Translation and the challenge of the cultural and the civilizational differences between languages

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Abstract: From ancient times until our days, the world has known vast cultural and civilizational differences between its poles, and the role of translation has always been crucial in learning about different cultures and their level of development in order to keep pace with changes at all levels. Therefore, translation has formed a bridge extended between countries and societies throughout the ages, within a framework of interaction, dialogue and cooperation despite differences and conflict that aim to achieve economic and political interests and goals. But people have always communicated, cooperated and integrated in order to create a climate of coexistence to achieve peace, stability and solidarity.

Keywords: translation; culture; cultural differences; civilization, civilizational differences.

1 Introduction

To translate is to transfer the words, the phrases and the sentences from a source text to a target one. Translation for linguists is to rewrite the linguistic elements of the source language in the target language. But, after that, the studiers of this field of science had discovered that the act of translating is deeper than they thought. The good translator always aims to have the same receiver impact in the target language. He always tries to keep the same reactions in the different language. So, in reality, translation is the transfer of linguistic, cultural and civilizational elements from a language to another.

It is to make the receiver of the translated text living different life, it is to make him know more and more about different cultures, civilizations, traditions, religions and languages. Translation helps the receiver to impact various civilizations and it allows him to be influenced by them. In another word ; translation allows cultures to enrich

each other smoothly. But the question is : how can a translator achieve all these goals at the presence of globalization ? Is it easy for him to make these sayings true ?

2 Cultural and civilizational differences in the world

Ideas and beliefs of some populations differ according to their civilizations and their customs in which they believe. Each group of people has a specific civilizational elements and special traditions that distinguish them from each other. Indeed, every tribe, or group of people, no matter how small it is and no matter how few their members are, may adhere to a set of principles and build its daily life on their basis. The people of the world, regardless of their political, social and religious orientations and affiliations, seek to develop their cultures and civilizations and give them a high status among other societies that differ from them.

People build their cultures on the basis of a set of experiences and situations they encounter in their daily lives. Culture, civilization, values, principles, customs and traditions were not born with man, but rather he acquired them through his, sometimes, hard experiences in facing this life. The primitive man, who wore tree leaves to cover his private parts, hunted animals to feed on them, and used hand signals, his voice, or the drawings on the walls of caves to communicate, did not imagine that these simple practices in his daily life would one day become the focus of attention of researchers and historians all over the world. He hardly realized that these were signs of an era of renaissance, progress and prosperity in human life.

We've all heard that it's a small world, but is it really ? People have a propensity to develop traditions and customs around everything from gestures to eating habits. This has led to a world enriched with thousands of different cultures since the dawn of civilization. Something that feels like a customary practice to you may seem bizarre to others. (Rod Austin 2020)

Cultural and civilizational elements are considered as an important factor in determining the individual's identity and distinguishing him from other individuals. It makes him independent of himself, proud of them, unwilling in many cases to change them or replace them with other elements that might distort his culture or civilization, which he used to respect, defend, and preserve from every stranger or intruder. We must acknowledge that the identity of individuals becomes clear and apparent through their customs and values by which they live. This means that we cannot differentiate between an Arab and a Frenchman, for example, or an Asian or an American, except after looking at and knowing about the culture of each of these people and delving into their cultural, civilizational, and social practices.

In fact, these cultures and civilizations, which differ from one country to another, are the result of a continuous struggle and a permanent desire to make the individual's life easier and more beautiful. They are also the result of a long-lasting struggle whose parties differed. Sometimes it was between the individual and his harsh life, and other times it was between the individual and his brother, and at third times it was between the individual and every stranger or intruder that seeks to enter and pollute his pure civilization.

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Thus, cultures began to interact, and the principle of giving and taking between them became a principle that could not be abandoned. However, it was not with everyone's approval. There are still those who call for cultures and civilizations isolation in order to preserve them and protect them from strangers who might mix with them. Therefore, we can say that there are two groups ; those who reject the principle of influence and being influenced, and those who support it and make it an important principle for cultural and civilizational exchange between people.

Cultural exchange in general is defined as when people of two or more different backgrounds trade ideas, feelings, stories and customs. Cultural exchange can be used as a form of creating dialogue and understanding diversity in communities to help build community relations and cohesion. (Anna Freud 2024)

The problematic here lies in whether the dialogue between cultures and the acceptance of the other is an important factor in the advancement of civilizations ? or it contributes in its contamination and its loss of its original identity ? Do people have to accept others as they are within their culture, civilization and heritage differences and keep them authentic ?

