

دراسة العلاقة بين الأنثروبولوجيا والترجمة الثقافية

Investigating the Relationship between Anthropology and Cultural Translation

م.م. مازن عبد الجبار رجه

Mazin Abduljabbar Reja (PhD. Candidate)

قسم الترجمة - كلية الآداب - الجامعة المستنصرية

mazinalani69@uomustansiriah.edu.iq

الملخص

يعد مصطلح الترجمة الثقافية مصطلحا جامعاً شاملاً يغطي مجموعة من التعاريف الواسعة في علاقته بالعلوم والتخصصات الأخرى مثل علم الأنثروبولوجيا (علم الإنسان) والتأريخ وعلم الأنثوغرافيا (علم وصف الأعراق البشرية) وعلم النفس وكذلك يشمل الدراسات ما بعد فترة الاستعمار في إطار حقل الدراسات الثقافية. بيد أن التعريف الأهم للترجمة الثقافية يتجلى في العلاقة الوثيقة مع علم الإنسان أو الأنثروبولوجيا. في هذا العلم، هناك حقيقة جلية للعيان مفادها أن الترجمة الثقافية عادة ما توصف الأفعال والسلوكيات الإنسانية والاجتماعية لأفراد المجتمع خصوصاً في أوقات الأزمات العصبية المرتبطة ارتباطاً وثيقاً بحياة الناس والمجتمع. إن طبيعة الأزمات مثل الهجرة، الزواج، الحروب، الاضطهاد السياسي، طالبي اللجوء اللاجئين بمختلف أنواعهم، والناس الآخرين تحت تأثير الصدمة. يسلط هذا البحث الضوء على دور الترجمة الثقافية في القضايا الإنسانية والقضايا المتعلقة بسلوك الإنسان في أوقات الأزمات من خلال العمل الذي يقوم به المترجمين والمترجمون الفوريون بتقديم المساعدة الإنسانية بمختلف أنواعها في مجتمعات ما بعد الصدمة وماهية المضامين التي تمس حياة الإنسان والتي تحكم هذه العملية الأخلاقية والإنسانية عبر علاقة وطيدة تجمع الاختصاصيين. علم الإنسان والترجمة الثقافية مجالات إنسانية مكملة لبعض الآخر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأنثروبولوجيا، الترجمة، الترجمة الثقافية

Abstract:

Cultural translation is an umbrella term which involves a set of holistic definitions in its relation with other sciences and disciplines such Anthropology, History, Ethnography, Psychology and in the field of postcolonial studies within the field of cultural studies. But the most important definition of the cultural translation is manifested in the close relationship with Anthropology. In Anthropology, it is usually an evident fact that cultural translation depicts the human and social acts and behaviours of the society individuals, particularly in the event of the crises and hard times that closely associated with the direct living of people. Crises like migration, displacement, wars, political oppression, civil conflicts and ethnic cleansing are in their nature anthropological issues which always require urgent human and social readiness and providing great requirements on the part of the countries and states which are expected to be vulnerable to deal with these crises through receiving migrants, displaced people, asylum seekers, refugees of different sorts and other kinds of people who are under a human trauma. This term paper sheds light on the role of cultural translation in human and anthropological issues via the work of the cultural and community translators and interpreters in providing human assistance of different types in the post-trauma societies and what are anthropological implications that govern this ethical and human process across a coherent relationship between the two disciplines. Anthropology and cultural translation are part and parcel human domains.

Keywords: *Cultural translation, Anthropology, Migration, Cultural translators and interpreters, community translation.*

