

Translation and Sustainability: Towards the Concept of Translator as Entrepreneur

Poulami Roy

Department of English, Netaji Nagar College, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

Corresponding Author's Email: poulamiroy.eng@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Sustainability denotes unity, a strong sense of cooperativeness, and the most raised notion of ethics: the search for the betterment of all. The present article explores various scholarly research of recent times that focus on entrepreneurship and translation in the context of sustainable development. It also aims to illustrate the relationship between sustainability and translation processes by focusing on the question of how translation plays a vital role and must be placed at the heart of any cultural reflection on social equality. However, the aim of this article is not to establish "sustainability" as a prescriptive concept for translation studies, but rather to incorporate and conceptualize sustainability as a dialogue between translation and cultural communication. Translation as a whole and the process of translating, therefore, can create a new and effective model for sustainable development.

Keywords: *Translation Processes, Sustainable Development, Cultural Negotiations, Translator Competence*

Introduction

As defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), the concept of 'sustainability' denotes an activity that has the ability to cater to current needs, without compromising the needs of the future or putting future generations at risk. Despite the countless social and political imperatives, as well as widespread ecological suppositions observed in recent times, the true nature of the word 'sustainability' has yet to gain a strong foothold among people around the world. However, the very concept should be considered indispensable for addressing the worldwide discussions about the future and well-being of people and people's responsibility towards it.

Translation, a phenomenon that can be inferred both linguistically and cross-culturally, plays an effective role in spreading information, knowledge, and ideas. It is a protector of cultural heritage and essential to the development of a global economy. Today's multicultural and multilingual society demands efficient and empathetic communication between languages and cultures, and the skills of translation are, therefore, becoming

ever more important and desirable. It is past time to investigate what constitutes a sustainable practice, how it operates as such, whether a greater number of sustainable translations can be produced, and, most importantly, how it should be sought after.

On the other hand, the concept of 'entrepreneur' derives its meaning from the French word 'entreprendre' – roughly understood as "undertake", which indicates an essential capacity of entrepreneurship. As translation studies have evolved throughout history, various points have been raised as to the actual roles of translators – they have often been regarded as interlinguistic mediators or described as communicators. However, few scholars have investigated translators' roles and functions as businesspeople, as entrepreneurs. Over the last few years, the business prospects of translation have become an increasingly important topic in translation studies. Sociological, cognitive, ergonomic, and working environment studies have offered perceptions of the complications and variegations of translation as a service. On one hand, studies impending translation from a theoretical angle are relatively few in number, and, in those studies, the translation process is considered a 'professional service'. On the other hand, many sociological studies portray translation as a field with an unskilled, low-status, and low-paying workforce with insufficient control over its activity. Since translations are needed in a wide range of contexts, the temperament of services in the existing translation market varies; and for this reason, some translation practices may demonstrate higher components of professional service than the rest. Since the beginning of the decade, translation scholars have been interested in the working lives of non-literary translators, providing observations both from the viewpoint of the translators, as well as from a service-theoretical outlook on the industrialization of translation.

Literature Review

In the Bloomsbury Companion to Language Industry Studies, the industry's stakeholders are analyzed in detail in relation to translation studies (Angelone, Ehrensberger-Dow & Massey, 2019). Cognitive perspectives in the work of the translators, like risk management, knowledge management, and translation as a form of 'distributed cognition', have been explored. The interaction between translators, the range of assignments and hindrances that professional translators have to deal with at their workplace, and the tools they deploy during translations have also been taken into account. As translation technology grows, an increasing number of handbooks and other publications emerge in the field of Translation Studies. One of the latest publications in the field is *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Technology* (O'Hagan, 2019). Additionally, some contributions discussing translation as a dynamic concept also demonstrate the service provision perspective, while others exchange views on the intersection between industry-based functional translation theories and practices by emphasizing the quality aspect. While translation professions and the procedures of translation services are the focal points of many studies in this field, a

number of scholars have also integrated useful methods from research related to services into translation. Some recent studies in this field describe the manner in which translation services are offered, marketed, and purchased, focusing especially on the complicated business procedures involving services and emphasizing the demand to examine the market-aspects of translators' training. Several studies view translation as a highly customized and complex professional service. Translations are usually performed by qualified professionals who have a proper and relatively high academic education, which actually contrasts with the claims of numerous sociological studies indicating that translators are often portrayed as low-status-unstable workers.

While commenting on the clients' standpoints on the attributes of non-literary translations, the assurance they expect from the translators, and the entire process of translation as a service, Koskinen states:

Clients often fail to recognise their own role in the service provision process, for example, by neglecting to provide the translator with information on the use and purpose of translation. Translation is indeed a service, with potentially some unique characteristics with regard to customer–service provider interaction and resource integration, i.e., 'co-creation of value'(Koskinen, 2020).

Koskinen places special emphasis on the multi-faceted aspects of translation and the very process as a service, as the term 'service' is quite complex and confusing. Also, by stating so, he contemplates how translation processes as services could be manufactured and designed according to the needs of the clients and users, which leads to the concept of translation as a user-centred process.

