

Linguistic and Cognitive aspects of Translation and Interpretation Skills

Shaymaa Mahdi Olewi¹

University of Kerbala, Presidency University/ Information
Technology Center, Shaymaa.mahdi@uokerbala.edu.iq,

Wisam Abdul Mahdi Kadhim²

University of Kerbala, Presidency University/ Information
Technology Center, wisam.abdulmahdi@uokerbala.edu.iq

Abstract

The original field of translation, linguistics, is now receiving a lot of attention from fields including sociology, psychology, computer science, and IT. According to studies conducted in the 21st century, technological improvements have transformed translation from a simple language activity into a showcase for the translator's or interpreter's extensive skill set. A thorough familiarity with current events on a global scale, as well as the cultural values that a language embodies within its sociocultural setting, is essential for the development of translation competency and associated practices. To become fluent in a language, one must first master not just the target language but also the source language. The translator or interpreter may approach the problem from several seemingly unrelated but intrinsically interwoven perspectives thanks to their sociolinguistic, communicative, strategic, pragmatic, and semiotic abilities. Learning about the mechanics of speech may help interpreters become more fluent and strategic thinkers by improving their ability to perceive and understand a wide variety of sounds. According to experts, translation and interpretation are forms of communication that mirror the value systems influenced by social and cultural norms and the mentality cultivated via analytical and imaginative reasoning. This significantly

affects the perception of translation/interpretation and, by extension, its practical efficacy. In this research, we provide a set of criteria that, according to our model, constitute a successful translation or interpreter.

Keywords: translation; interpretation; translator; interpreter; linguistics; competence; translation skills.

1. Introduction

Training programs for interpreters and translators have insisted on a solid grounding in language theory and practice since the second part of the twentieth century. As a result, linguistics courses like pragmatics, linguistic philosophy, discourse analysis, and others are highly valued by the translation and interpretation departments. These classes enrich the curriculum and help students hone various abilities. Sociology, psychology, computer science, IT, and linguistics—the original discipline—are all paying close attention to translation because of its interdisciplinary nature. Structure, semantics, style, and semiotics are the four facets that were highlighted. By delving into the mechanics of translation, we find that linguistics reflects behaviors in the social and cognitive realms rather than being a dry academic exercise in language alone.

Catford (1965), Nida and Taber (1969), and Nida (1964) were the first to investigate how to include linguistic aspects in translation, namely at the text level. As the primary vehicle for expressing ideas via language, the text rose to prominence. Unfortunately, these endeavors were mostly fruitless since linguistics was taught without real-world implications. Afterward, text-based techniques in translation studies

started to gain traction; in fact, they were all the rage before they became the norm. To achieve success and efficiency in translation, it is crucial to use linguistic features, as pointed out by Bassnett (1980), Gentzer (1993), and Munday (2001). Baker (1992), Hatim and Mason (1997), Neubert (1985), and Neubert and Shreve (1992) all share an interest in analyzing text during translation to highlight the relevance of pragmatics, context, and discourse. We may look to Vermeer's "Skopos Theory" (1989), Toury's "Polysystem Theory" (1985), and Herman's "Manipulation School" (1985) as the cornerstones of contemporary translation theory. These theories use linguistics to understand the seemingly exterior sociocultural influences that directly affect translation's core. The book depicts society and historical norms; similarly, Holmes (1988) emphasized an interpersonal and practical viewpoint on equivalence.

Translation and interpretation became more accurate in the late 90s when communicative-functional methods like text and context were used. Cognitive linguistics argues that translation studies might benefit from a greater focus on human comprehension and perception. Researchers and practitioners were able to zero in on the history of the practitioners, which is anticipated to include a broad spectrum of global events and topics, in addition to written or spoken language, using this technique. A perfect T/I in this area would integrate, drawing from various cognitive-linguistic theories, their unique perspectives on the world and their place in it, their level of globally structured sociocultural competence, and the psychological and psychosocial dimensions of their human nature. Therefore, the translator's or interpreter's point of view should be the starting point for any analysis of the linguistic aspects of translation. A thorough understanding of the language qualities expected of a translator/interpreter (T/I) requires systematic attention to and mastery of various abilities. By examining

how linguistic theory shapes translators' and interpreters' work, we may better understand the multidisciplinary character of translation studies and, by extension, the cognitive and emotional dimensions of the profession.

