

A Reflection on the Future of Translatology

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Abstract:

This article is a reflection on the future of translatology based on contemporary practices in the discipline. Three main key issues are discussed. First, the tension between theory and practice, which run through the history of translation and continues to divide trainers and professionals even today. Second, the changing role of the translator in the workplace under the pressure of globalization and the Internet. Third, translation training and the relationship between the university and society. Ultimately, a more pragmatic view in which technology plays a role of the utmost importance is suggested.

Keywords: Role of the translator- Theory and practice- - Translation training- Translatology.

ملخص:

يتطرق هذا المقال إلى مستقبل الدراسات الترجمة انطلاقا من الممارسات الآنية، ويناقش ثلاث قضايا رئيسية: أولا، التوتر الحاصل بين النظرية والتطبيق، الذي يمتد عبر تاريخ الترجمة ولا يزال يقسم المدربين والمهنيين حتى اليوم. ثانيا، الدور المتغير للمترجم في مكان العمل تحت ضغط العولمة والإنترنت. ثالثا، التكوين في ميدان الترجمة والعلاقة بين الجامعة والمجتمع. أخيرا، يسعى المقال إلى اقتراح وجهة نظر أكثر واقعية تلعب فيها التكنولوجيا دورا في غاية الأهمية.

كلمات مفتاحية: التدريب على الترجمة -النظرية والتطبيق -دور المترجم - علم الترجمة.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the 1970s, when a series of reflections on translation converged to give birth to what is known as “translation studies” (henceforth Translatology), there has been a rise in research in this field. The advent of the new discipline has been accompanied by academic recognition of its area as it took shape and became distinct from related disciplines such as comparative literature, and applied linguistics. As Susan Bassnett (2002) pointed out “Today, [...] Translation Studies is more comfortable with itself, better able to engage in borrowing from and lending techniques and methods to other disciplines.”(p.3). The emergence of translatology was mainly due to the work of James S. Holmes who set the foundation of the nascent discipline in 1972, but also to major contributions of scholars such as J.C. Catford, Eugene Nida, Hans Vermeer to name but a few.

In the age of the Internet, it is undoubtful that translatology will continue to play a fundamental role in human communication. The volume of work is currently growing exponentially in a globalized society characterized by the hegemony of English as the current lingua franca and a strong presence of linguistic and intercultural mediation. Globalization has also shaped new horizons and brought new challenges to translatology. The Romantic times of reflection where we took stock of two thousand years of translation are well and truly over. The new century calls for a more pragmatic approach that can keep pace with the digital boom of the 1990s, revolutionized by artificial intelligence and computerized technologies. Furthermore, the constant evolution of translation professions over the last few decades has radically overhauled the distribution of research areas within this dynamic discipline. The quest for a general theory of translation has now been abandoned, wiping out on its way the classical binary oppositions between letter and meaning, fidelity and betrayal, sorcerers and targeters, language and culture, practice and theory as if the aforementioned poles have either come together or dissolved into a consensual middle ground: the letter fades away in favor of the meaning; fidelity and betrayal are resorbed in creativity; being target-oriented is a natural tendency; the cultural fact is more significant than the language which expresses it; the practice can dispense with the superfluous 'theorization'.

In the light of the existing theoretical framework and the practical challenges facing translators in a number of different contexts, this article attempts to explore the future of translation by examining translatology' current state of the question from three main angles:

First, the traditional split between theory and practice, which harks back to recorded history, and still raise discord among scholars. Second, the role of the translator in our globalized society.

Third, translation training in the era of digitalization and e-learning. The aim is to provoke a reflection on these topics which, in many cases, have already arisen or are likely to arise, but this time from a different position.

Research questions:

- What are the main challenges facing the discipline of translatology today?
- How has the role of the translator changed in the workplace under the influence of globalization and the Internet?
- What is the current relationship between translation training and society, and how can it be improved?

Objectives:

- To identify and analyze the main issues and challenges facing translatology today.
- To examine the changing role of the translator in the contemporary workplace and its implications for the discipline.
- To investigate the relationship between translation training and society and propose ways to enhance it.

Methodology:

This study will employ a qualitative research design based on a critical analysis of existing literature and resources. The research will be conducted through an extensive literature review of recent and relevant literature on translatology. Data will be analyzed thematically.

