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TRANSLATION AND TRANSLATION STUDIES AT THE CROSSROADS OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract

Translation studies is a multidiscipline, by definition open to other disciplines and research methods. As worldwide globalization occurs, it reflects rapid changes in communication methods. These changes in communication are visible in everyday, routine work processes, but they also influence the approaches developed within the discipline to better understand the meaning and depth of ongoing changes.

Keywords

globalization, audiovisual translation, crowdsourcing, translation automation, media translation.

INTRODUCTION

In its general sense, translation is an activity that has been neglected for centuries, both in terms of its necessity and the effort and professional status it requires. Nevertheless, one cannot speak of uniformity: languages and societies remained silent in different ways and to different degrees, and, moreover, at different times. Although generalizations should be approached with caution - in many historical traditions and in different eras, translation was often in the service of those in power (both royal and ecclesiastical authorities), even if implicitly and hidden, and was used for everyday contacts, be it trade, scientific or philosophical among others.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this article, I am going to review the latest trends and research in the field of translation. Now two paradigms are being developed that justify, to some extent, such a number of various labels created for translation. On the one hand, the most traditional concept of translation, which has existed for centuries and manifested itself in the equivalence paradigm, has become more recipient or audience oriented. In other words, it can be called a culture-oriented paradigm. It coexists with another constantly changing paradigm: it reflects the different platforms and environments through which translation is carried out today. In this sense, there is a transition from paper format to digital and to Internet format (where the translated text becomes multimodal). This rapidly changing



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context is responsible for the proliferation of terms used to refer to what was once considered translation [1].

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Beyond the mechanical perception of translation

It seems that the term "translation" has a bad reputation. It is often replaced by competing terms such as localization, adaptation, versioning, transediting, language mediation, or transcreation. Although this proliferation of labels does not occur in all languages and cultures, the very fact that these labels appear and gain popularity makes it difficult to estimate the size and scope of markets. It can also make it difficult to understand what the discipline involves: how do we understand what is actually included in the subject matter of translation studies? To what extent can the definition of the term be expanded to include changing communicative situations and new dimensions that go beyond conventional concepts?

Translation implies a formal word-by-word transfer, communication passing in one direction, where the translator is given a subordinate place. The expansion of the field of translation studies has disrupted the traditional definition and image and now includes creativity, dedication and an ethic of subjective responsibility [Sun]. The collision of these paradigms, coming from the translation of religious texts and operating with printed sources, with digital culture is happening right now. It's difficult for us to define what we do when we translate—creative rewriting, translation-editing, or localization. And it's noticeable. Although new markets and technologies, as well as changing communication needs, have led to different divisions into sectors using different labels for the professional activities carried out, many still divide translators into two main categories of literary and non-literary translation (technical, commercial, medical, legal).

Translation and localization

The concept of localization has gained popularity both in translation practice and in theory. There are usually four main historical stages (co-existing at the moment): software, websites, mobile phones and computer games [2]. With the rise of personal computers in the 1980s and the start of software sales in countries that speak other languages for which the software was not originally intended, it became necessary to modify individual application features to meet needs and expectations. While programmers and software developers were encoding content in their languages around the world, effective marketing and localization strategies and campaigns launched by multinational software corporations, as well as initial experiences with international harmonization (Unicode being one of the similar examples) eventually contributed to the spread of standard interfaces and terminology for office software and Internet browsers throughout the world. In



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fact, the desire to simplify the process of computer communication using various protocols, interfaces and platforms in numerous languages was not limited to the business sphere. It became a social experience as well.

Translation enters the digital era

Communication, information and computer technologies have brought some changes to the idea of translation. These changes may well lead to a significant breakthrough not only in the practice, but also in the theory of translation. First of all, the level of computerization has increased, penetrating all aspects of translation activities. Special software is used to create translation memory databases, align texts, manage terminology, check spelling and grammar, access and search electronic corpora, and perform machine translation. There are also various combined products that combine, for example, translation memory databases, terminology databases and machine translation. Changing social relationships are also important. Through various discussion groups and forums, blogs, and social and professional networks such as LinkedIn and YouTube, the exchange of experiences and opinions has become possible.

