

Globalization and Aspects of Translation

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Edited by

Said M. Shiyab (Editor-in-Chief)
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P U B L I S H I N G

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This book first published 2010

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-1965-4, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-1965-7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	vii
Said M. Shiyab	
Acknowledgements	xiii
Chapter One.....	1
Globalization and Its Impact on Translation	
<i>Said M. Shiyab</i>	
Chapter Two	11
English as a Global Lingua Franca: A Threat to Multilingualism?	
<i>Juliane House</i>	
Chapter Three	36
Training Conference Interpreters in a Globalised World	
<i>Garry Mullender</i>	
Chapter Four.....	43
Translation and Multilingual Monitoring	
<i>Mathieu Guidere</i>	
Chapter Five	53
Small Parallel Corpora in an English-Arabic Translation	
Classroom: No Need to Reinvent the Wheel in the Era of Globalization	
<i>Hammouda Ben Salhi</i>	
Chapter Six.....	68
Translation Critique of the Arab Postcolonial Condition	
<i>Salah Basalama</i>	
Chapter Seven.....	78
The Paradigm of Translation	
<i>Jane Elizabeth Wilhelm</i>	

Chapter Eight.....	88
Optimizing Specialized Translation Process by Knowledge Organization <i>Sonia Halimi</i>	
Chapter Nine.....	100
Innovative Teaching Strategies for Training Graduates in Medical Translation <i>Maria-Cornelia Wermuth</i>	
Chapter Ten	111
Literary Texts and Literary Translation in Linguistic-Semiotic Perspective <i>Alena Petrova</i>	
Chapter Eleven	126
On the Translation of Poetry <i>Abdul-Fattah Al-Jabr</i>	
Chapter Twelve	145
Constructing Canons: Selecting Texts for Translation in the Gulf <i>Christopher Brown</i>	
Chapter Thirteen.....	165
The Ambivalent Status of Lexical Repetition in English-Arabic Translated Texts <i>Rasoul AlKhafaji</i>	
Addresses of Contributors	191
Index of Names.....	195
Index of Terms	197

FOREWORD

SAID M. SHIYAB

The present book came to light as a result of the ideas discussed during our 1st International Conference on Translation/Interpretation and the Impact of Globalization, held at the United Arab Emirates University. I am grateful to Marilyn Gaddis Rose, Juliane House, and John Duval for their dedication, efforts and professionalism. Their vision and every-present energy helped me understand and in fact appreciate the many venues within the fields of language, linguistics and translation.

This book has attempted to capture the quintessence or the epitome embodied in the concepts of translation and globalization. It also attempted to bridge the gap between the globalizing and globalized realms. Above all, it brings to light the diversity of areas in globalization and aspects of translation that have impacted the notions of cultural communication, translator's code of ethics, metaphorical meaning, code switching, media, etc. Scholars from all over the world contributed to this book, representing countries such USA, Canada, Germany, Portugal, Switzerland, Belgium, Austria, Tunisia, Bahrain, Jordan, and United Arab Emirates. Those scholars have done their research in their home countries on other parts of the world. Because of this diversity, I believe this book genuinely offers an international experience.

In Chapter 1, Said Shiyab examines different aspects of globalization in relation to translation. Faces of globalization are highlighted to make the point that globalization does not only evolve around language and/or translation changes, but also around information technology. One of the most significant points that this chapter addresses is that scholars, including translators and interpreters, cannot control how languages change as globalization is a result of technological advancements our society is witnessing these days and, as a consequence of this, our languages changes in accordance with the translation market needs and those who use it for marketing purposes.

In Chapter 2, Juliane House discusses a significant issue, which is currently discussed widely: whether and to what degree English as the world's most prestigious language in its role as a global lingua franca is a threat to multilingualism. House first explains how the term "English as a lingua franca"

(ELF) has come to mean; secondly, she discusses the controversial issue of whether ELF is a threat to multilingualism or rather provides a chance for global understanding from four perspectives: (1) socio-political, (2) linguistic, (3) psycholinguistic and (4) pedagogic. In the third and final part of this chapter, House draws some conclusions and provides various implications.

