

Novice Translators: Problems and Solutions

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Abstract:

The current research paper deals with various translation issues. It states some of the translation definitions, pointing out some deficiencies of such definitions due to the existence of modern translation tools that escort the development of modern technology. The paper also elucidates the type of translation and the requirements of each of them. General translation problems are discussed elaborately, concentrating on the problems faced by novice translators. The paper sheds light on difficulties encountered by translation beginners; giving suggestions about the manners of overcoming these difficulties. The features of novice translator are tackled, giving examples of how novice translators can develop themselves. Importance of practicing and training is given much concern in this research paper.

Key words: Translation, translator, interpreter, training, problems, novice

INTRODUCTION

The writer of this paper has a long experience in translation and interpretation for more than 33 years. However, having long experiences in translation does not mean that the translator reaches the perfect limit in translation. Despite long experience in translation, qualified translators always feel that

they need more experience in enhancing their performance. This is because translation always provides with the new and exciting because dealing with translation means dealing with languages, culture, history, customs and traditions, people's life, problems and combats, conflicts, industry.

The role of translation in exchanging culture, benefits, knowledge, and its role in promoting people's culture and knowledge is vital. It was the translation that conveyed peoples' thinking production, experiences, sciences, habits, tradition, and historical incidents to our present time. However, translation is one of the important links between the past and present.

In this research paper, the researcher- depending on his long translation experience- endeavors to help new translators and interpreters start their translating career in a right way, avoiding the difficulties experienced by their old peers, and how to utilize their expertness.

Today, translation job becomes easier than before because of the abundance of new technological means that many facilitate and make easy this difficult work. To give example, when you need to find the equivalent meaning of a word in the past, you need to open several dictionaries, exerting a very long time moving from a dictionary to another. Now the technological means make it easy for finding out the meaning in few minutes or even seconds.

The technology also provides with machine translation. However, if the machine translation does not take the place of man for its lacking sense, it offers many facilitations for performing translation work. Now people are longing for the time when this technology is able to create a sense in translation and takes the place of man in translation. All translation technological centers are working hard to find a sound method for doing the perfect translation.

1. WHAT'S TRANSLATION?

The traditional definition of translation is that translation is the process of conveying the meaning of a language (source language) to another one (target language). This definition is not satisfying and lacks many elements. First of all, translation is not just a matter of conveying a meaning of a language into another one only. Translation conveys meaning, sense, points of views, moral and immoral issues, behavior, and other elements. It can be said that translation is a means of communication by itself or it is a virtual person addressing actual one with two reciprocal languages.

During the translation process, meaning can be obtained by several methods and texts are created according to the ability of translator in selecting and using the targeted meaning. Therefore meaning can be changed, although the purport will remain unchanged in a good translation. The contrary can be said about sense, which remains unchanged. Lewandowska et al (2010; 83) point out this clearly, saying :

What remains unchanged during translation is not the meaning but the sense. Sense is not the criteria for the usage of a linguistic sign within a given language, but the relationship between the linguistic sign and a certain segment of reality (objects, events, persons, phenomena).

Many translation definitions concentrate on the conveying of the meaning of source language to the target language or producing an equivalent meaning of the source language, as mentioned by Schjoldager (2008; 17) referring to the definition of Catford:

Let us first look at Catford's (1965) classical definition of translation: Translation may be defined as follows: the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) (the source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL) (target language). Catford's traditional definition implies that prerequisite of translation is that the

target language text should be equivalent to its source text in both form and content.

Conveying only the meaning gives no full meaning of translation; that is, the matter is beyond conveying the meaning only. There are other processes occur during translation. When you translate, you hear, read, explain, think and interpret. You also feel and convey feeling and so on. Meaning needs to be conveyed in full understandable language, in meaningful sentences, correct grammar and construction, and sublime style. You need to make others feel that the target text is similar to the source one. This can't be done without conveying feeling and sense altogether.

Therefore, the most important thing is that is to make the readers or audience understand the useful ideas and thought and to be able to utilize them. They need to add to their knowledge new facts that help them in solving problems, entertain or address their needs .