2. Skills and capabilities of the translator/interpreter

2.1 Professionalism

People with this quality provide an example for others to follow because of how consistent their personalities are. They remain fair and nondiscriminatory no matter how strongly they feel about a topic (Arsoy, 2020). Among the most critical professional qualities translators should uphold are discipline, impartiality, confidentiality, preparation, and timeliness. The profession is elevated to a more prestigious societal position when these are followed. The translator should remain neutral, truthful, and refrain from sharing their biases, opinions, or vulnerabilities. They should also be self-aware, humble, and open to learning, development, and adaptation.

You may find this material referenced on pages 95–106 of Nida's 1987 paper. An outstanding character is required for the translator position since, as Nida pointed out, this occupation is closely related to other human qualities. Being meticulous in one's work is a great way to set an example and maintain high expectations for oneself and others. Careful attention to detail and an awareness of the most challenging part of improving and refining a translation assignment while maintaining clarity are hallmarks of the work of translators and interpreters. They realize that the omission or misuse of a word, poor sentence structure, or the literal or symbolic use of a punctuation mark may impact the meaning and development of the content. Following technical and ethical standards, a translator assesses the situation and avoids making translation errors to provide a professional and widely recognized version of the current action.

The importance of professionalism in organizations is culturally determined, according to Rudvin (2007). Cultural influences affect interpreters' ethical standards, how they see their job, recruiting and quality aspects, and interpreting methods (p. 1). When interpreters set universal standards for professionalism, as Rudvin's idea shows, they risk ignoring or downplaying the relevance of the unique contexts in which they work. Thus, interpreters need to find a way to be professional while still being sensitive to their cultural background. In doing so, they can better comprehend the local group's ethical norms and beliefs, which in turn helps them set career goals that are compatible with the international market. Considering the local demands and realities is an integral part of becoming a professional in any field.

Professionalism and ethics are related but separate ideas. As an example, a translator's ethical standards are primarily subjective. These principles include a mutual understanding of concepts, respect for the translator's background and environment, and understanding of the cultural setting in which they work. In this respect, the T/I must put one's sense of ethics first. Since no universally applicable ethical standards exist and the definition of professionalism varies between fields, this idea becomes apparent in a more all-encompassing conception of professionalism.

Now, we must pay close attention to the sociocultural schemata of the T/I. The capacity to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries is shown in this schema. When people act ethically and with integrity, they always look for ways to do a better job. They hone their practical talents by incorporating cultural and communication activities into their everyday lives. Sociolinguistic competency was emphasized by Canale (1983) in her definition of communicative competence. Canale argues that effectively communicating across social and cultural

boundaries depends on one's proficiency in sociolinguistics, which is based on one's ability to understand and work within real-life interactions. Communicating effectively in a sociolinguistic context is fundamental (p.2-16). As a first step, the interpreter should practice speaking and listening in comfortable circumstances while taking note of and internalizing the norms of conduct in real-life situations. The interpreter may maintain professional ethics by sociocultural standards by being proficient in efficient communication tactics.

2.2. Cognitive Skills

Many perspectives on translation have been considered, but one thing is sure: the significance of cognitive ability development and how it manifests itself in the translation/interpretation process must be balanced. The mental and linguistic processes important to this art form focus on text manipulation and processing. As the translator works on a particular assignment, it's important to remember that a text doesn't necessarily have to be written down; it may also include spoken language. Cognitive processing goes on whether the information is spoken or written. The mental and psychological aspects of interpretation and translation were the subject of empirical study by Dechert and Sandrock (1986). In a similar vein, studies conducted by Gerloff (1987), Krings (1986), and Lörcher (1996) examined the processes and reactions of translators and interpreters to verbal processing in the context of translation and interpretation. Improving our understanding of how the brain works—including thinking critically and creatively, solving problems, establishing strategies, perceiving, learning, and processing memories—is a significant goal of the cognitive sciences. Given the level of professionalism expected, it's essential to use a range of cognitive abilities, such as • Attention, the ability to focus and remain focused despite distractions; • Sustained

Attention, the ability to focus and remain focused for extended periods, even when faced with multiple stimuli;

- The capacity to tune out background noise and concentrate intently on a single job for a specific time is known as selective attention.