In Chapter 3, Garry Mullender examines some of the on-line resources designed for trainee and practicing interpreters and Lisbon University's involvement in various distance-teaching projects in the fields of conference interpreter training, ranging from the European Master's in Conference Interpreting, to its own Virtual Learning Environment. This platform is not only used for the university's programs, but is also the basis for a distance-teaching project with Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, Mozambique. Mullender points out that ever since Portuguese set sail in the 15th century on their voyages of "discovery", which included expeditions to the Gulf region, they have used interpreters to help them communicate. Today's globalization has created new places and situations in which interpreters are required and also changed the way in which we communicate.

Mullender argues that people no longer have to undertake lengthy journeys to meet, but do so virtually, through a range of different media, which have transformed the way people do business and are now changing the way in which interpreters, particularly conference interpreters, work. While information and communication technologies undoubtedly pose challenges for the profession, they also provide a wealth of training and life-long learning opportunities.

In Chapter 4, Mathieu Guidere examines the role played by the translator in monitoring activities. He demonstrates that multilingual monitoring allows translators to step out of their ancillary condition and into the realms of action and decision-making. With a command of search and documentary tools, they will be able to fully draw on their qualities as linguists and analysts.

Salhi, in Chapter 5, reports on an experiment that was carried out at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Sousse University to undergraduate students to demonstrate how small parallel corpora can be used to enhance the fluency and professionalism of translator trainees and facilitate the teaching and learning processes on the basis of a collaborative approach to the translation exercise.

He points out that one of the main advantages brought about by the phenomenon of globalization is the easy and quick access to electronic texts (Zanettin, 2002) as well as their availability on a large scale, whereas in the past only printed texts were available. Electronic texts can be easily retrieved, parsed, concordanced and aligned to serve not only translation research and practice, but also the process of translation teaching and learning. Using parallel (or translation) corpora in translation, classrooms have now become common practice amongst translation teachers and students alike. They are designed to make students familiar with the genres of texts to be translated and, thus, to enhance their understanding of source texts and improve their usage of target words (and terminology). Students are in fact now confronted with copious amounts of both original texts and their associated translations (Zanettin, 1998).

In Chapter 6, there are two folds. The first part is *theoretical*. In it, Salah Basalamah explains his take on translation beyond the linguistic transfer and how it can be considered as a paradigm. The second part is *critical*, which includes the applied aspect, along with the historical and cultural context for the critique. Basalamah believes that any project of constructing a new society has to start with and should permanently be accompanied by a critical apparatus. However, when the critique is fundamentally driven to a certain context by an acute sense of belonging, it should be considered as a self-critique. Basalamah goes on to say that whatever may be the harshness of the critical observations made in this chapter, it has to be understood as a contribution towards self-reform and self-development, not a contribution brought about by means of exclusive power and hegemony.

In Chapter 7, Jane Wilhelm discusses Paul Ricoeur's paradigm of translation in the context of his hermeneutics and his theory of the text as a model of interpretation. Translation, according to Ricoeur, is the "paradigm" of hermeneutics, the model of the basic interpretative process of bringing to understanding what is foreign, strange or unintelligible. Wilhelm believes that the hermeneutical model of translation and

exchange of memories and narratives between nations, with a view to reconciliation, as suggested by Paul Ricoeur, could be the future “ethos” of European politics, and eventually of cultural and political dialogue in an age of globalization.

In Chapter 8, Sonia Halimi explores the amount of knowledge students have in specialized fields. Halimi questions whether there is a method for a good exploitation of information in the text dealt with and the documents used as reference, and whether there are educational strategies that can be increasingly effective in the development of translation practitioners. Halimi believes that each of these questions should be addressed independently.

In Chapter 9, Wermuth believes that in view of the relevance as well as the importance of medical translations, it seems obvious to reconsider the teaching strategies traditionally adopted in the training of medical translators. In this chapter, Wermuth addresses the innovative teaching strategies adopted in the workshop in Medical Translation which is part of the MA Translation program of the Department of Applied Language Studies (Sub-Faculty of Linguistics, Lessius/Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium). She points out that within an academic setting, innovative teaching strategies can prepare MA students in Translation Studies to efficiently integrate themselves into the real life of medical translation.

Chapter 10 discusses the linguistic-semiotic aspects of literary translation. Elena Petrova reports on experiments she conducted to explore the effect of students’ awareness of the linguistic-semiotic aspects of literary translation. She believes that knowledge of the linguistic-semiotic aspects of literary translation has practical benefits simply because, on the one hand, it improves the poetic competence of translators, so they become aware of the interplay between the primary and secondary structures in literary source texts, and on the other, it helps translators overcome typical errors, which are related to the specific nature of literary texts.

