expertise, in order to overcome these barriers and make translations that are accurate, culturally sensitive, and successfully convey the message .

Keywords: Translation, Linguistic Barriers, Communicative Barriers, Translation Strategies.

1. Introduction

Translation is a multi-faceted activity which integrates linguistic, communicative and mediative aspects to find an appropriate meaning across languages and cultures (Katan, 2004). Translation, as a linguistic activity requires proficiency in grammar, syntax, semantics and pragmatics (Solikhan, 2017). Transcending a wide range of linguistic elements is still another matter due to the impact of communication on culture, tone, style and context (Brower, 1959). Not only that but translation is the process that mediates transference so that there are many interpersonal and cultural dynamics that have to be navigated, so that it is impossible without a translator as an involved agent to facilitate cross-cultural meaning (Katan, 2004).

Translation is a complex task, however, so there are plenty of obstacles to overcome as a translator that can undermine the accuracy and effectiveness of a given task. This study examines how the linguistic, communicative, and mediative dimensions in translation interact as well as challenges encountered by translators and proposed solutions. It, in particular, seeks to focus on the linguistic, communicative, and mediation barriers faced by translators with in particular, identify the barriers that require overcoming in translation and this study is based on these research topics. The problem being investigated in this study is, what are the common challenges in translating which include linguistic, communicative and mediation barriers, and how do these impediments influence the output of high-quality translation?

2. Translation Barriers

Translation is a complicated undertaking which requires overcoming the linguistic, communicative, and mediation barriers that prevent transmitting true meaning across languages and cultures. This research investigates the relationships between the aforementioned barriers and outlines ways to address them. There are many significant features that create linguistic barriers for the translator which consist of how the language differs from one another and technical terms. Translators are expected to be familiar with both source and target languages, from the grammatical, to the level of words, and to the cultural context in which they find themselves (Brandi Gratis, 2022).

Furthermore, skills and expertise should be targeted to accurately translate technical terminology (Peter Argondizzo, 2022). "Communicative barriers" are key factors in translation itself, including aspects of culture and idiomatic expressions (Miranda Parr, 2023). It is necessary for translators to make adjustments to cultural specifics and reference to

context-based references to communicate accurately (Miranda Parr, 2023). In addition, idiomatic expressions need careful attention to the context and sense of meaning to discover suitable surrogates or carry the intended meaning (Miranda Parr, 2023).

Besides, communication in this aspect also includes mediation such as cultural mediation and context knowledge hindrance, which could hinder the outcome of effective communication. In this process of intercultural translation, the translator has to navigate all the cultural differences. And being contextually aware of the purpose of translation is also crucial to the translation so as not to miss how to transmit meaning. The barriers can be transcribed with the help of different strategies by translators. Engaging in thorough research about subject matter, including terms used with technical terms, cultural references etc., is essential (Peter Argondizzo, 2022). Working with subject matter experts or native speakers may also prove valuable and can help with language (Brandi Gratis, 2022). Contextualisation and explanation of the meaning of translation is also critical in order to support the authenticity of sense-making (Miranda Parr, 2023). Finally, there is a need for continuous learning to refresh language skills, cultural knowledge and subject matter expertise to avoid becoming obsolete and to help overcome translation barriers (Peter Argondizzo, 2022).

2.1. Linguistic Barriers in Translation

Translation is navigating linguistic barriers in order to communicate meaning correctly across diverse linguistic and cultural boundaries. This review presents the connection between linguistic, communicative, as well as mediation activities in translation and identifies the different levels of communication difficulties and how to overcome linguistic obstacles in the effort to make meaningful work. Translation is hindered by linguistic elements, such as vocabulary, ambiguity, colloquialisms and slang, technical terminology, grammatical differences, and idiomatic expressions. Differences in lexicon of languages could be substantial challenges considering that words may not have equivalent functions within and/or between a language and they may have a different meaning in the language (Katan, 2004).