Discussion

As the term 'service' encompasses a wide range of economic activities, its interpretations are necessarily extensive, incorporating factors that are endorsed by every other service, such as domestic cleaning, legal services, car repairs, and education. Even though translation requires specialized knowledge as well as a professional workforce, this profession is extensively unmonitored and uncontrolled, preventing it from receiving the level of recognition it deserves, as is the case with professional services like law or medicine. The fact that nearly anybody can practice translation actually decreases the merit of translation as a profession, since the majority of translation services on the market lack a professional control system. There are international standards in the translation field that raise the status of translation as an expert service and enhance the professionalization of translators. Additionally, there are national and global professional associations that enforce codes of conduct and norms for fair, proper, upstanding, and principled translation practices. The specification published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), provides requirements for translation service provision, specifying, for example, the competence expected from translators – formal translator training or a minimum of five years of

experience in translation service provision (ISO 17100:2015). There are some countries, however, where authorised translation is a special case: Finland, for instance, regulates the outline of certified translation services through the Finnish National Agency for Education, which requires applicants to pass the assessment process or complete a specialized type of translator training in order to be licensed. In recent years, a crucial step regarding the expansion of the societal significance of translation has been taken: in a United Nations Resolution, translators' role in fostering understanding and development was recognized as an important component of connecting nations and fostering development. As the link between nations, organizations, businesses, governments, and people who do not have the same language or culture, translators enable globalized intercommunication. Nonetheless, many clients and users fail to acknowledge the true value of translation by considering the task of translation to be a secretarial activity rather than a skilled or specialized job. As a result, translators cannot help but suffer from a dearth of societal acceptance and appreciation. To overcome this, translators, as inter-cultural operatives, should maintain a trustworthy position just like physicians or lawyers, and clients should also put their faith in translators to provide translations that enhance understanding in their best interests.

Translation services are intrinsically tailored to meet specific needs, both academically and well as in case of market-service. According to functional translation theory, every translation has a designated goal, and each and every translation solution should fulfil that goal.

With the advances in machine translation systems in recent years, translators stand in a position to accept new roles and acquire new techniques and skills in light of these developments. Translation workflows now involve more than just a source text; translators also need to deal with raw machine translation outputs. Consequently, in a machine-translation setting, translators around the world are expected to edit and modify the end-products in agreement with the predefined guidelines. This can appear to be completely unfamiliar with respect to the common and general translation workflows, where translators take a source-text as the base of translation. As the process of post-editing takes place at several levels relying on the role of the translator and the customer's expectations, the skills and competences of translators are increasingly important. Although machine translation has gained popularity, it has yet to be completely recognized by professionals or accurately implied by trainees. Comparing translators' attitudes towards 'Computer-aided Translation-tools' and systems that produce Machine-Translation, one can see that translators reacted negatively to machine translation systems, unlike the translation memories they had developed over time (Çetiner, 2018). A growing number of professional translation companies have begun to incorporate courses on machine translation into their translation training programmes to respond to market needs, and translator training

institutions are reserving a portion of new and relevant courses on translation technology for machine-translation as a means of responding to market needs. The translation profession's sustainability depends on the skills and competencies needed for its survival. The future of translation research focuses on these skills and competencies. A rule-based system, which is based on pure linguistic rules, was designed for the initial machine translation engines. Nevertheless, with the increasing compilation of massive data, which includes bi-lingual and multi-lingual contents, and using staple-tools to regulate these contents or texts, corpus-based propositions attained traction in recent times. While earlier approaches were used in academic and professional contexts to some extent, it is fair to say that tools and applications of machine translation did not get people's consideration until Google launched Google Neural Machine Translation in 2016 as a new kind of approach. In light of the fact that post-editing is such a complicated process, post-editors play a crucial role in successfully regulating the risk-factors linked with many features of translation, such as consumers' expectations regarding value and standard, profit-making concerns, and data safety. In fact, post-editors are regarded as separate jobs or tasks that require additional training in the professional translation industry. Language industries have experienced profound changes due to machine translation in the last ten years—translation companies of all sizes and individual translators have been using this technical approach; this is largely because of the reported increment in the traits of translation products. Artificial intelligence enables machine translation to try to emulate human translation to some extent, but it also conceals errors in itself in order to appear to produce better translation outputs. The errors are not easily detectable, but they need to be found and edited to ensure that the translation is completed professionally. A growing number of companies are looking for qualified post-editors who can recognize errors and be capable of editing them according to the requirements outlined either by the user/consumer or the concerned authority/agency. Consequently, post-editor expertise has obtained increasing importance in the translation industry as well as in academia at large. Due to this, proper knowledge regarding machine translation, basic programming or operational skills, and the efficiency of maintaining machine translation engines are especially stressed in the competencies for post-editors. Translation companies seek candidates with these skills, while institutions meant for translator training strive to prepare the trainees with them.