In Chapter 11, Jabr examines the translation of poetry by focusing on four translations of Shakespeare’s sonnet *Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?* into Arabic. The four translations were first given to four Arab professors of translation and literature, two in each domain, to rate them in terms of their appropriate rendition of the meaning of the original poem into the TL poem and their conformity to the poetic features of the genre.

The raters were asked to briefly comment on their ratings. By the same token, a reasonably elaborate analysis of the translations is then provided. Jabr hopes that the implications of this study would open a new vista for more intensive research into this rather sporadically trodden area.

In Chapter 12, Brown reports on two major translation initiatives launched in the United Arab Emirates: *Kalima* and *Tarjem*. The two projects represent a joint government and private sector commitment to translating hundreds of books from a variety of disciplines, cultures, and languages into Arabic. While the concept is wholly praiseworthy and that the swiftness with which they have begun to produce and market volumes is indeed impressive, Brown believes that the choices of texts already completed as well as those slated for translation is curious indeed. Brown raises serious questions about the cultural health of the region such as whether or not the creation of such a list represents a kind of canon formation and the philosophical or ideological beliefs that drive the formation of this collection of titles.

Chapter 13 investigates an interesting and intriguing feature manifested in translated texts regardless of the languages involved. Such feature, according to Al Khafaji, is clear or manifested in the simultaneous presence of two contradictory textual phenomena, viz. the *deletion* of lexical repetition in translations as well as its addition. The intricate relationship between these two ambivalent phenomena and their co-occurrence in translated texts have attracted the attention of many translation scholars recently, mainly as a result of the analysis of large electronic corpora of translated texts in different languages. Al Khafaji describes and interprets the nature and function of this relationship within the context of English and Arabic translated texts along with a report on the analysis of the bi-directional parallel corpora together with some sample examples from data analysis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my colleagues and co-editors, Dr. Marilyn G. Rose (State University of New York, Binghamton Campus), Juliane House (Hamburg University), and John Duval (University of Arkansas) for their valuable input and observations. I would also like to thank Cambridge Scholars Publishing (CSP), UK for their encouragement and for publishing this book.

Special thanks go to my wife, Tammy, and my daughter, Amy, who understood what I was going through during the preparation of this book. Without their understanding and encouragement, this book would have never seen the light.

CHAPTER ONE

GLOBALIZATION AND ITS IMPACT ON TRANSLATION

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Introduction

This chapter examines different aspects of globalization in relation to translation. Facets of globalization will be highlighted to make the point that globalization does not only evolve around translation or linguistic changes, but is first and foremost about information technology, and political and economic changes. One of the most significant issues examined in this chapter is the fact that scholars, including translators and interpreters, cannot control how languages change, simply because globalization comes as a result of technological advancements and, as a consequence, our languages change in accordance with the changes in technology, politics, economy, and the needs of translation markets.

Views on Globalization

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, globalization means “To make global or worldwide in scope or application”.¹ This means that transforming things, no matter what they are, can be from being local or regional into worldly, international or global. Globalization can also involve people becoming one global community in which their economical growth, social prosperity, political forces, and technological advancements turn out to be a common denominator to the whole globe. Therefore, what happens in one country at the social, economic and

¹ The American Heritage Dictionary, 4th Edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001).

political levels affects another. People's political systems and economic strategies become integrated as one system, affecting one another.²

Globalization can also mean elimination of boundaries. There are no restrictions on all kinds of exchanges among nations or countries. In a canonical sense, globalization can be used to describe the neoliberal form of economic globalization. Within this context, Noam Chomsky states:

The term "globalization," like most terms of public discourse, has two meanings: its literal meaning, and a technical sense used for doctrinal purposes. In its literal sense, "globalization" means international integration. Its strongest proponents since its origins have been the workers movements and the left (which is why unions are called "internationals"), and the strongest proponents today are those who meet annually in the World Social Forum and its many regional offshoots. In the technical sense defined by the powerful, they are described as "anti-globalization", which means that they favor globalization directed to the needs and concerns of people, not investors, financial institutions and other sectors of power, with the interests of people incidental. That's "globalization" in the technical doctrinal sense.³