Ambiguous words or phrases in a native language also create problems in terms of how to convey the meaning of phrases accurately, as it seems that the translator needs look at the linguistic background to unpack the meaning (Solikhan, 2017). Translators need to understand the grammar, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of language at their core. Grammar and syntax, when translated, dictate the order of terms and phrases in a sentence (Katan, 2004). Semantics is the study of the meaning in language, and thus

interpreters need to take into account the word semantic differences in the two languages and how they affect meaning and word usage to correctly communicate meaning (Katan, 2004). Pragmatics deals with the way context colors how language's meanings are interpreted, which is why translators should be aware of the pragmatic aspects in both the original and target languages to communicate (Katan, 2004). Translation is not only a linguistic activity but a communicative, mediating one as well (García Luque, 2009; González-Davies, 2020).

Translators are confronted, though, with the communicative intent of the text, the target audience and the cultural context when translating to create an accurate and efficient language output (Parks, 1992). As translators, we strive to address cultural and linguistic differences (González-Davies, 2020) while facilitating communication between different sides in a bilingual, globalized world through mediation. Linguistic barriers are to be overcome with a variety of strategies by interpreters including thorough researching, joint working with subject matter experts, and contextual understanding. Subject-matter expertise or research must be employed to translate technical terminology (e.g., Peter Argondizzo, 2022). Idiomatic expressions and cultural references must be explained or adapted in order to be interpreted as intended (Miranda Parr, 2023).

2.2. Communicative Barriers in Translation

Translation is a complex and dynamic process that provides meaning, intention and communication related elements of the source text in the target language. The study investigates linguistic, communicative, and mediation activities when translating; the study emphasizes the difficulties & ways for capturing aspects of culture differences (i.e., tone, style, register, and context). Cultural nuances in translation can include specific use cases where some words or phrases mean something that is cultural to that particular context (Miranda Parr, 2023). Idiomatic expressions, for example, are sensitive to social mores and need to be adjusted in order to get across the intended message (Katan, 2004). We need to keep in mind that there is also a need by the translator to try to get the tone and style of source language such as formality, informality, verbosity, or conciseness, also the source language tone (Wang, 2022). Both register and context are equally important when translating. But we have to be mindful the language should be appropriate to the target audience and purpose, using technical vernacular and formal phrasing when that is appropriate (Peter Argondizzo, 2022).

Correct translation depends in part on context, meaning that every word or phrase is context-specific and will have different meanings

depending on its context (Katan, 2004). Pragmatics contributes as a key element in translation, meaning that we are interested in how the text is used for various purposes (Katan, 2004). Translators must take pragmatic aspects into account in both source and target forms of translation in order to maintain efficiency with the target audience. Many communication challenges such as intention and tone, textual cohesion of meaning, and cultural sensitivity exist in translation.

To express and convey the author's intended tone in the target language, translators must interpret the source language. Textual cohesiveness is a necessity for the flow and meaning of the original meaning, and cultural sensitivity is necessary to respect cultural beliefs and values. Translators in this domain work by mediating between different cultures and languages (mediation between parties) to help to solve these communication problems (González-Davies, 2020). The integration of linguistic, communicative and mediation work is a tool that helps translators to make more precise as well as more effective translations.

2.3. Mediation Barriers in Translation

Translation is a multifaceted process that combines linguistic, communicative, and mediation activities to convey meaning, intent, and cultural nuances of the source text in the target language. This study examines the interplay of these activities, highlighting the challenges and strategies involved in capturing cultural, emotional, contextual, and pragmatic aspects of the source text.

Mediation in translation involves interpreting and conveying cultural references, idiomatic expressions, emotional undertones, and contextual information to ensure effective communication between parties. Cultural mediation is crucial, as it requires capturing cultural nuances and adapting them to the target culture (Miranda Parr, 2023). Emotional mediation involves conveying the emotional content of the source text, including tone, style, and register, to evoke similar emotions in the target audience (Wang, 2022).

Contextual mediation refers to capturing and conveying information about the social, historical, or situational context of the source text. Translators must analyze the context and provide sufficient background information or find suitable equivalents in the target language to maintain the original context (Katan, 2004). Pragmatic mediation involves considering the intended purpose and effect of a text during translation, adapting it to suit the target audience and culture (González-Davies, 2020).

However, mediation in translation can be challenging due to various barriers, including ethical considerations, translator bias and subjectivity, and technical and domain-specific terminology. Translators must be aware

of these barriers and employ strategies to overcome them, such as conducting extensive research, consulting subject matter experts, and exercising judgment and adaptability.