Introduction

In cultural studies, "cultural translation usually refers to the different forms of negotiation that people engage in when they are displaced from one cultural community into another, or it refers to the displacement itself. In both cases, scholars have typically explained the term's use by pointing out that 'translation' per se is a human and social activity used to serve the issues of cultures in relation to other scientific disciplines" (Buden, et al. 2009 ,pp. 196-208). In this sense, Assad (1986, p.141) clarifies that cultural translation in Anthropology could be a descriptive process which works to describe a certain human issue by focusing on the role of cultural community in conveying the social phenomena that the individuals suffer from and to interpret their suffering to the world. According to Jordan (2002, p. 96), a means of conveying different cultures of peoples. For anthropologists, foreign cultures also contribute in enhancing norms and thoughts in such a globalized world in which the international norms, which are mostly human and ethical in their perspective, can be affected by the conflict of interests, predomination of super powers on media and technology as well as exploiting ideological issues for propagandist policies and purposes (Trivedi, 2007, p.277). For her part. Simon (2012, p.12) maintains that cultural translation has been witnessing a large development and has gained a considerable interest in the Translation Studies in the twenty-first century owing to the urgent need for cultural translators and community interpreters to serve in remote areas across borders for works of relief and to provide human assistance within the United Nations organizations to the migrants and refugees fled from the horrors of wars.

2. Definition

In Maitland's words (2017, pp. 11-18) "cultural translation is concerned as much with interpreting the objects of the world as 'source texts' with which we each can should engage as it is with the communication of this interpretation towards an eventual audience. Within this mode, the process of cultural translation comprises five broad dimensions: the interpretation of a plurivocal text to be understood; an act of reading across a distance of time and place; the incorporation of the text within the sociocultural context of the translator; the transformation of meaning for a purpose and the emancipation of the translator as a reader". For his part, Assad (1986, p. 141) defines cultural translation as a human and social practice and a communicative act that nullifies the limits of time and place and carried across culture.

3. History and scope of cultural translation

According to Maitland (ibid) "the place cultural translation occupies in the popular imaginary is undeniable. Cultural translation made its academic evolution in 1985 in an article by Roger Keesing for the Journal of Anthropological Research entitled "Conventional Metaphors and Anthropological Metaphysics". From this perspective, one can opine that this kind of translation has evolved as a result to the urgent need of the societies in the human and anthropological field as these societies usually based on the premise of fulfilling the requirements of the individuals to live in a decent way far away from the conflicting issues that separate these societies. Although, translation as a means of communication has a close relation with other disciplines of linguistics and an effective tool in the life of peoples as being a human, cultural and social activity, but its concrete relationship with Anthropology takes the lead (Baker, 2013, p. 23). In this context, Maitland (ibid) also adds that "cultural translation is a term currently much used in a range of disciplines both inside and, perhaps especially, outside translation studies itself and in very different ways. Many of these approaches seem to promise valuable insights into cultural practices of transfer, yet the precise use of the term ;cultural translation' remains controversial". This controversy on cultural translation whether within the field of Translation Studies or the European context is attributed to the ideological nature of the critical human crises and issues which on top of them the crisis of migration that struck Europe after 2015 when the political and ideological arguments intensified on the norms should be adopted to receive thousands of migrants who fled from their countries in the Middle East and crossed the Mediterranean Sea towards the shores and coasts of Greece and Italy.

Here, in the mid of these serious and disastrous situations, the role of the cultural translation evolves effectively and spread like a wildfire to urgently provide cultural and community translators and interpreters by the political officials and authorities of the first receiving countries to those oppressive refugees who cross seas and shores to reach safe-havens and to find a shelter for their lives as happened in 2015 after the civil war in Syria, and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as sever human situation in Eritrea.

4. Literature review

As a discipline, cultural translation is a fledgling field within Translation Studies. It was evolved in the mid of 1980s by Roger Keesing and then gained its importance with growing steps in the field of scholarly and theorization. As a practice, it was emerged with the works of the community translators working in the European human organizations during the Balkan wars in the mid of 1990s (Longinovic, 2002, p.5). Many scholars and theorists wrote about this kind of translation within the field of the cultural studies and Anthropology. Roger Keesing (1985) was the first who associated between cultural translation and Anthropology in an article for the Journal of Anthropological Research entitled "Conventional Metaphors and Anthropological Metaphysics". Talal Assad's (1986) "The concept of cultural translation in British cultural anthropology", was among the first anthropologists who dealt with this new fledgling kind of translation in the anthropological framework. Another anthropologist who highlighted the role of cultural translation in relation to the Anthropology was Todd Larsen (1987) in his article entitled "Action, Morality and Cultural Translation". Shirley Ann Jordan's (2002) "Ethnographical encounters: The processes of cultural translation", was also interested in writing about this discipline of translation. Also, there was Tomislav Longinovic's (2002), "Fearful asymmetries: a manifesto of cultural translation". Harish Trivedi's (2007), "Translating culture vs. cultural translation". There also Kyle Conway's (2012), "A conceptual and empirical approach to cultural translation". Buden & Stefan's (2009), "Cultural translation: An introduction to the problem". Mona Baker's (2013), "Translation as an alternative space for political action". Michael Cronin's (2006), "Translation and identity". Last but not least, Maitland's (2017), "Cultural translation".