There are others who view globalization as internationalization. According to Jones, globalization is a form of internationalization⁴, catering for the increased mobility of factors of production, goods, and services across the universe. This has resulted in a truly global market. However, Daly believes that while globalization can sometimes be used to mean internationalization, there is a difference between the two terms.⁵ Internationalization refers to the importance of international trade relations, treaties, etc., whereas globalization refers to the erasure of national boundaries for economic purposes. In other words, international trade becomes inter-regional trade. While one can say that globalization has created quantitative or qualitative changes in global economic and political structures, it has often been utilized as a rhetorical means for promoting the interests of certain groups or countries. This means that globalization has been used by interest groups to justify their actions or

² Bhagwati, Jagdish, *In Defense of Globalization*.(Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

³ Chomsky, Noam, "Noam Chomsky chats with Washington Post readers". *The Washington Post*, March 24 (2006).

⁴ Jones, Barry R. J., "The World Turned Upside Down?" *Globalization and the Future of the State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

⁵ Daly, Herman, "Globalization vs. Internationalization," *Ecological Economics* 31 (1999): 31-37.

their social pressures on both its advocates and those who disparage or devalue it.

One can see that, to a large extent, there seems to be some consensus about the fact that globalization is a means of producing interconnectedness and interdependence among different people and different nations.⁶ Sassen believes that what is good about globalization is that it involves a variety of processes that begin to denationalize policies, capital, political subjectivities, urban spaces, temporal frames, among other things. Globalization, she asserts, relates countries of the globe through their shared economic and political activities. Many developing countries such as India, Malaysia and (UAE-*my addition*) have adopted advancement in technology and have successfully integrated their economies into the world economy. As a result, they are experiencing economic development and expansion in communication networks.⁷ Croucher believes that globalization is a process that combines economic, technological, social, cultural and political forces together. Millions of people are now integrated globally through networks or websites into the world wide information technology.

Others believe that there seems to be a little agreement on the degree of interconnectedness or interdependence.⁸ As a result, four different views on the lack of integration and pervasiveness have emerged. One is the view that globalization involves homogenization in the global system. Another view is concerned with the fact that homogenization through globalization is highly unlikely, and a third view is concerned with the idea that globalization promotes internationalization. A final view maintains that nothing of this sort has happened. Most observers have invalidated the most revolutionary views, i.e. that globalization will result in integration or adaptation of the view that globalization has not impacted us yet. The debate now remains between those who believe that assimilation, within the global system, remains highly unlikely and those who believe that globalization will lead to internationalization.

⁶ Sassen, Saskia, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton University Press, 2006).

⁷ Croucher, Sheila L., *Globalization and Belonging: The Politics of Identity in a Changing World* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 10.

⁸ Jones, Barry R. J., *The World Turned Upside Down? Globalization and the Future of the State*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

Causes of Globalization

Globalization does not come from a vacuum. It has to come from forces that have contributed to the notion of interdependence, blend and incorporation. Nations cannot exist or survive in isolation. People, too, cannot survive without mutual understanding, support and cooperation, which have resulted from the following:

1. Economic Investment and Free Trade Policies

It should be noted at the outset that information technology and mutual understanding and cooperation among people and nations cannot alone justify the emergence of globalization. One important factor that has resulted in economic, social and political integration is the governments' efforts to remove economic, social and cultural barriers among peoples and nations. Many countries have increased their investment in various economic areas, which have resulted in world integration. Such economic integration would have not come to the light without the encouragement and the support of governments. Increased global integration has resulted in the deregulation of finance and removal of barriers or controls over foreign goods and materials. This policy, taking into account the free world market, has changed free trade and helped eliminate controls over capitals.⁹

2. Reduction of Investment and Communication Costs

There is no doubt that research and information technology have a lower cost than the cost of physical communication. In the past, the cost of transforming information or even conducting research had hindered the flow of information. Now, with the reduction of cost, transforming information can be easily and speedily done at a minimum cost. Indeed, information technology and communication through multimedia have reduced distances among peoples and nations. It has also helped speed up the exchange of ideas and information. Because of the advancement of technology, cost of transforming ideas and information has been reduced, and the discovery of governments' monopolies and ways of exploitation have come to an end.

⁹ Markusen, James R., "Trade vs. Investment Liberalization," *National Bureau of Economic Research* (NBER), Working Paper No. 6231 (1997).

