

THE TRANSLATOR'S ROLE IN THE 21st CENTURY. THEORETICAL ISSUES

LE RÔLE DU TRADUCTEUR DANS LE 21^E SIÈCLE. RÉPÈRES THÉORIQUES

ROLUL TRADUCĂTORULUI ÎN SECOLUL XXI. REPERE TEORETICE

Sebastian Cristian CHIRIMBU

Multilingual and Intercultural Studies Centre, *Spiru Haret* University

13, Ion Ghica Street, Bucharest,

E-mail: sebastian_chirumbu@yahoo.com

Abstract

The translation is at the crossroads of the study interests of linguistics, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, and more recently traductology (translation theory) and it is becoming an outstanding science at the intellectual, theoretical, practical and cultural levels. The study of translation as an integrator phenomenon is relentlessly enriched by new research, progress and investigation. The present paper attempts to discuss the role of the translator in the 21st century, when rendering meaning in a global world is no longer enough. Translation culture and making the best use of the latest technology in the field of translation is the new challenge for the professional in the field of translation(s).

Résumé

Comme domaine d'études, la traduction se trouve au carrefour de la linguistique, de la psychologie, des études culturelles et, plus récent, comme science de la traduction (ou de la théorie de la traduction), en se tournant dans une science remarquable comme niveau intellectuel, théorique, pratique et culturel. L'étude de la traduction comme phénomène intégrateur est récemment enrichie par de nouvelles recherches, par d'avancement et de l'investigation. Cet article essaie à discuter le rôle du traducteur dans le 21^e siècle quand la direction de renvoi dans un monde global n'est plus suffisant. La culture de la traduction et le meilleur emploi des technologies les plus nouvelles représentent un nouveau défi pour les professionnels du domaine des traductions.

Rezumat

Traducerea, ca domeniu de studiu, se află la intersecția lingvisticii, psihologiei, sociologiei, studiilor culturale, și, mai recent, traductologiei (sau teoriei traducerii), devenind o știință remarcabilă ca nivel intelectual, teoretic, practic și cultural. Studiul traducerii ca fenomen integrator este recent îmbogățit prin noi cercetări, progres și investigare. Lucrarea de față încearcă să discute rolul traducătorului în secolul XXI, atunci când sensul de redare într-o lume globală nu mai este suficient. Cultura traducerii și cea mai bună utilizare a celor mai recente tehnologii în domeniul traducerii reprezintă o noua provocare pentru profesioniștii din domeniul traducerilor.

Key words: *translator, interpreter, translator as cultural facilitator*

Mot clés: *traducteur, interprète, traducteur comme facilitateur culturel*

Cuvinte cheie: *traducătorul, interpretul, traducătorul ca facilitator cultural*

1. Introduction

Translation (Translation Studies), as a young and recent discipline, has undergone considerable development. “Linguistics-based concepts and analytic methods were used to develop a linguistic theory of translation. Both intercultural communication and translation have been increasing attention in the last decade. This huge interest does not mean, however, that we are faced with a new phenomena” (Schäffner, 2003:80)

Our question relates to identifying what is the translator. One possible answer is: the best reader of a book, a newspaper, or of any other work he or she translates.

“The word 'translation' comes, etymologically, from the Latin for 'bearing across'. Having been borne across the world, we are translated men. It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling, obstinately to the notion that something can also be gained.” (Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism, 1981-1991*, online source)

The translator appears wherever there is an interaction between two cultures, two languages. Currently, the role of the translator is very important. It is present in the most diverse places and at all levels: legal, political, cultural, economic, etc.

One shouldn't think of a translator as a walking dictionary or a mirror. He must be seen as an inter-cultural mediator linking two cultures and languages, and whose role is to facilitate communication between two or more parties involved in dialogue.

In our role as translator, we have faced cultural and educational differences, different designations in terms of work, family, entertainment, respect for older people, dress code or even food. These issues can create conflicts when the language is not common. The translator is the one who can facilitate intercultural communication. Its role is not only to interpret words but also non verbal expressions, intentions and perceptions of a party before the other party in order to establish a balanced communication between them. Therefore, the translator is a person who must have, apart from solid language knowledge, a high degree of cultural sensitivity that will allow him or her to adapt the meaning of words in the two cultures.