Translation is an important activity for conveying cultural information and making contacts available among civilizations. The cultural role played by translation in transferring cultures among people is well known. Translation is an old human activity started earlier in the old ages. The Arabs started translation before Islam and continued after it, reached its highest point in Abbasid State, notably in the reign of Caliph Haroun Al-Rasheed and his son Al-Mammon, where thousands of books were translated from foreign languages into Arabic .

Translation participated greatly in developing human knowledge across the ages. It is considered one of the most important bases that the Islamic Culture depended on. It played a considerable role in transferring Islam to other countries .

Translation is considered important in maintaining the linguistic heritage of the nations. All countries are trying now to widen the translational domain. This is because of its contribution in enhancing the movement of the scientific

research that leads to development and progress of nations. Translation is substantial in business, especially in the financial and banking establishments. Besides, translation enriches the cultural, social, and scientific lives.

Translation generally means conveying thoughts and ideas from one language to another. This definition is applied to both written and oral forms of language, including sign languages and the signs of the deaf. It is a process of transforming a written or spoken source of language text (SLT) into an equivalent target language text (TLT). This process requires the full understanding of syntactic, semantic, and grammar of both the source and target languages .

Any translator should master at least two languages properly. Ignoring any aspect of the two languages, the source and target one, will result in bad translation. The translator's style is of essential importance for producing a good translation and offering a positive sense for the readers .

Nowadays, the conception of dynamic translation emerges, which endeavors to convey messages or ideas to a target language and to create for target language readers the same responses that are similar to those obtained by the readers of the source text.

The definition of dynamic translation requires three essential terms as mentioned by Venuti (2000; 163):

- (1) Equivalent, which points toward the source language message
- (2) natural, which points toward the receptor language, and
- (3) closest, which binds the two orientations together on the basis of the highest degree of approximation.

Many translation theorizers agree that translation is an act of transferring meaning from one language to another. The most important question hides in the manner of transferring this meaning. This mechanism needs a competent person to put the matter into practice. Besides mastering the source and target language(s), a translator should be an individual of good memory, a mother-tongue speaker, of a high quality in

manipulating slangs, dialects, and archaic words and of an ability to deal with the cultural differences .

The translators should estimate well the time in which they will accomplish the required translation tasks. They should be individuals with vast experiences in the field of translation. Further, they should be patient and honest, not to delete, add or omit any part or parts of a translated text. Finally, they should gain linguistic skills .

It is thought that the theory of translation is born by applied linguistics. Sanchez (2009; 15) goes farther in this regard to say that, "*It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that one of the most prolific aspects of Applied Linguistics in the second half of the twentieth century will have been the Theory of Translation.*"

The translator should acquaint a very high sense, wide education, of an ability to analyze and expect, skillful in generating the meanings. He should know the limits of his abilities, and to have the courage to confess when he/she commits any mistakes. The translator should also connect the language with its cultural domain because language is a substantial reflection of a culture as stated by Newmark (1991; 73 -74):

Language is a substantial but partial reflection of a culture, culture being defined here as a total range of activities and ideas and their material expression in objects and processes peculiar environment... Translation is always more or less possible because of the Universal and cultural constitutions of language.

1.2 Types of Translation:

The most prominent types of translation are the commercial translation, scientific translation, legal translation, medical translation, literary translation, press translation, technical translation, political translation, general translation, administrative translation and literary translation. The most

prominent ones are general, legal, commercial, administrative and literary translations.

The General Translation is considered as the simplest of all translation types, as it is more flexible and the source material of which is ordinary and general or everyday speech .

The Legal Translation is the most complicated type of translation and it is of a high risk. It is the translation of agreements, treaties, conventions, agreements, leases, contracts, academic certificates, legal and birth certificates and the like. It requires a great deal of objectivity and accuracy. It requires a kind of mostly educated translator of a deep culture and vast knowledge. Seeking professional legal assistance is essential in this type of translation

According to the Commercial Translation, it can be said that it is the most common than any other kinds of translations because of its relation to the business activities. The translator of this kind of translations must gain wide business knowledge. He should be skillful and familiar with the commercial activities such as tendering, commercial correspondence, and of knowledge of legal information. To speak about Administrative Translation, this kind of translation deals with managerial texts .