It should be noted that during the past decade or so, many significant changes have taken place, which have sped up the flow of information. The first significant change that mankind has witnessed and experienced is the expansion of the computer industry. Millions of people now have access to computers, and the cost of buying a computer, compared to the past, is very minimal. The second change that has impacted the exchange of information is the materialization of the Internet. This flow of information has helped in two areas: one area is the use of computers, which has extended from being used as a tool for typing or calculating, or storing information, into a machine that can be used for the purposes of media entertainment, information retrieval, edification and above all communication.

Furthermore, other communication devices, i.e. mobile phones, fax machines, etc., have positively or negatively impacted people's lives, which, in turn, have helped reduce distances among people and connect one another. People now are able to connect with one another despite the fact that there are thousands of miles between them. They exchange ideas, discuss issues, and send one another all kinds of messages or images. Contrary to the past, the latest breakthrough in the cellular phone industry and Internet technology has made it so easy for people to do the work regardless of where they are and what time of the day it is.

3. Free Private Enterprise

Nowadays, it is very hard to conceive the world without technological advancement or novelty. With the removal of economic, social and cultural barriers among peoples and nations, and as a result of the world free market and the liberalization of economies, conglomerate organizations have taken advantage of the world free market and, as a result, they are engaged in disseminating technologies about how the production of goods and commodities is done.

Furthermore, innovation is taking place everywhere these days and multinational corporations operate without borders to explore talents and people with potentials anywhere in the world. Hamm asserts that new business models are on the rise and that might make it possible to turn large swaths of this contentious world into something approximating a true global village.¹⁰

¹⁰ Hamm, Steve, *Race for Perfect: Inside the Quest to Design the Ultimate Portable Computer* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 312.

4. Global Networks

One cannot ignore the fact that technological innovations are constantly invading our private lives. Not only have our lives been impacted by the emergence to technology, but also how corporate companies done their daily business. At the social level, technology has helped people cooperate with one another, share common interests and work on joint ventures. Technology contributed to world integration through setting up global networks. Ostry flatly asserts that globalization gave rise to international organizations defending human rights and to advocate democracy.¹¹ Ostry believes that such organizations would have not existed had globalization had no impact on world organizations. Such organizations helped in demarcating the role of government, in an attempt to protect the interests of people nationally and internationally.

At the social level, the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization indicates in its report that globalization has set in motion a process of far reaching change, which has affected everyone.¹² With the new technology, the world has become interconnected through open policies. More social, economic and political interactions have taken place among national and international organizations as well as among people and individuals across the world. Such interconnectedness promoted the idea among people that the world is a small community. What happens to one may affect the other. Individuals started to come to terms with the notion that people, no matter where they come from, share common interests and universal values, and this will be directed in the long run towards building enlightened and democratic global governance for the sake of everyone.

While the picture of globalization often looks glamorous, this does not mean there are no serious concerns. One of these concerns is the fact that globalization created more gaps among individuals and people. Loss of employment, disappearance of small businesses, monopoly power of local industries, consumer exploitation, and low quality products are all examples of negative globalization. Therefore, unbalanced outcomes among people were created, and wealth is not evenly distributed. Even in the eyes of many people, globalization has not provided them with their legitimate aspirations for a respectable job, better future and better life for their children.

¹¹ Ostry, Sylvia, "The WTO after Seattle: Something's Happening Here, What it is Ain't Exactly Clear", presented to *the American Economic Association* (2001).

¹² World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization (2004). *International Labor Office* (ILO). Genève, Switzerland.

Globalization and Translation

The effect of globalization had a tremendous linguistic and social impact on translation or translation studies simply because globalization necessitated translation. Nowadays, there are more demands on translation services requested by educational institutions and private companies than any other time, simply because parts of the world are becoming interested in one another due to many reasons, i.e. world conflicts and clashes, world economic crisis, shared concerns, common interests, etc. This was triggered through the need for technology, which has helped, to a large extent, reduce the cost of disseminating or exchanging information. This in turn has led to two things: one is the spread of English as a world language, and the second is the global demand on translation.¹³ Pym describes globalization as an economic process, impacting the social role of translation.¹⁴ Such a role will definitely affect the political organization of translation studies as a scholarly discipline. Pym states:

There are, however, political processes that build on globalization but should not be identified with it. Those processes also have consequences for translation but are not to be considered inevitable. Some of them can be resisted or influenced by the use or non-use of translation. Those political processes can thus be indirectly affected by a scholarly Translation Studies, which might thus develop its own politics with respect to globalization. This means that Translation Studies should seek to understand and explain the effects of globalization, without pretending to resist them all. At the same time, it should attempt to influence the more negative political processes within its reach, developing its political agenda and cultivating its own political organization. In this, the dialectics play out between the technological and the political, between the things we must live with and the things we should try to change. Only with this double vision should we attempt to take a position with respect to globalization.