“It is the task of the translator to release in his own language that pure language that is under the spell of another, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of that work.” (Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, online source)

2. The translator – an intercultural facilitator

The ethno-cultural differences between the parties involved in communication can lead to tensions. In order to avoid such situations, one of the skills of a translator must be the knowledge of the two parties and the differences between them. A translator must also avoid cultural pitfalls, be able to analyse the socio-political and ideological changes currently occurring, to be intuitive and creative, given the unforeseen situations to which they must cope. The attitude of the two parties is subject to stereotypes, prejudices or fears that the inter-cultural mediator must remember in order to be able to guarantee good communication. Also, the translator is a free-time person. The working day of a translator is not 8 hours. He / she doesn't have a fixed schedule. It is extended until late at night.

The interpreter can be considered a socio-cultural mediator possessing certain skills necessary in preparation for knowledge of languages (or dialects) and cultures. These skills are as follows:

- Have thorough knowledge of both languages;
- Guarantee a certain neutrality and distance;
- Notice if there is a certain lack of knowledge or a cultural difference between the two parties;
- Possess a certain terminology and be able to change the register when needed
- Adapt the text according to the situation and listeners;
- Have a pleasant voice;
- Capacity to use reference works (dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.)

- Have the ability to passively receive and transmit everything a speaker says, without engaging emotionally and without expressing his point of view;
- Be spontaneous;
- Have a good memory that enables it to retain a large number of specialized terms in various languages and at the same time allow it to spontaneously choose the best equivalent and the best form, and on the other hand render the exact information and meanings of a speech;
- Other advantages of the interpreter are: control and management of emotions, memory quality, concentration capacity, experience.

3. The translator as a highly specialized professional

The translation process comprises certain stages and elements in order to assure a higher quality and efficiency result:

- Initial analysis of the text (identification of any problems of linguistic ambiguity, abbreviations or any other aspects requiring clarification);
- Research of the source text from a terminology point of view and of the specialized field, establishing the terminology of the text;
- First version of translation;
- Correcting the first version of the translation;
- Stylistic revision and terminology of the translation;
- Elaboration of the final version;
- Correction of the final translation (one last look before the translation is sent to the beneficiary).

Depending on the purpose that the translation for the client serves, it can be of several types (Chirimbu, Chirimbu, 2012: 658):

3.1 A functional translation: it is based on the source text and conventions in the target language on the type of text. If cultural differences determine the need for adaptation, the content of the source text will be adapted to serve the desired purpose in that situation.

3.2 An authorized translation: translation of official use or international documents, which shall be carried out by special translators empowered to do so by the competent authorities. In this case the translator attests that the translation of the document complies with the original.

3.3 An adaptation: The source text is adapted on form and/or content criteria to fulfill the desired purpose in the target language.

3.4 An informative translation: The information contained in the source text is summarized in the target text and/or the relevant passages are translated.

3.5 An update: An existing source text is changed and updated based on topical information in the source or target language

3.6 Making the text local: Linguistic-cultural adaptation and translation of software applications, technical descriptions, user manuals, etc., for target markets.

3.7 Making the text international: Adaptation of technical descriptions, software products, user manuals, etc., to allow for further localization of the source text.

3.8 A technical documentation: translation of reference texts (instructions for use, repair manual, etc.)

4. Translation tasks of a professional translator

Translations can be divided into several groups:

4.1 The authorized translation-is a written document, signed by a translator authorized by the Ministry of Justice, in which the translator attests that the translation of the document complies with the original.

4.2 Notarized translation – is used for documents of official or international use and consists in guaranteeing the legality of the document by a State body or institution empowered to do so. The

process of legalisation of translations checks whether the The signature and stamp appearing on a document are authentic.

4.3 Apostille – is a certificate or declaration, affixed to the translated document, by stamping or by attachment on a separate sheet. The Apostille contains the official signature of the competent authorities of the country of provenance of the original document and the Atestăţara of origin of the document, the identity and quality of the people signing the document, the names of all the authorities which have stamp or signature on that document.

5. Interpretation work of a translator

As a professional translator-interpreter, we also need to talk about interpreting work.

Interpretation is the oral rendering activity, from a source language into a target language, of speeches, presentations, pleadings, etc. This implies a good knowledge of the working languages at a proficiency level.