3 Translation and acculturation

The concept of culture is not limited to the linguistic elements and religious values of people only, but rather includes behaviors, all intellectual and social activities and daily practices ; education, development, civilization, food, clothing, literature and arts. Thus, Man moved from the concept of culture to the concept of acculturation, which appeared at the end of the XIXth century in the field of anthropology. It is a term that is difficult to define. It means, at the same time, the cultural assimilation of other cultures, the cultural conversion to them, and the cultural fusion and dissolution in them according to the conditions in which this term grew up.

A different way of learning culture is through acculturation, the process by which we learn the rules and norms of a culture different from our native culture. Through acculturation, our original or native culture is modified through direct contact with or exposure to a new and different culture. (Brooks N. 1968)

Acculturation in origin is : a voluntary interaction that does not take place and its fruits are not reaped except through a mutual desire between the acculturated parts, and it can never be achieved in cases of forced mixing resulting from wars and occupations that result cultural distortions that are far from any cultural characteristics. In another words, acculturation is based on respect and recognition of the other and his right to be different. It fosters communication and interaction between acculturated people, with the aim of mutual enrichment, as well as providing the conditions of trust and desire to achieve interaction and to ensure mutual progress and development and the acquisition of knowledge, sciences, experiences and human expertise.

Studying the set of relationships, connections, and interventions that occur between different cultures helps understand the phenomenon and master its concept and quantify it. Likewise, careful consideration of the stages through which the acculturation process or the act of acculturation goes through makes it clearer and easier to com-

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prehend. The stages of acculturation between civilizations and cultures can be summarized as follows :

1. *Collision and confrontation stage :*

It is a first stage in which a kind of acquaintance occurs between the future civilization and the dominant one.

2. *setting stage :*

As communication continues, the receiving civilization will sort out some aspects of the dominant culture and integrate them into the new culture that is in the process of formation.

3. *The integration stage :*

Since the exchange between two civilizations is not unilateral, this exchange results a new identity that reconciles the values of the two cultures.

Translation is a much more complex concept than most people understand which is why so many translations are ineffective. Being bilingual helps but it doesn't make one a good translator nor is it even one of the most essential aspects of a good translator. Effective intercultural communication can be an even more important concept. Intercultural communication goals frequently deal with dimensionally challenging factors involving how to most effectively convey a given message to a specific target audience. (Guillermo Calvo Mahé 2023)

Translation is considered one of the most important means of acculturation because it is not only a process that brings languages closer together, but it is also an advanced cultural act that results in a long-term act of acculturation at the level of individuals and groups. This cultural act continues to expand the circle of acculturation in its environment, as its goal behind this is assimilation of the greatest possible amount of human knowledge, and acquiring the experiences of others and making them a weapon for one's development, advancement, competition, and then rich cultural contribution. Translation is also the key by which nations avoid intellectual closure on the one hand, and through it get rid of absolute dependency that leads to dissolution in the other, on the other hand.

I believe that communication is the secret of being and the secret of identity, and it is the realizer of rapprochement, exchange, and presence, and it is hardly limited to tools except to harness them for this process, so that the process of communication becomes a process of contrast and difference. It goes then beyond that to become a process of understanding, interpretation and dialogue and thus enters within the model of totality and comprehensiveness. (Ben Ahmed kouider 2024)

To obtain a truly successful translation that achieves acculturation, cultural duality is more important than linguistic duality. Translation is not just a linguistic act, but it is also a cultural act, that is, an act of communication between cultures. Translation always involves both language and culture, simply because the two cannot be separated from each other. Language is an integral part of culture, as it both expresses

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and reflect cultural reality, and the connotations of linguistic elements, whether they are words or larger sections of text, cannot be understood only within the cultural context in which it is used.