5. Cultural translation and Anthropology

The relationship between cultural translation and Anthropology is part and parcel as both disciplines integrate each other in dealing with human and social issues of mankind. According to Assad (1986, pp. 141-64), "the concept of cultural translation in British social Anthropology involves issues of Sociopolitics of Ethnography, cultural studies in post-colonization, migration from Asia, Africa and Latin America". He adds that the anthropologists in British conservative community viewed cultural translation as an ethical process as it handles the foreign cultures of peoples and civilizations (ibid). In this sense, Ricoeur (1995, p. 18), "looked to translation as an ethical model for the hospitality of otherness in a European context. He wrote to translate a foreign culture into the categories peculiar to one's own presupposes one's prior transference into the cultural milieu governed by the ethical and spiritual categories of the other". In Anthropology, the concept of 'otherness' means to accept the foreign cultures and norms of relevance to maintain the ethical and spiritual implications of the old conservative communities and to coexist with new thinking and feeling brought to the country by new comers such as migrants and asylum seekers of different ethnographical origins. In this context, Ricoeur (ibid), further maintains "we could start to view the identity of groups, cultures, people and nations not as immutable substances or as fixed structures to be accepted or rejected, but instead as 'recounted stories' from which we could receive a sense of 'narrative identity' which is at base, mobile". It is worth mentioning that Ricoeur is one of the hermeneutics interpreters and anthropologist who argues that cultural translation can be understood in the limits of interpretation of any social and human phenomenon- "to understand who we are and where we stand before the object- for interpretation" (Maitland, 2017 ,pp. 11-18).

6. Migration and cultural translation

The connection between cultural translation and migration has gained a growing interest in Translation Studies. According to Baker (2013, p. 23), "this increase in attention is due to a combination of factors. On the one hand, it is a consequence of the marked visibility of migration phenomenon in the contemporary world and of the centrality they have acquired in the social, economic and political spheres. On the other, it is also the result of theoretical moves towards cultural phenomena". In this sense, cultural translation has become an institutionalized activity that flourished inside the translation institutions of EU in parallel with the escalation of the human crises all over the world such as migration and wars. For his part, Gentzler (2008, p. 45), argues that the identity and ideology of migrants can be recognized by their social behaviours when they be settled in their refuge places, where the community translators take their part to facilitate for them multilingualism benefits of understanding to provide health care, decent camps, food, official papers as well as an extent of security and safe-zone. Maitland (2017,p. 11) also agrees with Gentzler in this perspective concerning the multilingualism of the translators to deal with different citizenships of different ideologies as well as in providing better treatment for those migrants and refugees.

7. Characteristics of cultural translators

Since the cultural translation is an institutionalized social and human practice largely performed within the official authorities and political institutions of the European Union, namely the European Commission Directorate-General for translation, and other governmental organizations of the United Nations, it broadly subjects to the international authentic norms and standardization of the European Management of Translation Quality (Koskinen, 2008. P.10). In this context, cultural translators working with these EU translation institutions should be competent and qualified for both efficiency and efficacy. Their characteristics can be categorized as follows (Assad, 1986/ Koskinen, 2008/ Baker, 2013/ and Maitland, 2017):

- 1.Their translations are equally authentic though, they are working in different translation institutions.
- 2.Their translations have a legal effect as they deal with rights, legitimacy and obligations.
- 3.They must be of high translation quality management.
- 4.They must be efficient and adequate of translation multilingualism.
- 5.Their translations go beyond the limits of the local etymology to the international ethical and spiritual norms and principles.
- 6.They should be have wide knowledge and long experience of more than one culture, i.e. to be bicultural or multicultural.
- 7.They must be unbiased to any certain ideology religion or ethnicity.