Thus, the interpreter must be able to render faithfully and correctly in and out of a certain language speeches, keeping the tone and level of the source language, without adding or omitting anything from the speech. Depending on the circumstances, the interpretation may be simultaneous or consecutive. For a quality result and a good performance, the interpreter must know at an advanced, written and spoken level, the language used in and in which he translates, must possess vast general knowledge and a rich vocabulary.

Simultaneous interpretation consists of interpreting a speech as it is conducted. The interpreter, located in the cabin, and the beneficiaries of the interpreted speech (recipients) are equipped with headphones. The interpreter listens to the speaker's speech in the headset and translates it immediately, without interruption, into the target language. Simultaneous interpretation is required by companies and governmental structures to ensure qualitative performance of various types of activities: Congresses, conferences, Council meetings, press conferences, seminars, etc.

There are three methods of simultaneous interpretation:

5.1 Whispering – The interpreter whispers in the client's ear what is just being discussed ;

5.2 Simultaneous headphone interpretation – The interpreter translates the speech that he hears through the headphones;

5.3 A paper-based interpretation – the interpreter reads the text written in the source language of the target language, without having known before this text.

To provide maximum yield, a simultaneous interpreter will not be required without pause for a longer period than 20 minutes. In the case of longer conferences it is recommended to collaborate with at least two interpreters for simultaneous interpretation, in order to give each performer the opportunity to rest. Although the whole process of interpretation takes place within a short period of time, it is very demanding for the interpreter because it involves achieving as much as possible simultaneously the following steps:

- Full understanding of the original speech ;
- Transposing it into the target language ;
- Verbal presentation of the product.

Consecutive interpretation is preferred by the interpreters because it is easier in terms of the interpreter's request. That's why it's more widely used. The speech is divided into segments, and the interpreter sits next to the speaker, listening and taking notes as the speaker communicates the message. When the speaker makes a break or finishes talking, the interpreter translates into the target language a part of the message or even the full message. The speaker will establish together with the interpreter the duration of the speech segments so that the interpreter can play the message in the correct and complete target language.

In short, consecutive interpretation is based on the memory of the interpreter, but also on the ability to take notes. This method is often used in speeches, recorded declarations, witness statements in court, but it is usually best for the speaker to complete the whole idea before being interpreted.

There are differences and similarities between the two activities: translation and interpretation. Thus, the interpretation relates to the linguistic intercession of an oral communication and implies knowledge of interpretation, knowledge and ability to play at an advanced level of working languages and, why not, experience. The translation refers to written documents, and implies written linguistic knowledge of the working languages, knowledge of the specific translation processes.

Finally, the work of a translator-interpreter can be considered a special form of communication involving listening. This activity is based on the principle of personal development, carried out by those attracted by this profession, after certain theories and methods specific to the field.

6. The translator's role in a global culture

How can we synthesize the role of translations into a global culture, as the current one wants? The expression of some of the most varied wills and beliefs, the contemporary landscape of translations does not lack visions yet unfinished from the cultural and spiritual standpoint, put together with the most accomplished expressions of human thought and feeling.

The translator carries in him / herself a gift, a talent, namely the possibility of opening a pathway of communication between people with different cultural experiences, with different beliefs, and sometimes with different desires and interests, sometimes contradictory. Beyond being able to know us through translations and translators, we should enjoy the possibility of respecting each other as members of the different cultures of the world, for what we are and for what we could become. Keeping us open and sympathetic to the cultural-spiritual level of other traditions, Romanians should not lose sight of the essential coordinates of our becoming, our cultural-spiritual dimension which has given and can continue to give life to our lives (Chirimbu, 2011:656).

7. The translator as communication facilitator

The translations have represented, over time, intercultural bridges of great importance to the whole world. The most sought and disseminated translations have been responding, for more than 2000 years, to essential existential and ontological questions and to research on culture and spirituality. Gradually, the last centuries have divided knowledge into increasingly narrow areas, known through an increasingly rational and mathematical spirit. Currently, the field of translations enjoys a special attention and position in the knowledge society. There are more and more schools for translators and the amount of information waiting to be translated is larger than ever, but rather without fully aware of the aspects of the profound reasons for the realization of translations and the long-term consequences of the translations made. In order for the society of consciousness to become a reality, it would be necessary for each of us to act according to the highest level of our consciousness, i.e. according to the values and virtues of the highest who have proven their validity and robustness along of human history. An evolution that seems to allow society to appear in the future is that every actor of the contemporary world retains all that is good in his / her cultural heritage, seeking perfection for him/ herself as well as for the "Global Village" represented by the contemporary world.