A translation service's degree of customizability can range from profoundly individualized to primarily forthright content production; tailored translation services are rendered to translate texts or contents that require modification for the sake of functioning in the target language (TL), such as political or marketing documents. As an example of a greatly customised professional translation, transcreation, often described as a mode of tailor-made content for a specific audience or purpose, satisfies brand and campaign intentions more faithfully in contrast to the author's original posited meaning and objective in the marketplace. Since the prevailing misconception is that

the process of translation has to be an accurate and authentic transfer between languages, which does not allow any adaptation of content, advertising agencies have been handling the translation of large companies' international marketing materials until recently. With the right elements processed by the technological tools, translation technologies might prove to be effective for professional exchanges with a reasonable amount of customization: if the user-specific terms and preferences are acknowledged by the system, the translators who are working on the texts of that user(s) get a perception of the company's preferences and do not need to customize each text separately. Translating is portrayed as a knowledge-based, intelligent activity, relying on the service provider's expertise to produce its core offering. Professional translators, for instance, possess a variety of skills, including insights regarding different languages, cultures, and the process of translation itself, along with knowledge of consumers' preferences and technological overviews; and they know how to assimilate those skills to suit each translation situation. The translation process involves a distinct level of decision-making; therefore, it has to be somewhat knowledge-intensive; and translation is not any different from other professional services from a labour-intensive standpoint. It used to be possible to produce the core offering without investing in technology, but today, service providers are equipped with one or more technological tools in order to keep up with the constant demand for productivity increases. As a cognitive task, translation is likely to be considered a primarily labour-intensive, people-based service, with technology simply supporting rather than fulfilling the major function.

Conclusion

There has been a significant improvement in translation practice in many countries over the past few years, and translators are now gaining professional status in many countries; however, it is important to note that India, despite having identified and documented no less than 1635 mother tongues, divided into 122 languages, has not yet achieved the intended professional status for its translators. Despite the fact that bilingualism and multilingualism have paved the path for the development of the diverse society of India, Indian translators face challenges resulting from the inherent bilingualism and multilingualism of Indian society. In many cases, a translator can be equated with a friend or co-worker, who is bi-lingual and also perceived as being able to help with any questions or extend their services for free or for a very low price. As a result, the challenges become more challenging when Project Managers, with or without proper knowledge of the entire process, compare the costs of a skilled, professional or trained translator with those of their colleagues, who have helped them out for free. The translator's task becomes even more challenging when he/she is trying to bid on an international project and has to explain the differences between the translation process carried out by machine translation and that of a professional translation to the Project Manager or the Indian businessman. A professional translator's external challenges multiply once they interact with the industry; they are

faced with a range of other issues as well, such as payment problems with companies or consumers, a deficiency in the stability of work, a lack of interest from governments toward proper recognition, a shortcoming of standards, funding, and certification to upgrade skills. A translator has a difficult time evolving as a professional in this situation, and those who do evolve are easily considered entrepreneurs, since they cultivate the capability to build and create something from scratch. While practicing this method of making wages every day, the professional translators have to constantly deal with all odds, only with the hope of being recognized as established translators at some point in time. While the difficulties are quite obvious, there are some translators, a significant number of whom live in India, who face these complexities and rise above all obstacles to acquire a livelihood and contribute to the nation's economic, social, as well as cultural development. In addition, a few of them progress quite well and establish small to medium-sized, if not large, translation companies that facilitate and enhance the utility of translation. Furthermore, to face external as well as internal challenges, a translator must consider the reality of globalization, which is one of the key factors behind a dynamic market. Globally, innovation is becoming more important as service providers strive to find ways to achieve customer satisfaction. It is impossible for any firm to have a scope and size large enough to satisfy the needs of its customers, and in order to satisfy consumers one at a time, all firms must have access to the resources of various small and medium-sized companies, therefore building a global ecosystem. Translators, too, can benefit from well-known networks that work wonders, and by utilizing these networks, they can bring competitiveness to their work. It is evident that Indian translators are slowly growing as entrepreneurs, but they have not yet achieved their full potential by adopting a common platform; other setbacks and hurdles are largely the result of vestiges of colonial mindsets that persist to this day. As the shared impacts of events have become apparent, perhaps it is time for a change, and the only hope can be found in knowledge sharing, along with the inter-cultural exchanges of experiences, resources, and ideas. The profession of translation and the utility of translating will thrive in the future if entrepreneurs "network" to manage, procure, and sustain development and growth by taking into account all the means, measures, and infrastructural support available throughout the world.

In conjunction with the focal point of the connection between translation, market and ecology, it is important to enquire about the aspects or factors that make some specific translations more sustainable than the others — what exact function does the sustainability of the process of translation play in sharing and accumulating knowledge; and what are the criteria that can be proved to be useful to assess the sustainability of translating contents related to fields which are more complex than the others. These queries and interrogations have the capacity to pave the path for recognition of the process of translation as a cultural practice and furthermore, also lead towards a more explicit notion of sustainability of translation.

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