As for the impact of technology, Pym argues that globalization is a consequence of cost reduction in communication and transportation. It is just a set of things no more or less. It takes place only when distances among nations and cultures become closer, not physically or geographically of course, but mentally or intellectually. So, as technology

¹³ House, Juliane, "English as a Global Lingua Franca-A Threat to Multilingualism?" in *Globalization and Aspects of Translatio* (Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010).

¹⁴ Pym, Anthony, "Globalization and the Politics of Translation Studies," *Intercultural Studies Group* (Tarragona, Spain: Universitat Rovira, 2003).

advances, things can move further and more efficiently. Even at the communication level, people can communicate effectively and efficiently. The only thing that was affected here by technology is the cost of such communication. However, different technologies, Pym correctly points out, structures these costs in different ways. Slight changes can sometimes have a large scale effect. The move from using parchment to paper made rewriting inexpensive, and also made multiple revisions possible. Teams worked greatly and distribution was wider. The arrival and use of paper was concurrent with the translation activities in Baghdad in the 9th and the 10th tenth centuries. This has led to the creation of conventions and the standardization of local languages, while specific texts promoted greater awareness of individual discourse (i.e. style of the author) with corresponding calls for translators.¹⁵

Away from the business context of globalization, one cannot deny the fact that globalization and translation are intertwined.¹⁶ Globalization has always been a significant aspect of translation, simply because translation brings cultures closer. With the age of globalization and technology, and the emergence so many new technical and nontechnical words, the translator has no choice but to adopt (not adapt) a set of foreign words that enrich the target language, so it becomes more understandable to the reader. According to Wiersema¹⁷ and House¹⁸, people as well as translators need to come to terms with the fact that words adopted from the target language can be enlightening to the reader as they genuinely mirror other cultures and their traditions. To do so, and with the advancement of technology, translators have no option but to adopt a foreign word with or without explanation to rewrite the text so it becomes comprehensible to the reader. It could be that this aspect of translation can be applicable to the translation of literary or scientific texts, but the fact that globalization has brought with it so many innovations with regard to all genres is a case in point. In Arabic, for example, words that emerged as a result of technology such as fax, telex, telegraph, mobile, computer, laptop, camera, and microwave, have already been adopted, even though

¹⁵ Pym, Anthony, *Negotiating the Frontier: Translators and Intercultures in Hispanic History* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2000).

¹⁶ House, Juliane, *Translation* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹⁷ Wiersema, Nico, "Globalization and Translation: A discussion of the effect of globalization on today's translation," *Translation Journal* 8, 1 (2004). Available online <http://accurapid.com/journal/27liter.htm>.

¹⁸ House, Juliane, *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited* (Tuebingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1997).

their counterparts exist in Arabic. If the Arabic adaptation of foreign words is used, then translators can only stymie the reader.

Technology and Translation

One may think that technology is equal to globalization as globalization is associated with world advancement in technology. However, the relationship between globalization and technology is that of cause and effect. Globalization is a consequence of technological advancement, and the consequence of such globalized technology is the daily translation services we see everywhere. It is not only translators who have been impacted by globalized technology, but also the daily lives of many people, their cultures and various translation businesses. Globalization has also affected how translators do their work and their style. This has forced translators to redefine their services.

At the social level, globalization has helped translators become significant mediators among cultures through a better understanding that can be accomplished. One cannot deny that, as a result of globalization, people develop a deep interest in familiarizing themselves with other cultures, and what better way to do this but through translation.

Taking a cursory look at what is going on now and with the process of globalization moving faster than ever, one cannot help but confirm that in the next few years, the translation market will be more overpoweringly affected than any other market, simply because of the disappearance of national boundaries and custom tariffs. Local markets will not be protected any more, and goods will be sold internationally. As a result of this, there will be a big demand for translation.