Translation is indispensable in a globalized world where people from diverse linguistic backgrounds interact daily. It allows individuals to express themselves in their native languages while still being comprehensible to speakers of other languages. This promotes effective cross-cultural communication. (Mohammed Imran Khan 2023)

If translation has, for many centuries, initiated a series of civilizational dialogues through the mechanism of acculturation, its role at the present time has begun to gradually diminish with the decline in the influence and presence of multiple languages and cultures on the global scene due to the wave of globalization that confiscates the right of coexistence, difference and diversity. Meaning that translation, as it aspires to create a culture of acculturation, seeks to achieve pluralism, when globalization is trying to reduce this pluralism and transform it to unity. If translation in the context of acculturation represents an addition, in the embrace of globalization it tends to become appropriation.

4 The receiver of the translated text between two cultures

When we talked about culture at the beginning, we said that it is the set of values, knowledge, and skills that an individual has in society. It is closely linked to individuals, as he is the one who builds this culture and develops it over time, because he considers it an important component in building his personality and social identity. But the question that came to our mind is : what extent is this individual willing to be influenced by others in order to enrich his culture ? Is he ready to engage in dialogue with the other ? Or will he be satisfied with the knowledge, skills, sciences and arts that he produces in order to preserve its original culture ?

Languages are not simple, one-to-one code systems. They are imbued with nuance, cultural references, idiomatic expressions, and wordplay that can be extremely challenging to convey accurately in translation. As a result, there is often a risk of diluting or altering the message, which may not fully capture the essence of the original text. (Mohammed Imran khan 2023)

For every translated sentence, the translator must be able to decide on the importance of its cultural context, what the phrase really means, not necessarily what it literally means, and convey that meaning in a way which makes sense not only in the target language but also in the context of the target culture. (*Don Schaeffer* 2015)

The receiver is considered as the basic nucleus of any type of dialogue. Because he can evaluate this dialogue and decide at the end what to take and what to leave behind. He also chooses what to give to others and what to keep for himself. The nature of the receiver varies depending on the societies. There are societies that accept the interaction between cultures, and there are those that categorically reject it. However, the lived reality imposes it and makes it an urgent necessity.

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The current expression today that describes the world as a small village has become evidence produced by media globalization, and with this expression we are able to touch the levels of integration and openness that have begun to take place among all societies, including cultural openness. Some may consider It is the choice for the fanatical receiver who wants cultural isolation.

History tells us that translation plays a part in the development of all cultures. Historical cases also show us repeatedly that translated works which had real social and cultural impact often bear little resemblance to the idealized concept of a 'good translation'. Since the perception and reception of translated works — as well as the translation norms which are established through contest and/or consensus — reflect the concerns, preferences and aspirations of their host cultures, they are never static or homogenous even within a given culture. (Eva Hung 2005)

The receiver may want to preserve the culture and not mix it with other cultures because he rejects every stranger in it, no matter how the specialists try to settle him or include him in this culture. This is because he considers this to be a contamination of his culture and a threat to it : Therefore, it was necessary for us to fortify ourselves and strengthen ourselves to confront the danger facing us, which seeks with all its might to annex us to it and to change the local, national character with foreign one, so that we remain confused and lost between the victor culture and the defeated culture, because he considers that taking from other cultures and imitating other populations causes distortion to his culture and makes it lose its original identity, which he is proud of.

Man rarely admits his weakness and underdevelopment, and he usually cherishes in himself, his identity, and his civilization. Perhaps the receiver's refusal to interact with other cultures is an explanation for his refusal to be enslaved or restricted by another civilization or another people. He refuses to admit his inability to develop and advance in the absence of different other cultures, thinking that only the oppressed are those who accept dialogue with others. Maybe He doesn't realize that the loser today can be the victor tomorrow. The Western people whose cultures know remarkable development today were conquered by the Arabs in the era of Arab renaissance and prosperity. These populations would not have reached what they have achieved without the interaction with Arab culture and being influenced by it.

Translation of all kinds, whether scientific or literary, seeks to make the communication process successful between people with different ideas and various civilizations in the aim of achieving an important scientific and literary exchange between societies. In this case, it helps in the imposed interaction between cultures, which often results a change in the way of thinking and dealing with others. Transferring the literary and scientific heritage and what is related to the humanities to a society different from the one in which it originated helps it to develop and to advance. But will the receiver of the translated text be convinced of this idea ? Does he fundamentally believe in the idea of dealing with a new culture to enrich his own ?

The receiver of the translated text must be the translator's focus while translating the text. The translator must also know that the receiver of the translated text is the

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evaluator of his translation and the decider whether it is correct or not. Therefore, a skilled translator must create a beautiful conversation between the two languages and cultures in order to help the receiver to avoid confusion and enjoy reading the translated text.