Having the ability to multitask is what's meant when people talk about split attention. According to this model, a simultaneous translator should use their working memory and long-term storage simultaneously, just as the name implies. All cognitive capacities are used at once, including vision and hearing, focus, concentration, processing speed, and perception. At the same time, processing information from many sources simultaneously increases the cognitive load. While the T/I listens, reads, observes, perceives, connects, and evaluates the present and future activities, the mental absorption of incoming information seems to have a high cognitive load.

2.3. Being Up-To-Date & Knowledgeable

Professional translators are up-to-date on the latest developments in science, technology, society, economics, and politics. Arslan (2010) states that these students read actively and are highly aware of the following: the goals they are aiming for, the grammatical and semantic structures used in the reading material, the upcoming tasks they need to perform, and the linguistic standards they must comply with. Rather than being a hobby, the translator's propensity to remain knowledgeable and up-to-date is an integral part of their life. It is essential to take into account the thought processes of the T/I in this context. The groundbreaking scholar Gile (1995) first proposed extralinguistic knowledge in this area. Improving one's ability to understand and process the outcomes of translation and interpretation assignments is something Gile stresses. As information is gained, the kind of extralinguistic input determines the quality of the activity. Sociocultural practices, global issues, communication practices in

different local and target contexts, humanistic and anthropological subjects, personal ethical standards, and a strong desire to step out of one's comfort zone to gain more experience, observe, process information, think critically, and adapt effectively are all subjects that fall under the umbrella of extralinguistic knowledge.

2.4. Proficiency and Skillful Application of Grammar

A good translator is fluent in both their native and target languages. Their proficiency in translation and interpretation is evident on several professional and social platforms, offering them a distinct advantage. "An individual lacking linguistic knowledge would be wise to avoid attempting the translation process." To succeed in his line of work, he has to be fluent in both spoken and written languages. According to Arslan (2010). Therefore, this aspect of translation and interpretation is essential in theory and practice, but what sets them apart is their need for excellent listening and reading comprehension, no matter what. Translators need to be well-versed in sociolinguistics, style, and semantics and able to apply this knowledge to various texts (Eradam, 1991, p.70). Essentially, the translator's role is to ease communication across different fields. As a result of their extensive experience and dedication to professional development, they are fluent in a wide range of written and spoken styles.

Having a solid knowledge of grammar is crucial for achieving successful communication in various social and cultural contexts. It includes linguistic theory and its foundational structures. A person with solid grammatical competence can express and understand meaning by using well-structured sentences that properly transmit semantic information. A command of the rules governing the proper construction of words, phrases, and sentences is necessary for grammatical competence. A good grasp of organizing language structures during translation or interpretation allows for better communication

techniques, making it easier to acquire communicative competence. At its foundational level, grammatical competency—sometimes called "linguistic competence"—requires learning the rules of language, tacitly and via direct experience. Following this line of thinking, the Common European Framework (CEF) (2001) states that grammatical competence is the ability to understand and express oneself through the production and recognition of appropriately structured phrases and sentences, following these rules instead of depending on rote memorization and replication. There has been no complete or final resolution to the complex problem of language grammar.

Undoubtedly, the translator's focus should be on perfecting their grammar skills as an end and developing their ability to communicate effectively. Focusing on grammar is difficult and time-consuming while working as a translator or interpreter. A command of grammar is like a computer system; it enables one to utilize language effectively and purposefully in specific communication settings. With this level of skill, interpreters, and translators may stop worrying about the nuts and bolts of the job and concentrate on other crucial aspects.

2.5. Social Interactions and Cultural Sensitivity

An excellent translator is someone who is well-versed in both their work and personal lives. Literary works, statutes, regulations, and laws may be lengthy to translate, often requiring years. Pay close attention to detail and maintain concentration throughout. This requires the ability to stay focused for the duration of a project, which might often be days or weeks. The social, economic, and geopolitical contexts in which interpreters work are also constantly changing, making simultaneous interpretation an even more excellent task. They should pack their bags and be ready to go wherever the situation arises. Being a human requires constant interaction with others and participation in pursuits outside of work since this is an essential human component.