3. Literature Review

Translation is a multidimensional process that entails addressing linguistic, communicative, and mediation barriers to convey meaning accurately across languages and cultures (Katan, 2004; Wang, 2022). The literature also explains the interplay of these activities and the challenges and strategies of capturing cultural nuances, tone, style, register, and context. The linguistic barriers in the way of vocabulary, ambiguity, colloquialisms and slang, technical terminology, grammatical differences, and idiomatic expressions can create problems for the translator (Katan, 2004; Solikhan, 2017). Translators have a lot to deduce in terms of language: such things as grammar/syntax, semantics and pragmatics (Katan, 2004). Communication barriers also affect translation, referring both to differences in culture as well as idiomatic expressions (Miranda Parr, 2023). With proper adjustments, meaning is more likely to be realised (Miranda Parr, 2023).

Other facilitators include mediation barriers, such as cultural mediation and contextual understanding (González-Davies, 2020) which are vital to effective communication. This literature provides different solutions to these obstacles such as: thorough exploration, collaboration with specialists in the domain and contextualized understanding (Peter Argondizzo, 2022; Brandi Gratis, 2022). A mediation approach that involves overcoming cultural and linguistic differences is another effective tool that can be applied by translators to enhance communication (González-Davies, 2020).

Important contributions have been discussed in the realm, including Katan (2004), who focuses on translating cultures, emphasising cultural nuances in translation. Miranda Parr (2023) argues that translation should be sensitive to cultural aspects, González-Davies (2020) on mediation in translation. The literature review indicates a paucity of research regarding the interaction between linguistic, communicative, and mediation activities in translation. This study seeks to bridge this gap by looking at the main obstacles faced and strategies that are employed to overcome them.

4. Methodology

In this study, the qualitative method is taken to investigate these linguistic, communicative and mediation processes in translation, highlighting the obstacles in front of the translators and outlining solutions towards mitigation. Based on Wang (2022)'s assumption that translation is a multilevel activity that combines linguistic, communicative, and mediative

elements to convey meaning accurately across languages and cultures, the study includes specific in-depth research of translated terms and expressions (English-Arabic and Arabic-English) to explore linguistic barriers (differences in vocabulary, ambiguity, technical terminology), communicative barriers (cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, tone and style), and mediation barriers (cultural mediation, contextual understanding, pragmatic mediation).

Data will be extracted from terms and expressions analysis that will be analysed thematically to extract barriers. The purpose of the study is to generate the full impact of these barriers that translators encounter and recommendations on their overcome along, with thorough research followed by the involvement of the subject matter expert as needed and context-based analysis. This study explores how these activities intersect with each other and aims to contribute to the development of translation practices.

5. Data Analysis

The data analysis involves examining the interplay of linguistic, communicative, and mediation activities in translation, highlighting the barriers that translators face and presenting strategies for overcoming them.

Linguistic Barriers

- Vocabulary differences:

- English: "bank" (financial institution or river side) → Arabic: بَنْك (bank) or سَاحِل (bank)

- Analysis: The translator must consider the context to determine which meaning is intended.

- English: "spring" (season or coiled metal object) → Arabic: رِبِيع or نَبَوِيَّة (nabawiyyah)

- Analysis: The translator must analyze the sentence structure and context to disambiguate the word.

- Ambiguity:

- English: "I saw her duck" (person or action) → Arabic: رَأَيْتُ بَطَّهَا (ra'aytu bawwatahā) or رَأَيْتُهَا تَحْتِي (ra'aytuha takhtabī)

- Analysis: The translator must consider the context and syntax to determine the intended meaning.

- English: "The teacher graded the papers" (evaluated or marked with a grade) → Arabic: قَيَّمَ الْأُسْتَاذُ الْأُورَاقَ (qayyama al-'ustādh al-'awrāq) or وَدَّعَ الْأُسْتَاذُ الْأُورَاقَ (wadda'a al-'ustādh al-'awrāq)

- Analysis: The translator must analyze the context and vocabulary to determine the intended meaning.

- Technical terminology:

- English: "API" (Application Programming Interface) → Arabic: وَجْهَ الْبَرْمَجِيَّةِ التَّطْبِيقِيَّةِ (wajh al-barmajiyya al-taṭbīqiyya)

- Analysis: The translator must have specialized knowledge of computer science and programming to translate technical terms accurately.