A material that can be considered as reference in the history of translations, and has the merit of being yearly updated (the first edition of the year 2008), bringing together opinions about no less than 31 histories of translations, 30 contemporary cultures with their diachronic evolution, and the peculiar case of Latin, is the Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies (editors: Mona Baker, Gabriela Saldanha). Its merit is that bringing together synoptic perspectives on the tradition of translations in Africa; America (Canada, USA, Brazil, eastern South America); Asia (Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Indian, Jewish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian); Europe (British, Bulgarian, Czech, Danish and Norwegian, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Slovak, Spanish and Swedish), this English encyclopedia provides essential data that They allow the drawing of global trends and the extraction of conclusions about intercultural

communication through interpreters and translators, about what has been translated, about the motivations that led to the translation, the extent to which The translator is aware of his role and purpose, about historical events that have been turning points in the history of translations for different cultures and geographic areas, etc.

The translation is at the crossroads of the study interests of linguistics, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, and more recently traductology (translation theory) and it is becoming an outstanding science at the intellectual, theoretical, practical and cultural levels. The study of translation as an integrator phenomenon is relentlessly enriched by new research, progress and investigation. The trends and reflections on the translation are so varied and multiple, recent and questionable, that they become rhapsodies of theorems. The problem of translation has not long received a systematic study. Only from the 18th century, the translation becomes an epistemological problem and seeks an appropriate methodology (Herder, Schleiermacher, Schlegel, Humboldt). But that does not mean that the problems of translation were not previously addressed. In ancient times, Rome inaugurates the literary translation. Ennius writes, that he has "three souls, because he speaks Latin, Greek and Osca. The Greeks for translation have only the word "Hermeneuein (to interpret). The Romans elaborate a whole lexis for translation - *vertere*, *convertere*, *transverter*, *imitari*, *reddere*, *translatore*. Rome also has the first translator Livius Andronicus (284-205 BC), which translated *Odissea* in 240.

Conclusion

The first attempt to theoretically approach the problem of translation is the preface of a translation of Demosthenes, made by Cicero, which opts for an oratory achievement, but not a traductological one.

From here the conflict between sense and word, sense and style, creativity and fidelity. The first treaties on French translation was made by Etienne Dolet in 1540 "*La Manière de bien traduire une langue en autre*."

The true theory of translation activity can only be identified after World War II, when the process of valuing linguistic heritage begins. The undeniable fundamental work, which puts the basis of theoretical insights into the activity of translation is "*Problèmes de théoriques from traduction*" by George Mounin, which was published in 1956. Being precocious, this work largely carries the impression of linguistic influence practised by the "*General linguistic Course*" by F. Saussure.

Traductology claims that any message can be translated, though evident with ultimate efforts. Therefore, the work of the translator is much heavier than that of the author. "As the writer owes to remain that right moral conscience, in which he may believe his peers, so the translator must be aware of the severe demanding, of his vocation.

The author's devotion to the word, to the truth, to the peers and to himself must be equaled by the responsibility and devotion of the translator to the writer, to the intentions of this ". (A. Bantaş, E. Croitoru, 1998)

The translator making a solitary thing, often remains anonymous, often even unmentioned on the title sheet, is meant to decipher an entire foreign universe.

In the 70's, Roland Barthes proclaims the "death of the author in relation to the translator, in this case the translations become "works" of an impersonal and anonymous language. Two theories contributed to the improvement of the author-translator relationship, enhancing both the role of the translator and the role of the authors in the production of the text. So, the polisystem theory, developed by Gideon Toury, places the translation at the same level as the original work, making it free from the status of secondary importance work. Another theory, known as the *skopos* theory focuses on the translated text which gains a certain independence from the original.

The sentence of the author's death so provocatively facilitated new theoretical investigations into the translation emphasizing the question of the parallel placement between the author and the translator.

In 1991, the International Federation of Translators (FIT) under the auspices of UNESCO decreed 30 September the International Day of Translators and did not choose this date by chance. In the Roman Catholic calendar, on this date is celebrated Saint Jerome, the reference translator of the Bible of Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic in Latin in the third century.

We may conclude with a quote from Steiner: "Without translation, I live in a realm that borders with silence." or from Ken Liu: "Every act of communication is a miracle of translation."

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