8. Cultural translation and the theory of hermeneutics

In Anthropology, the theory of hermeneutics means interpretation, i.e. how to interpret human truths on the premise of understanding ourselves towards others. The Anthropologists view cultural translation in relation to the philosophical hermeneutics. This means that cultural translation as a human practice can serve in widening not only the epistemology but also ontology of people who are trying to find their identity in a post trauma community after they suffered from bad conditions during their long journey whether as migrants, refugees or asylum seekers to be resettled again in new countries which are depicted as the first receiving states. Within the theory of hermeneutics, cultural translators could be effective tools to make those kinds of people adapting and understanding the requirements of new aspects of life "as being 'borne across' from one culture milieu to another" (Maitland, 2017 pp. 11-18). The idea that cultural translators valid to be 'crossing borders vital instruments' was elicited from the origins of this theory (Assad, 1968, p. 141) which embedded in Maitland further saying that the hermeneutics "is regarded as a philosophical method which takes its name from Herms who was the god of fertility, thieves, travellers and lies in Greek mythology. Hermes's job was to convey messages between the gods and people of earth by crossing the boundary separating the two worlds. His role was to translate divine mysteries beyond the capacity of human words into terms that mere mortals could understand" (ibid).

9. Cultural translation and post-colonial studies

In both cultural studies and Anthropology, post-colonial studies take the lead in recent decades. The nature of the post-colonial studies has been describing as human, social, cultural and literary studies within the field of Translation Studies. These post-colonial studies (sometimes called post-colonial literature) involve critical issues related to the certain topics of social, cultural and anthropological implications such as feminism movements, gender, ethnicity, struggle of negro to have their liberty, eliminating the slavery and the place of women in the society as not being qualified to lead or influence in the life of people, furthermore, sexual oppression they subjected to under the absolute predominance of the men at that dark period of colonization, All these issues are studied within Anthropology and cultural translation (Trivedi, 2007, p. 277). Cultural translation is one of the most prominent kinds of translation that unveil the suffering of certain peoples under colonization namely in Africa and Latin America. However, cultural translators played a considerable role in conveying their plight to the world when they worked with relief institutions as community translators and interpreters and translated many sad stories about their struggle for liberty (Bandai, 2008, p. 120).

10. Cultural approaches and Anthropology

To study any cultural phenomenon, besides linguistics, other disciplines and sciences such as Sociology, Psychology and Anthropology seem more associated with its effects and results. In this context, the phenomenon of migration which has gained a growing interest within the field of cultural studies and in the cultural turn approaches that evolved in the early 1990s by Bassnett and Lefevere, this cultural and anthropological phenomenon was considered under a belief that in finding international norms and standards for applying them

within the cultural approaches, the interest in such issues would take another turn (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990, p. 84) According to Snell-Hornby (1990, pp. 97-86), "cultural studies approaches focused on issues of humanity and beyond, from 'positivism' to 'relativity'. These cultural approaches shifted from the study of literature into non-literature divide as it implicitly embraces all kinds of translation".

11. Multilingualism and cultural translation

According to Grutman (2009, p. 182), "if we consider multilingualism as 'the co-presence of two or more languages' (in a text, individual or society) while translation is traditionally defined as the substitution of one language for another, then the translation and multilingualism are inextricably connected". To be a multilingual translator means to be competent and professional in more than two languages and their relevant cultures. Cultural translation is at the heart of Multilingualism which entails that a multilingual translator has the ability to handle a large array of domains and topics such as "literary translation, audiovisual translation, localization, language management, community interpreting, language policy etc." (Grutman, *ibid*). In cultural translation, multilingualism benefits in handling with different kinds of people of different languages when they come to new cultures and languages and to facilitate the work of cultural translators in providing them with new opportunities for life and settlement (Schaffner, 2008, p.169).