Expected results:

This study is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges facing translatology today and provide a theoretical framework for

addressing them. Additionally, it is expected to reveal the changing role of the translator in the contemporary workplace and provide insights into the implications of this change for the discipline.

2. Theory Vs Practice: Towards A Pragmatic Approach

From Cicero to Venuti, scholars have endeavored to make the role of translation and the translator understandable. While efforts were directed at establishing a single theory (Early attempts at systematic translation theory: Dryden, Dolet, Tytler and Yán Fù (Munday, 2022) ; a number of studies have appeared calling for a new approach: Some advocating the supremacy of the author and the original text (Schleiermacher, Walter Benjamin, Berman, Meschonnic), while others prioritizing the reader and the target text (Nida, Evan-Zohar, Toury, Selescovich, Lederer and Fortunato Israel). Nowadays it seems that the interest is rather in the translator, the new authorial figure.

The emergence of novelties in the field of communication will quickly have an impact on translatology. We live in an era where the academic position of the different disciplines is determined by their relationship with the new technologies. It is foreseeable that the translation of tomorrow will go in this direction. The state in which the new technological revolution in progress finds itself seems to confirm this opinion. Hence, the primary objective of translatology based on communication theory would therefore not to learn how to translate or to determine the meaning but rather to understand the position of translation in the communication system and eventually to analyze its behaviors within it. The dialogue between technology and translation could only have common interests.

The construction of different theoretical models of translation with the help of information and communication technologies (ICT) would be a good approach for the understanding of the forthcoming translational phenomena. In a communicative theory of translation, it would be a question of giving a preponderant role to translation typology, by analyzing the various cases in their singularity. More specifically, translation problems posed by the different communication media require an atomistic vision, which takes into account the particularity but also the complexity of each process: for example, the implication of communication channel (simple - verbal, non-verbal, audiovisual, ...- or

complex - multi-channel and multi-code type of communication)¹, the form of the message, the nature of the addressee, etc. Indeed, translation, once seen as a dichotomous: (literal/free, transparent/colored, general/specialized, written/oral...), will gradually give way to new combined formulas such as oral and written, literary and audiovisual. This is the reason why scholars such as Delabastita (1989), Zabalbeascoa (1993), Gottlieb (1994) and Gambier (2003) called for a new reflection on digital media in order to develop a model of analysis specific to it.

3. The Changing Role of the Translator

Translation was once considered as one of the loneliest jobs in the world. Today the perspective has changed; translators are increasingly becoming professional, cooperative, technologically literate, advertising their services without spatial restrictions, making the whole world their territory, and their computer their office. Henceforth, the network represents the very space of translation and translators, but also the space of the other: the client or the cybernetic agency.

The network is the domain of new technologies where the use of automatic translation systems and translation memories favor the work of the professionals. terminological and lexical resources, online corpora, proofreading services (both mechanical and human), are all excellent tools for users, including tech skeptics, humanists and literary scholars, who are increasingly convinced of their value. These tools help to guarantee the quality of the work, but they also favor the speed of the action, values that are very dear to the profession.

In tomorrow's society, knowledge of the job will be much more related to training. The students of translation will have a more accurate vision of the issues at stake, since their training will be based on quasi-professional content. The new context will finally allow them to undertake the practice of translation according to a more realistic expectation and not to purely utopian or ideal standards as it is the case in many didactic exercises nowadays.

Cooperative work will also have consequences, both positive and negative: The increase in the volume of work will lead to quasi-industrial methods to ensure a decent wage. In the new production systems, substantially more skills will be

required from the translator who will have to master a whole range of tools to survive cutthroat competition.

With the move towards the knowledge economy and society, new forms of translation emerge resulting in new practices: literary translation for the media, media localization for a whole range of new products such as video games, cell phones, podcasts, etc., ‘

The profile of the translator is constantly expanding and will become even more complex in the future. The translator of tomorrow is called upon to play the role of “super-translator” or “all purposes translator” given the training s/he received and the demands of the communication society.

The dissolution of personal work into team work, under the orders of the translation companies, increases the ‘invisibility’ of the translator (Venuti, 2018, p.1). The translator's name disappears from the text in favor of the company's name (a common practice in agencies today), which may certainly pose an important problem of textual ownership. Another important problem would be the loss of the translators' role in editorial decisions to the benefit of literary agents and the marketing group.