The Literary Translation is a kind of translation that offers a wide range of freedom to a translator to prove his skills, to add or delete in a manner that does not breach or affect the text. It deals with poems, plays, short stories, novels, articles, and the like. With the exception given to the translation of poems, this kind of translation is simple and of a low risk. It is not as difficult as the legal and commercial ones. However, the translator should be so proficient especially in translating humor and cultural nuance. The style should be attractive and the translator should use as many figures of speech as he can. He must convey the feelings, emotions, and other sublime elements in very skillful manners. It is worth mentioning that the religious and poetry translations are of great difficulties .

2. GENERAL TRANSLATION PROBLEMS

Translation is a risky job. Committing mistakes in translation is sometimes disastrous and can result in very bad damages. It contains many difficulties that should be manipulated. Committing mistakes in legal, commercial or political translation can lead to incurable damages. For these reasons, a translation of such a kind should not be done by unexperienced and junior translators. A mistake in political translation may lead to war and the same can be said about the translation of treaties, conventions, and agreements. Awareness should be given when dealing with this type of transition. On the other hand, inaccurate medical translation can breach the medical rules and affects the patient's health. Furthermore, committing mistakes in research translation may result in both scientific and financial damages .

The translator of insufficient knowledge about sciences or weak in source or target languages may commit deadly mistakes through harming the scientific facts. The lack of knowledge of semantic, grammar, syntax or any kind of misusing the language correctly causes damages to the meaning and confuses the information .

Lacking writing and reading skills is one of the problems that face translators. Writing skill is the cornerstone of the translation process. Unexperienced or junior translators face difficulties in conveying the required meaning. A translator should be a man of knowledge of the source language. Lack of knowledge in understanding colloquial expressions, slangs, humor, meanings, contents of cultural significance and hidden meanings are dangerous problems .

Shallowness in semantic, including aphorism, standardized terms, idioms, proverbs, puns and the like lead to a poor translation. All language characteristics should be fully mastered.

Ignoring the knowledge of structure harms the translation process. The translator is in need to transfer the

typical meaning from the SLT to the TLT. Any failure to do so results in confusing the text. Ideas and meanings must be conveyed accurately and exactly. The word for word translation may result from lacking cultural information and cultural differences. This will embrace the text and leads to failure in translation. Sofer (1434A.H, p. 29) considers that translation is a decision making process involving judgment. He considers that translation is not a merely a replacement of one word by another:

Translation is more than replacement of one word in the source language with another word in the target language. It is a decision-making process involving a judgment regarding every single word translated, and the best way to translate it.

Another problem can be mentioned here is the lack of knowledge of the text being translated that makes the word for word translation occur. A translator should form a full idea about the text he or she is going to translate. It is better to contact the organization or the individual who brings the documents for being translated. The reader of the translated text should not feel that the text is not natural or translated from another language. One of the translation problems is that the translators do not consider the scientific expressions, and their translation becomes unscientific or are not as the same as the original text.

Finally, bad translation leads to altering refined statement, wrong interpretation, omission, mistranslation of keywords, and distortion of logic.

2.1 Difficulties Encountered by Beginners of Translation:

Translation is thought to be a craft like any other trades. This means that everyone needs to be a translator should consider this. As translation is a craft, so the translator needs both learning and practicing. Translation skills are not only obtained by learning translation theories. Translation theories are not

enough to create a translator. That who learns much about driving cars can't do this depending on his knowledge. Driving cars needs practice more than the information about the cars and how they can be driven. The novice translators should bear in mind this fact. Learning much about translation theory is not enough to create a professional translator. Training and practicing are of utmost importance. Ying (2015, 382) emphasizes this matter by saying:

It is true that some talented translators acquire translation skills through translation practice without any formal education in translation studies. However, to supply a large number of professional translators and interpreters means the majority of novice translators and interpreters need to undergo formal training before they become qualified service providers of professional translation and interpreting. The skills to translate and interpret professionally need to be shown by master translators and interpreters before trainee translators and interpreters understand the know-how of the process of translating and interpreting and explore further a right way to accomplish the initiation process.