12. Cultural translation and anthropologists

Roger Keesing (1985) is one of the most prominent anthropologists who dealt with the relationship between cultural translation and Anthropology since the mid of 1980s. He believes that cultural anthropologist should study the human phenomena that related to the real-life differences of the tribal people when they come to a new culture. He argues that "without the capacity for self-criticism in the application of conceptual tools designed to understand the unique cultural character of the different peoples of the world and the attendant acknowledgement of the ways in which Anthropology apprehends the reality of others, we run the risk of what termed cultural translation, that is, reacting our objects of study in our own image" (Maitland, 2017). It is worth mentioning that Keesing himself produced the term of cultural translation and associated it with the philosophical studies of Anthropology. However, Talal Assad (1986) is another anthropologist who highlighted the significance of the cultural translation in dealing with human and social crises of the society in relation to the effect of Anthropological norms and principles in the history of British Anthropology. According to Maitland (*ibid*), "Talal Assad (1986) published a chapter in James Clifford's landmark collection: 'Writing culture' entitled 'The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Anthropology' in which he argued that cultural translation was an institutionalized practice that resulted from the differentials of power that separate societies". In the same context, Ricoeur, another anthropologist who interested in translation as a whole and cultural translation in particular, was focusing on the ethical norms of Anthropology to be applied towards human crises such as migration and providing sustainable tools to secure better life for them. In Maitland's words (*ibid*), "Ricoeur looked to translation as an ethical model for the hospitality of otherness in a European context. He wrote that to translate a foreign culture into the categories peculiar to one's prior transference into the cultural milieu governed by the ethical and spiritual categories of the

other. In other words, for successful translation to the local, we must place ourselves in the foreign other's shoes, acknowledging the other's existence as a thinking, feeling and constructing being". However, another powerful supporter to the cultural translation within the field of Anthropology is Todd Larsen (1987). Maitland (2017,p. 12) maintains that "in 1987 the Journal of Anthropological Research once again returned to the topic of cultural translation, in an article by Todd Larsen entitled 'Action, Morality and Cultural Translation', in which he called for the capacity for 'self-criticism' in the application of Anthropology in relation to cultural translation". In all these approaches and perspective on the close connection between cultural translation and Anthropology, it is seemingly important to say that the issue of handling human and social phenomena that are closely related to the life of people through the role of both cultural translators and anthropologists can provide good opportunities for migrants, refugees, displaced people, asylum seekers and so on to live in a decent way in the regions and camps of the first receiving countries across seas and borders. Here, across borders, the role of the cultural translators and community interpreters will be magnified as being multilingual professional translators and interpreters to provide different kinds of assistance to those oppressive people (Taibi, 2011,p. 214-27)

13. Cultural translator vs. anthropologist

From what aforementioned, a reasonable comparison can be elicited from this coherent and close relationship between cultural translation and Anthropology as follows:

- 1.Both disciplines have an ethical shared responsibility in dealing with spiritual and anthropological issues related to the norms and principles that govern human and social practices of translation.
- 2.In anthropologist's view, cultural translator should be qualified to deal with issues and phenomena of humanitarian nature, i.e. to exercise his task across borders and to be unbiased in handling different kinds of people regardless their ideological, cultural, religious or political attitudes.
- 3.In both practical and theoretical conception of the hermeneutics, cultural translation and Anthropology see the interpretation of 'carried-across' cultures is an epistemological reality and that these cultures are mobile with their carriers wherever destination could be.
- 4.In anthropologist's perspective, the question of migration should be institutionalized in separation of power differentials of societies and that the translation institutions should legitimize the work of the cultural translators to perform their tasks in a legal and human way.
- 5.The work of the cultural translator focuses on facilitating the measures of receiving migrants, asylum seekers, displaced people and refugees who leave their countries for different reasons, in turn the work of the anthropologist highlights the ethical and spiritual responsibility to be undertaken on the part of the official authorities of the first receiving countries in absorbing thousands of migrants as was happened "in 2015 following the outbreak of civil war in Syria and military intervention in Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan (Maitland, 2017, p. 2/ UNHCR 2015)".

6.Cultural translators and community interpreters help official authorities in "localizing and absorbing those refugees humanly, ideologically, culturally and socially such as providing decent camps, food and health care for them"(ibid). In turn, the role of the anthropologists involve holding debates across mass media to publicize the great effects of such crises and to determine the ethical responsibility on the part of the countries in dealing with those refugees.