This is paramount to them because of the unique challenges that interpreters have in juggling their personal and professional lives.

In this respect, translators are more than just workers who follow predetermined procedures. For persons who work as translators, learning the target language's culture is just as important as knowing the target language itself. This is because cultural subtleties are present in both languages and must be carefully considered to achieve appropriate translations. This is because language and culture are inseparable. Their original cultures, the people that make up those cultures, and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which was put out in the 1950s, all play a role in the translation process. The effectiveness of a translation relies heavily on the translator's language and style. Translation affects how we help other communities share their knowledge and culture, and given the state of the world today, translators need to go above and beyond what is often expected of them. Therefore, to excel in this area, it is essential to establish cultural competence via social practices. According to Çoban (2015), translation proficiency is incomplete without cultural competence and subject area knowledge. With their prior knowledge of the target culture and the subject matter, translators can understand and create new texts in the target language. Therefore, it is relatively uncommon for people to fail to understand the real-world consequences of what they read or hear if they fail to develop sufficient cultural competency. Language use is a social activity, according to Mey (1993). Conversations serve as a means for people to communicate, whether for casual chats, more in-depth discussions, or more serious pursuits. On pages 185–186, you may find the cited work. The fact that a translator's or interpreters (T/I) social behavior is correlated with their linguistic behavior shows that participation in sociocultural activities also helps one become more

proficient in a language. Their performance is the result of all their efforts.

Interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds give the translator or interpreter several opportunities to hone their practical abilities. Chin Lin (2017) argues that by adopting a more global and multicultural viewpoint, students may better understand the relevance of language. International communication is more accessible to pupils when they have a basic grasp of pragmatic organization. In this case, similar to students, translators and interpreters can approach their task from a broader viewpoint because of their practical expertise. Teaching students to think pragmatically is something that Rueda (2017) stresses as well. Teaching pragmatics, according to Rueda, is about showing students how various language resources are used in real-life situations (178). In conclusion, one may become competent in pragmatics after acquiring cultural competence via social norms. Moving the emphasis from local to global perspectives improves understanding of cross-cultural issues and encourages the development of interactional competence.

2.6. Technology and Research

Experts in the field of translation and interpretation make good use of translation programs to keep in constant contact with coworkers all around the world. Many people used to doubt that we could ever attain such a high degree of connectivity. They had good reason to be skeptical. But much has changed since 1940, and the new century has brought even more dramatic shifts. As Türker puts it, "Science, technology, people's value judgments, and computers have all undergone significant changes" (p.137-38, 1991).

Furthermore, a translator is well-versed in doing thorough research. Occasionally, a translator must look for a problematic term in various sources. By delving further into this pursuit, the translator

improves their research skills and better comprehends related methodologies. They are more disciplined, organized, and goal-oriented due to their rigorous work and quest for excellence, giving birth to these traits.

Competence in strategy and semiotics is required of the translator while using research and technology. Improving one's strategic competencies allows one to analyze data, make plans, respond to problems, and think creatively and critically to solve problems. This trait calls for well-defined decision-making skills that may be applied to specific issues. Translators and interpreters who are strategically competent can engage in metacognition while they work. Knowledge of semiotic systems, which include the ability to recognize and understand signs and symbols used to communicate meaning, also impacts this cognitive function. As per Erton's research (2018):

“The semiotic capacity of an individual reflects the effective and efficient usage of pragmatic competence in which the language user has the awareness of sociocultural and anthropological conventions processed and produced in the course of communication. Such a capacity also enables a systematic usage of cognitive skills, thereby developing the value of the communicative context and the perception of the individuals in various discourses” (p.1).

2.7. Speech

An interpreter must also be a natural public speaker proficient in both the original and target languages. Sure, more than being able to

translate across languages is needed to be an interpreter. A high level of competence in pragmatics and careful conversation analysis are prerequisites for successful simultaneous translation. For an interpreter to successfully convey the speaker's meaning in a translated text, they must have a firm grasp of the target audience's original message and its intended reception. To do this, one has to immerse oneself in the culture and grammar of the target language, stay focused, have a good memory, and show practical intelligence without becoming tired or bored for lengthy periods. Obler studied the mental characteristics and language patterns of simultaneous interpreters in 2012. When he compared his results to previous studies, he found that those who translated simultaneously had quite different and complex cognitive traits than those who translated in other ways. Competent simultaneous translators know how to captivate and direct listeners.