- English: "HTML" (Hyper Text Markup Language) → Arabic: لُغَةُ الْأَحْمَوِيَّةِ لِوَثَائِقِ النَّصِّ الْهَيْبِرِ (lughah al-ḥamwiyyah li-wathā'iq al-nass al-hayper)

- Analysis: The translator must be familiar with web development terminology to translate technical terms accurately.

Communicative Barriers

- Cultural nuances:

- English: "break a leg" (good luck) → Arabic: حَظٌّ سَعِيدٌ (ḥazz sa'īd)

- Analysis: The translator must consider the cultural context and adapt the idiom to the target culture.

- English: "give someone the cold shoulder" (ignore or show indifference) → Arabic: يُجْعَلُهُ يَبْرُدَ كَاتِفُهُ (yaj'alhu yabrud kātifahu)

- Analysis: The translator must analyze the idiom and find an equivalent expression in the target language.

- Idiomatic expressions:

- English: "cost an arm and a leg" (expensive) → Arabic: يَكُونُ غَالِيًا جِدًّا (yakūnu ghalīlan jiddan)

- Analysis: The translator must consider the context and find an equivalent idiom in the target language.

- Arabic: أَكَلَ مِلْحَهُ (to eat someone's salt) → English: "to be someone's guest"

- Analysis: The translator must analyze the idiom and adapt it to the target culture.

- Tone and style:

- Formal English: "I request your presence" → Arabic: يُرْجَى حُضُورُكُمْ (yurjaḥa ḥuḍūrakum)

- Analysis: The translator must consider the tone and style of the source text and adapt it to the target language.

- Informal English: "Hey, what's up?" → Arabic: كَيْفَ الْحَالُ؟ (kayf al-ḥāl?)

- Analysis: The translator must analyze the tone and style of the source text and adapt it to the target language.

Mediation Barriers

- Cultural mediation:

- English: "Ramadan Mubarak" (blessed Ramadan) → Arabic: رَمَضَانَ مُبَارَكًا (ramadan mubārak)

- Analysis: The translator must consider the cultural context and adapt the greeting to the target culture.

- Arabic: مَرْحَبًا بِكَ (marḥabān bik) → English: "welcome"

- Analysis: The translator must analyze the cultural context and adapt the greeting to the target language.

- Contextual understanding:

- English: "The meeting is at 2 PM" → Arabic: الْإِجْتِمَاعُ هُوَ السَّاعَةَ اثْنَيْنِ مَسَاءً (al-ijtima' huwa al-sā'ah ithnayn masā'an)

- Analysis: The translator must consider the context and provide sufficient background information.

- Arabic: الْمَطَارُ هُوَ السَّاعَةَ خَمْسَةَ (al-maṭār huwa al-sā'ah khamsah) → English: "The airport is at 5 PM"

- Analysis: The translator must analyze the context and provide sufficient background information.

- Pragmatic mediation:

- English: "Can you help me?" → Arabic: هَلْ تُعْذِرُنِي؟ (hal tu'dhirnī?)

- Analysis: The translator must consider the intended purpose and effect of the text and adapt it to the target audience.

- Arabic: هَلْ تُغْذِرُنِي الْمَسَاءَ؟ (hal tu'dhirnī al-masā'?) → English: "Can you help me tonight?"

- Analysis: The translator must analyze the intended purpose and effect of the text and adapt it to the target audience.

Consequently, it is suggested that translators need to adopt a multilevel approach, incorporating different strategies (e.g., research, cultural adaptation, subject-matter expertise) in order to overcome barriers and make translations accurate, culturally sensitive, and successfully conveyed.

6. Conclusion

This study elucidates the interaction between linguistic, communicative, and mediation levels of translation and provides insights into barriers and ways in which they can be overcome through addressing and reducing the potential for miscommunication in translation. Translators must address linguistic, communicative, and mediation barriers to rendering appropriate, culturally competent, and accurate translations. A multilevel approach where linguistic skills are used all together with communicative and mediation skills should be taken from these levels. Understanding these barriers will help translators provide better quality translations; therefore, they can effectively facilitate cross-cultural understanding. As a result, the study provides an understanding of translators' skills and knowledge that would facilitate effective translation practices by providing insight into the key challenges and strategies.

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