5 Translation is the engine of the cultural exchange process

Translation was never merely a matter of decoding a specific language and enumerating a set of specialized vocabulary or terms and their equivalents in the other language ; Rather, it is a complete transfer of a text that contains human, social, religious, customary, linguistic, and other values on which societies are built, from a first language called the source language to a second language called the target language.

Translations are not only a way of communication ; they are not only connected with linguistic competence, but with intertextuality, psychological, and narrative competence, being a cultural vector, a facilitator of cross-cultural cooperation. It has to be clearly acknowledged that translation functions not just as a trans-lingual vector of meaning but also as a vector of cultural specificity (Lulia Elena et al 2016)

Translating literary, intellectual, scientific works and heritage are related to the national identity of the individual. It expresses his identity in the source language so it must do the same in the target one. It is therefore inseparable from identity, no matter what happens. Either it expresses the identity and nationality of the original reader before and after the transfer, or it expresses the identity of the future after the transfer. In both cases, translation is an intellectual window and a cultural gateway that guarantees to our local identity more communication with others in every field of his creativity.

Translation is indispensable in a globalized world where people from diverse linguistic backgrounds interact daily. It allows individuals to express themselves in their native languages while still being comprehensible to speakers of other languages. This promotes effective cross-cultural communication. (Mohammed Imran Khan 2023)

The most important role played by translation is the cultural exchange between other people and cultures, it is also the transfer of sciences, knowledge, arts, literature, customs and traditions that others have. Cultural exchange is one of the signs of the strength of any nation, as it will be able to participate and interact with different world, and benefit from this difference in developing its culture and building its civilization.

Translation plays an important role in creating successful communication between different people and cultures. It is a link through which individuals and groups can overcome the difficulties caused by linguistic differences between people and nations without sacrificing part of their identity, such as the language they have chosen to express themselves.

Translation, with the help of technology in our modern world, has enabled people to communicate, and has contributed fundamentally to consolidating relations between people. Whether through tourist traveling or reading other people translated litera-

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ture, or communicating with them through social media. Despite the different means of communication, translation remains the official sponsor of such opportunities for communication between nations.

Translation has the merit of strengthening peaceful international diplomatic relations, as without it, governments would not have been able to communicate or build friendly relations based on common interests and international agreements that are in the interest of humanity. Perhaps without translation, we would be warring countries and races that only agree on ruin and wars.

Translation was a way to open new global economic fields. Thanks to it, we began to see branches of global institutions in foreign environments, and international economic cooperation between major institutions that did not agree in their language, but agreed in their vision. We began to see new markets opening in different countries every day, without translation. All these opportunities would have been impossible.

Cultural communication is a means of absorbing the achievements of others, and learning about their wealth of knowledge and cultural potential. Without it, cultural differences turn into hotbeds of tension and conflict. We must realize in this regard that civilizational communication does not aim to reach a state of conformity between cultures, but rather aims primarily to dialogue and assimilation of others and to know different cultures with their human and civilizational values.

In the age of globalization, the exchange of ideas, values, and traditions between different cultures has become more prevalent. Translation services are essential in facilitating these exchanges, as they help to make cultural products, such as films, music, and literature, accessible to a wider audience. As a result, translation promotes multiculturalism and diversity, allowing people to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for cultures beyond their own. (Tamera Nelsons 2023)

Cultural communication is the exchange of main cultures or their branches and systems, contact with each other through dialogue, acquaintance, and interaction. This communication may be horizontal communication that takes place between simultaneous cultures or between specific cultural regions, and it may be vertical communication that takes place between successive generations of a culture or between its socially hierarchical groups or classes. This communication occurs through translation, acculturation, or both.

6 Conclusion

Translation is one of the most important tools of communication between people and civilizations, and in a globalized world, in which the pace of events is accelerating, countries find themselves required to dialogue with other people through translation and other means, as this role becomes part of the tasks of national governments and people.

It is clear that translation from one language to a second one means creating a kind of acculturation between them, which would contribute significantly to bring people

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and nations closer together. This, in turn, leads to communication between societies and breaking their isolation, and this is of great benefit to all nations.

Translation, then, is an intellectual window and a cultural gateway that guarantees to our national identity more communication with others in all areas of creativity.

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