14. How do cultural translators and community interpreters work?

Firstly, the work of the cultural translators (sometimes called cultural mediators) focuses on welcoming refugees of different sorts who fled their countries for serious conditions. When they travel or cross long borders, they encounter a critical barrier of language. Here, the first challenge in front of the translators and interpreters will be in facilitating the language barrier through talking with them, if possible, by their native languages, i.e. to be multilingual translators to absorb different languages of those refugees.

Secondly, the cultural translator should be bicultural or multi-cultural i.e. they must have a great extent of knowledge concerning different cultures those refugees or migrants carry in order to advise them to follow suitable cultural acts or to make a better integration between two or more cultures. This will help in overcoming cultural barriers.

Thirdly, the work of the cultural translators and community interpreters with those people exceeds the limits and barriers of language and culture to include organizing their legal position by explaining the measures of residence or by giving correct information about their human and social situations. They also help in providing them with health care, food and decent shelter (UNHCR-2015 –REPORTS ON REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS CROSS THE WORLD) .

Conclusion

In the light of what aforementioned, it can be concluded that the relationship between cultural translation and Anthropology is part and parcel and closely integrated in the issues and crises of the humanitarian nature. This relationship can be clearly manifested in the cultural and anthropological implications of the measures taken by the countries which receive migrants, refugees, asylum seekers or oppressed people for political or ideological attitudes or critical situations. Cultural translation can be activated within the field of Anthropology and its studies and debates on issues that largely associated with the mankind. In cultural translation, community translators and interpreters work in a direct and urgent way to facilitate their human demands and to meet their own requirements when they reach new countries to overcome language and culture barriers. Although, in the past, Europe suffered from wars, troubles of ethnicity, political divisions on minorities, genocide, but it emerged more powerful after the 2nd World War, and unified in a stronger economic union. When the crisis of migration magnified globally in 2015, European countries unified ideologically to absorb and localize thousands of migrants who fled their counties seeking for safe-haven an decent shelter.

In the theory of hermeneutics, cultural translation was a means of interpretation and how to understand the otherness and adapting their conditions towards new cultural milieu. Both disciplines have an ethical shared responsibility in dealing with spiritual and anthropological issues related to the norms and principles that govern human and social practices of translation. In both practical and theoretical conception of the hermeneutics, cultural translation and Anthropology see the interpretation of 'carried-across' cultures is an epistemological reality and that these cultures are mobile with their carriers wherever destination could be. In anthropologist's perspective, the question of migration should be institutionalized in separation of power differentials of societies and that the translation institutions should legitimize the work of the cultural translators to perform their tasks in a legal and human way. Cultural translators and community interpreters help official authorities in "localizing and absorbing those refugees humanly, ideologically, culturally and socially such as providing decent camps, food and health care for them"(ibid). In turn, the role of the anthropologists involve holding debates across mass media to publicize the great effects of such crises and to determine the ethical responsibility on the part of the countries in dealing with those refugees. Both disciplines have an ethical shared responsibility in dealing with spiritual and anthropological issues related to the norms and principles that govern human and social practices of translation.

It also can be concluded that in both cultural studies and Anthropology, post-colonial studies take the lead in recent decades. The nature of the post-colonial studies has been describing as human, social, cultural and literary studies within the field of Translation Studies. These post-colonial studies (sometimes called post-colonial literature) involve critical issues related to the certain topics of social, cultural and anthropological implications such as feminism movements, gender, ethnicity, struggle of negro to have their liberty, eliminating the slavery and the place of women in the society as not being qualified to lead or influence in the life of people, furthermore, sexual oppression they subjected to under the absolute predominance of the men at that dark period of colonization, All these issues are studied within Anthropology and cultural translation. the cultural translator should be bicultural or multi-cultural i.e. they must have a great extent of knowledge concerning different cultures those refugees or migrants carry in order to advise them to follow suitable cultural acts or to make a better integration between two or more cultures. This will help in overcoming cultural barriers.

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