4. Training: From Traditional Training to Active Methodologies

The teaching of translation is influenced every day by new pedagogical ideas. The crisis of the educational system of the century, from which translation could not escape (Bueno, 2005), is being tackled progressively by new experiences capable of overcoming the divorce between the university and the society and the imbalance between the role of the teacher and that of the student. As an example, the different countries of the European Union are preparing for an imminent adherence to a single system of credits called European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which will allow the cross-border recognition of academic qualifications and study periods. (European commission, n.d). This program aims at enhancing the relevance and adequacy of university education to the job market, supporting students mobility between higher education institutions and blending different learning styles, such as university and work-based learning, within the same program of study or through lifelong learning.(European

commission, n.d) The system ensures the best possible training for all European translators and will certainly have a very important impact on translators training, both within and outside the continent borders.

The training of translators based on the involvement of students in the learning process calls for active methodologies. Among these, information and communications technology (ICT) offers a host of possibilities for active translators training such as Tele training, networking, mobile learning (M-learning), computer-assisted language learning (CALL) etc. it is worth mentioning that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has made integrating ICT into education as part of its efforts to ensure equity and access to education. (UNESCO, n.d) .Technology has established new relationship in teaching and a change of roles in the teacher-student relationship, where the former becomes a real tutor guide, a moderator, an aid to stimulation, and the latter a protagonist of the contents, an active partner in the training, an apprentice trainer...

The spread of virtual learning spaces in the classrooms of our universities², undoubtedly allows better management of resources and course activities. The semi-attendance teaching system is a solution that does not conflict with the traditional university and allows for the consolidation of direct training.

Thanks also to telematics equipments, education can benefit from common actions, such as inter-university training based on technological agreements between different sectors. The implementation of technology in an academic setting also requires translators to have a cooperative spirit and to be committed to increasing their participation in the design of the telematics tools themselves. This skill is necessary to succeed in obtaining advanced technology that is close to the real interests of the translators.

It is needless to remind that the use of telematics in education (e-learning platforms, online translation memories, online resources ...) has a deep impact on the future of the profession : we are not only transmitting practical and technological knowledge but also creating a space for applied research in translation. And what is even more important: we are changing the translator's working spirit. The use of ICT changes the translator's relationship with the text

and with society. Technological values also have a very important implication in translational context.

The debate on training undoubtedly leads to the idea that we have of the university. The values it has always represented in society will not be able to diminish tomorrow, on the contrary, the university is called upon to be the obligatory reference of knowledge and to play an important role in the society of the future. We do not imagine a university living on the margins of society nor a society living on the fringe of the university.

The university has always constituted the essential bridge to both teaching and learning translation. Yet the training path is not limited to it; the value of continuous training and the importance of professional retraining in the life of the translator are both of utmost importance. Educational institutions of tomorrow will have to be capable of ensuring the individual quality education and effective training by keeping doors widely open to professionals. Given the technological potential of the research units, it is certain that the university will not be the only investor in technology; companies are also called upon to innovate in the field of translation and in other fields.

If the goal of the university is to train the professionals of tomorrow, the role of professionals is to respond to the expectations of the society and the market alike. To do so, both trainee translators and professionals must be aware of their shortcomings and be able to overcome them. By recognizing that learning translation is a lifetime process and that training is a necessity for the translator, self-training should be regarded as a professional requirement and will increasingly become part of a personal conviction.

To sum up, active methodologies allow students to participate in their training and provide professionals with the opportunity to be aware of the technical successes.

4. CONCLUSION

The translation of tomorrow will certainly not be the translation of yesteryear. Various factors have emerged adding new challenges to translatology. First, the theory of translation will have a much more pragmatic reading, focused on the concrete problems of translation and on the different types of texts to be translated. Second, tomorrow's professional translator will certainly be better trained and likely to have more work to do than today's, but s/he cannot deny some of the

disadvantages of the profession. Third, the learning methodology will undergo a great change, caused by social, political and technological progress. In all this adventure, the role of new technologies is fundamental. Their direct involvement in all the facets of translation will have a decisive influence over the discipline. However, the task of translators will always remain the same: a universal conviction that translators' action is decisive for the success of human communication, and it seems that this is something that will never change.

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Endnotes

¹ - Gottlieb (1994) used ‘polysemiotic text’ to refer to texts with two or more communication channels. (Snell-Hornby 1993) preferred ‘multimedial’ to distinguish texts with multiple channels.

² - Such as Note 9, Moodle, QUEST...