The ongoing changes in translation practices in the digital world affect not only professional translation and localization. Many types of users have emerged. One prominent example is the use of machine translation by ordinary users around the world. Free programs available on the Internet allow users to download text and get a translation of its essence without much concern for quality. There may be limited or no human involvement. If users speak one or more foreign languages, then they themselves can correct the result obtained in order to improve the quality of machine translation in their language and in the corresponding translation direction [3].

The second type of users has more specific features and includes those who, although not professionally trained, are fluent in foreign languages. They usually team up to carry out specific tasks or join projects where they can apply their knowledge of language and culture: they engage in amateur translation, subtitling, dubbing and superimposing translation on specially selected manga, animated films and computer games.

The third type of user-translator participates in projects that are not necessarily amateur, but clearly focused on performing a specific task. Such projects are often called collective translation (meaning crowdsourcing). Participants translate and/or localize software, websites, articles, reports, literary texts and interviews. To carry out this unpaid collective work, volunteers and anonymous (but not always) participants rely on their linguistic competence to translate and review the part of the project that they choose, whenever they are willing and able, until the entire project is completed. They can translate thanks to



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tools such as Traduwiki, Wikitranslate and Google Translate. Online social networks (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) are taking advantage of these collective translation efforts to become more accessible to segments of the population they may not have initially considered. However, these structures, in addition to their function as social networks, also make a profit and are listed on the stock exchange. Crowdsourcing (i.e. translation performed by an unspecified group of volunteer translators) raises serious concerns regarding the individuals involved (are they translators? how are they compensated for their work?), regarding ethics (what are the consequences of free work? for companies seeking to

make a profit?), as well as regarding the concept of translation itself, how it is

Audiovisual translation

carried out and how it is perceived [4].

An audiovisual object, or performance, consists of a number of meaningful codes that simultaneously influence the generation of meaning. Viewers, including translators, perceive a series of codified signs, connected in a certain way by the director (choice of angle and shooting) and the editor (editing). One of the key tasks for WUA practice and research remains identifying the types of connections between verbal and nonverbal signs. The table lists 14 semiotic codes that influence the generation of meaning to varying degrees.

Table 1
Semiotic codes in audiovisual works [5]

	Auditory channel	Visual channel
Verbal	linguistic code (dialogue, monologue,	graphic code (written forms:
element	comments/voice-over, reading);	letters, headings, menus, street
s (signs)	paralinguistic code (manner of	names, advertising, brands,
	pronunciation, intonation, accents);	intertitles, subtitles)
	literary and theatrical codes (plot,	
	narration, scenes, dramatic	
	development, rhythm)	
Nonverbal	(special sound effects) sound	iconographic code; photographic
elements	code; music code;	code (lighting, perspective,
(signs)	paralinguistic code (voice quality,	color); scenographic code (visual
	pauses, silence, voice volume,	background signs);
	auditory noise: crying, screaming,	film code (shooting, framing,
	coughing)	cutting/editing, genre
		conventions); kinesthetic code
		(gestures, manners, postures,
		facial expressions, glances);



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proxemic code (movements, use
of space, distance between
characters);
dress code (hairstyle, makeup)

Digital technologies are changing the face of the audiovisual industry (script writing, sound, image, costume production, as well as special effects, filming and editing), rental and exhibition. Thanks to them, new techniques have emerged, such as audio commentary, supratitles, subtitles for live broadcasts and audio subtitles. New technologies and devices (video streaming, video and on-demand television, podcasting, mobile phones and portable video players) continue to greatly impact broadcasting and audiences.

CONCLUSION

The platforms, technical protocols, media, sociotechnical contexts and digital spaces within which translation now exists are characterized by a mixture of structured and structuring dynamics that motivate the production and consumption of multimedia and multimodal content. The desire to translate and communicate through translation is enhanced by computer and information and communication technologies. The equivalence paradigm, analytically suitable for static texts and limited areas of application, where the translator is the only actor, is opposed by dynamic and changing content, easily moving from one production-consumption scenario to another, transformed into linguistic versions, culturally adapted and relevant to users who are increasingly fluent in the language of technology. The emergence of a large number of terms denoting linguistic and cultural transformations, for which the term "translation" was previously sufficient, indicates not only a conceptual gap, but also the importance of communication for the growing global network.

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