A new translator should pass through many long practices and training. However, it should be known that not all people can be trained and, become subject to training and then become genuine translators as mentioned by Ying above. Translation needs talent before any steps towards professionalism. It happened that the writer of this study trained two Master holder individuals at his office for a period of approximately more than six months. At the end of this period, they were given only a paragraph to translate. To his surprise, the two people failed to translate three sentences correctly. At the same time, many were trained at the same office in short periods ranging between two and three months and took their way as successful translators. That is to say, the above mentioned persons lack the talent and capabilities to become translators despite their strong desires to be so. It is worth mentioning that

those individuals were teachers of considerable experiences in teaching.

It is noticed that new translators encounter a lot of difficulties. First of all, their misconception that translation is an easy job so they reduce the volume of difficulties they may face. As soon as they discover the contrary, they are shocked by the difficulties they experience. They also ignore the actual risks of translation. Therefore, at the beginning of training, some of them become impatient and withdraw from the training program. Some of them fail to choose the suitable correct vocabulary for giving the correct targeted meaning. They are very slow at the beginning of their career. They tend to fallacy and anger when they are told that their translation is not proper and it needs mending. They mainly become shy to ask about the text that they are unable to translate. Sometimes they irresistibly become despaired and have the desire to abandon the program. The reason is that the false conceptions they have of translation surely hinder their progress in translation program .

The first important thing needed by new translators is a supervisor who supervises and corrects their works, giving them directions about how to translate, answers all their questions and helps them translate difficult texts. The supervisor of training courses guides novice translators to the right way towards professionalism.

Another difficulty faced by novice translators is how to distinguish the vocabulary used in commercial, scientific, statutory, technical translations and the like. Selecting the appropriate vocabulary needs many practices. Some of them lack the abundance of vocabulary. Translators of little vocabulary can't become successful translators. A translator should know at least several meanings of one word. Knowing much vocabulary can be obtained through many practices, consulting translation supervisor, referring to various specialized dictionaries, going through the similar previous translations and so on .

The translator should master and control the structure, spelling and vocabulary in order to make his translation so accurate. Giving attention to grammar in all its elements even the punctuation is very important as translation requires no mistakes at any of its components. Good style is very important. Coherence is very necessary, the matter that novice translators lack. New translators may lack all of the above mentioned. They should give care to these elements so that they can take the first step towards professionalism. About the importance of vocabulary and knowledge in both languages, Sofer (2002; 74) says:

The first requisite for the working translator is a thorough knowledge of the source and the target languages. There is no point in billing oneself as a translator if one is not fully familiar with both languages or does not possess a vocabulary in both equal to that of a speaker of those languages who has a university education or its equivalent.

It has been noticed that new translators sometimes use vague and ambiguous words. Their sentences are very long and may start the sentence of the target language with the same manner the sentence written in the source language. Predominantly, their sentences are very ambiguous and so complicated. Some of them use very long phrases to write the meaning of one word .

2.2 Features of Novice Translators

Novice translators have specific characteristics. Besides their shallow vocabulary, most of them lack some technical qualities that enable them to translate correctly and skillfully. They are known to be very slow translators as they tend to translate word by word and not concentrate on the translation of the content. They are very sensitive to criticism posed by their supervisors and they dislike proofreading their works. They largely tend to omit difficult texts or the text that they do not understand properly.

As a result of their lacking the abundance of vocabulary novice translators face great difficulties to use the correct meaning of the target language, so giving the typical meaning forms actual problems to them. Further, their formulating text is sometimes very confusing and may lead to missing the needed meanings .

Many of the novice translators ignore the translation risks and do not know how to estimate the time required for implementing the work. They refrain from asking their supervisors some questions to grasp the needed meaning or enhance their translation, claiming that they are competent enough to ask. In addition, they become very impatient to spend a long time in translation. Some of them are not efficient to utilize modern translation tools. Some of them give no attention to documentation. Legal, scientific, technical, commercial and medical terms and the like form actual problems to them.