- In addition, the interpreter has to be well-versed in phonology and phonetics simultaneously. Studying these two branches of structural linguistics enhances the interpreter's ability to comprehend and react correctly to a wide range of spoken expressions in a communication job. Both phonetics and phonology are concerned with the properties and articulation of speech sounds, while phonology is more narrowly focused on their structural organization. Researchers in these areas use instrumental methods to quantify and understand the properties of sounds and sound patterns in their natural environments. The physiological aspects of speech production are also included in phonetics. One of the most critical factors in the actual production of sound is the location of the articulator organs.
- Regarding diction, interpreters should focus on four key areas: emphasis, tone, intonation, and juncture. Another area of study in phonetics is the relationship between the auditory system's

perception of spoken sounds and their acoustic properties. To better understand the neurological features involved in speech sound creation and interpretation, this research investigates the neurophysiologic state of the sounds. Successful performance in many contexts requires the interpreter to understand the phonological and phonetic features of both the source and target languages. Here are some examples for your review:

- To maximize the reaction from the audience, the interpreter might modify the tempo and clarity of their voice.
- • The use of accurate diction by the interpreter improves audience understanding. It is easier for the interpreter to distinguish target sounds since they are familiar with the physical characteristics of sounds in the target language.
- • By analyzing juncture, stress, tone, and intonation, the interpreter may highlight and explain certain parts of the speech creation process, helping the listener to concentrate on the most critical factors.
- The ability to understand a wide variety of phonemes in the target language, regardless of the speaker's accent, dialect, or idiolect, is a skill that an interpreter develops with time. Audience engagement is encouraged, and management is made more accessible by the interpreter's knowledge of phonetics and phonology. Instead of being passive observers, the audience is actively involved in every performance step when this method is used.
- Imagine an interpreter whose speech the listeners miss entirely the point of.
- Mistakes such as an uneven delivery, an unnatural choice of words, or an overly quiet voice may cause the listeners to lose

interest, which can distract the speaker and have disastrous consequences.

Conclusions

Modern understanding of translation and the translator's duties in this area are more intricate than their predecessors. Translators should know that additional skills are necessary for the job than academic credentials. In this setting, people advance in their careers, improve their brainpower, follow a routine, learn about current events and technological developments around the world, pay close attention and be thorough when working, learn the grammar of both their native and target languages and find a happy medium between their professional and personal lives. To completely grasp communications, getting the needed cultural awareness by using available resources, conducting thorough investigations, and displaying the kind of polished, authoritative speech expected of those in traditional positions is crucial.

Translators and interpreters, in addition to academic training, need to be able to draw on and make good use of a diverse set of skills. People who believe they have achieved professional mastery are often nearing the end of their careers. Because of the dynamic essence of life itself, translation is inherently dynamic. Additionally, the translator or interpreter needs to understand that translation is a work that revolves around language and requires them to build a "translation competence." Because translation and interpretation include so many different fields of study, this competence covers them all. Putting together well-structured phrases and sentences is a prerequisite for being a competent communicator, whether in writing or verbally. Translators and interpreters can look beyond their cultural background with strong communication skills, leading to a grasp of social and cultural conventions. This will inspire the T/I to learn more about human

nature's physiological and psychological aspects and how they interact with their work.

Language and sociocultural knowledge growth are interrelated and linked, as shown by the semiotic aspects of translation. In addition, semiotics explains how studying a language's value systems is intrinsically related to studying human language's core. As a result, learning to read and understand semiotic signs is best seen as a bridge between language and thought. Every area of human study has some connection to translation and interpretation. Thus, it is incumbent upon translators and interpreters to comprehend and value the benefits and insights provided by these scientific disciplines. They should see them as opportunities for growth and inspiration, as well as resources for translation.

Further, social and cultural norms influence the value systems reflected in these fields. These aspects should be carefully addressed while deciding on a professional path. In any case, this is what you need to become a good translator or interpreter.

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