Grammar and sentence construction are the other problems face new translators. Some of them are weak in both source and target languages. Before starting being a translator, much concern should be offered to studying these two languages carefully. Writing skill is essential in this respect. A translator of weak style and technique in writing is no longer a translator.

Translation is not a matter of obtaining a high degree in a language, but it is a matter of skills, talent, and other elements. Some of the novice translators face difficulties in understanding the texts properly. In fact, nobody can translate any text without fully understanding of it. Misunderstanding the texts make some of the novice translators tend to omit something from the source text or add something to the target text. This leads to dangerous results harming the credibility of translation. Understanding the meaning of the text is crucial as mentioned by Cheung (2017; 1440):

For Wei, translation involves "a vast number of contexts"; it changes constantly and has numerous permutations, and is mysterious beyond imagination. In order to translate

"accurately", the translator must thoroughly understand "the meaning" of the original text, to have a grasp of its rhetoric and style, to catch its tone, to capture its nuances, not to add or omit anything, nor to invert or to translate only the idea.

Seriousness and honesty are important matters in translation. The translator should be accurate, serious, honest and of a high discipline. Some of the novice translators give no concern to these elements due to their neglecting the translation risks. They should give care to the time in which they must complete their work and too much attention to its sublimity .

Some translators strongly cling to their point of views and resist the instructions and advice. This kind of translators will not develop their translation abilities properly. Resisting the advice of senior translators is a deadly mistake as no one can judge himself as a translator. Diligent translators study the translations of others deeply, utilizing their style and thus enhance theirs .

The writer of this research paper highly recommends those who desire to be good translators should pass through translation offices or the specialized translation establishments. These expose them to various types of translation, offering them a chance to come into contact with the customers and senior translators, to discover the high risks of translation, to face the heavy burden of this job and to be enforced to give the care to accomplish the work in time.

The translator is a deep culture person with various kinds of knowledge such as sciences, law, commerce, medicine, politics, people's culture, history, geography and the like. Shallow knowledge translator faces a great deal of obstacles in the matter of culture and knowledge. He should also be familiar with the community in which he performs the translation job. Acquainting the local dialects and heritage, local traditions and habits, laws, customs, and even people's relations is unquestionable. He also should know the culture of the source text. In discussing this matter, Armstrong (2005; 3, 6) says,

We can see from this brief discussion of what's required in a good translator, that a simple definition like 'very good knowledge of the two languages of interest' brings us very quickly to the question of what we mean by knowledge, what kind of knowledge, as well as the question of what we can call 'meta-knowledge' or knowledge about knowledge... the minimum knowledge required by a competent translator is very good knowledge of two languages and their associated culture.

It has been mentioned that novice translators find difficulties in dealing with complicated texts. Complicated texts are largely the texts written in bad languages or handwriting or archaic languages. The texts of bad languages result in bad translation contrary to that of sublime languages of good style and techniques. Sometimes their translation is of very confusing and ambiguous styles.

Some of the novice translators do not distinguish the vocabulary needed for each kind of translation. Due to their short experience, they find it difficult to use the right words in the right context. They do not know that one word has different meanings for different kind of texts. A word can carry statutory, commercial, scientific, technical, commercial meanings and so on. They should be guided properly towards the manner of using dictionaries and grasp the required meaning according to the context in a good manner.

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICING AND TRAINING

Like any trade, translation needs heavy practicing and training. Without practicing very hard, nobody can be a professional translator. Training is an important issue for the novice translator. However, he is in need of an experienced and professional trainer to train and guide him through the right steps towards the aim.

There are very big conflicts stirred up between the importance of translation theory and translation practice. As a

long-experienced translator, the writer of this paper strongly supports the importance of practice. Many professional translators become skillful in translation depending only on practice. To him, practicing translation is the most important matter than translation theory. Some prepared their Ph.Ds. in translation but they couldn't become professional translators. In this regard, Leal (2014; 13) believes that:

A much-discussed issue in the field of translation studies is the relationship or the conflict between translation theory and translation practice. Indeed, this conflict has a strong impact on the way one perceives translation studies in general, including its institutionalism, the aim of translator / interpreter training, the purpose of translation theory, the relationship between original and translation, the notion of professionalism as far as translators and interpreters are concerned, the object of translation research, are amongst various others.

The translator should give care to translation ethics such as honesty, accuracy, and respect for time and others besides devotion to his work.

Novice translators should be offered extensive training on translation ethics. Besides translation ethics and risks, they should be trained that translation bears no mistakes. Dishonesty is entirely forbidden in translation job.

The novice translators should acquaint that gaining experience in translation is an endless process. They should learn that translation always provides with the new and no one can claim that he is satisfied enough with the translation experience. Gaining experience in translation is something regenerated every day on which translation is performed. They need someone to judge their progress in translation and to show them the best methods and mechanisms for developing themselves in translation. They need to be trained how to deal with individuals and establishments, to go back to them during translation, asking and inquiring about terminologies, idioms, and abbreviations. Experience in translation is gained by the

help of many sides, starting from the translator himself, and passing through customers and does not end in supervisors. It should be put in mind that training courses are important in the matters of professionalism. To quote Kearns's (2008; 4) opinion:

The first step in the professionalization of translation involved the mounting of training courses in post-secondary institutions, especially universities. As the new field was housed in most cases in language, literature or linguistics departments, the methodologies current in these fields drove the first research into professional translation .

It has been mentioned before that information technology plays an important role in translation. However, the use of this technology needs special care. As they approximate times and efforts, deadly mistakes may be committed if this technology is misused. To give example, Google Translate plays a considerable role in translation but taking its translation without giving consideration to revise carefully and correct the mistakes concerning the sense lead to bad translation. Novice translators need training in utilizing these modern translation tools and technologies as mentioned by Mrs. Tennet (2005; 17):

Specific training is therefore needed if translators are to benefit from the opportunities offered by the rapidly evolving field of translation technology, even if it poses significant pedagogical challenges. The integration of technological tools in translation program inevitably has "an impact on the way translation itself is taught".

Notwithstanding, training is useless if the trainee is unmotivated and of no talent to be a translator. It is not true to say that someone is good at the target and source languages so he will become a good translator. The translator is not someone who masters a language. However, to be good at a language or languages and familiar with the linguistic features of TL are important issues in translation. Federici (2009; 68) well emphasizes the talent and linguistic features, by saying:

It is absolutely necessary that the translator should have not only a complete understanding of the SL but also a creative and impeccable talent in writing his TL and an awareness of its linguistic features, as the translator is constantly forced to make cogent choices.

CONCLUSION:

With the emergence of the new technologies and communication means such as satellite channels, computer, the new methods of trading, and the globalization, the importance of translation and interpretation increases. These new technologies and communication means make the world as one village, the matter that highlights the importance of translation. The globalization requires intensive communications among the nations for political, commercial, scientific, military reasons and others.

The rapid development of the world of today, with its problems and the complicated relations among the countries, the development of modern trade with its advanced electronic means, and the explosion of knowledge via the internet and the social media make translation play an important role in the world of today .

The new technology does not ignore the necessity of translation as it pays great attention to its development through inventing the modern translation tools for translators. However, these modern translation tools do not take the place of man in translation totally at least in the present time. This matter necessitates the importance of training for translators.

Training novice translators requires the integration of many elements such as studying linguistics, developing the methods of acquiring second languages and upgrading the training means so that the new translators are made available for covering the lack of translators and interpreters.

The present research paper emphasizes the importance of talent and practice in translation. It sheds light on the role of

experienced translators and interpreters to carry out their roles in training novice translators, to acquaint their characteristics and needs.

For training novice translators, new methods are required to help and facilitate the means that motivate them to discover their hidden talents and skills. The novice translators should offer especial importance to develop themselves in order to join the professional translators. Dealing with the new translation technologies requires the utmost care for avoiding confusion during translation and for guaranteeing the accuracy of translation.

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