Furthermore, internet services have become a way of life, and with the increased demand on such services, there will be a demand on translation and translators. One of the significant aspects of globalization is that it impacted literary translation. These texts will become, if not already have, out of the ordinary and as a result, these translations will be needed to provide a better understanding of other cultures. It becomes very apparent these days that we are in a rush to do everything, and translation can be done anywhere in the world. With the pursuit for globalized strategies, there will be an increase on the quality of translation, i.e. translation of advertisements. In a changing world economy, translation will always be on the rise and translators will always be involved in cross cultural translations. Thanks to advances in technology, which make all of this easy!

Conclusion

As indicated above, and over the past decade, globalization has been fervently discussed by scholars in the field of translation and those in other fields, i.e. industry, management, politics, economics, etc. Interpretation of globalization varied from positive to negative. At one extreme, globalization has been perceived as an overpowering force for bringing economic affluence to people and nations throughout the world. At the other, it has been perceived as a pandemic for all modern problems. One key characteristic that can be ascribed to globalization is that it helped liberalize foreign and global trade. It also helped create global market competition, where international financial flows have been long-drawn-out. This has come from several factors: one is the removal of national barriers and replacing them with money-making transactions, and this allowed the expansion of global markets and affected the range of goods and services. The second factor is the role of technology which has impacted areas such as information technology and all means of communication. Costs of transmitting information are greatly reduced, and time and distance barriers have been abridged.

At the translation level, globalization has impacted the lives of everyone, including the profession of translation and the lives of translators. With the new technology and the emergence of new words and concepts, translators have to incorporate globalization into their daily practices. At the cultural level, translation can bridge the gap between peoples and nations, and globalization has contributed in a more effective way towards understanding the source language and culture.

CHAPTER TWO

ENGLISH AS A GLOBAL LINGUA FRANCA: A THREAT TO MULTILINGUALISM?

JULIANE HOUSE

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Introduction

In this chapter, I want to discuss an issue which is currently widely debated: whether and to what degree English as the world's most prestigious language in its role as a global lingua franca is a threat to multilingualism. I will first clarify what the term "English as a lingua franca" (ELF) has come to mean; secondly I will discuss the controversial issue of whether ELF is a threat to multilingualism or rather provides a chance for global understanding from four perspectives: (1) socio-political, (2) linguistic, (3) psycholinguistic and (4) pedagogic. In the third and final part of this paper I will draw some conclusions.

English as a Lingua Franca-Clarification of Terminology

The concept of a lingua franca in its original sense is very different from the role which the English language is currently playing on the world stage. In its original meaning, a lingua franca - the term comes from Arabic *lisan al farang* - was simply an intermediary or contact language used, for instance, by speakers of Arabic with travellers from Western Europe. Its meaning was later extended to describe a language of commerce in general, a rather stable variety with little room for individual variation. This meaning is clearly not applicable to today's global English, whose major feature is its enormous functional flexibility and spread across many different linguistic, geographical and cultural areas, as well as

its openness for foreign forms.¹ ELF in both intranational and international communication can be regarded as a special type of intercultural communication where there is no consistency of form that goes beyond the participant level, i.e. where each combination of interactants seem to negotiate and govern their own variety of lingua franca use in terms of proficiency level, uses of code-mixing, degree of pidginization etc. One might even go as far as saying that with every Korean, Italian and German, Dutch and Frenchman who interacts in English as a mediating language there arises a unique and genuine speech community where the roles and rules of mutual understanding have to first be established.

Such remarkable formal (and functional) flexibility coupled with a truly global spread has led to another new, and indeed remarkable, feature: that the number of non-native speakers is now substantially larger than its native speakers (the ratio is about 4 to 1, tendency rising). This means that English in its role as a global lingua franca is increasingly NOT owned by its native speakers, and this progressive de-owning process makes for a parallel increase in the diversification of the English language through a series of acculturation and nativisation processes. The linguistic consequences of such large-scale processes of convergence and divergence are numerous non-native varieties. And this means, of course, that there is no monolithic 'hegemonic' English voice - but rather a diversity of many different voices, which reflect differences in the social, economic and political backgrounds of its speakers. In sum, then, the so-called 'inner circle' in Braj Kachru's famous three-circles-model² consisting of the most influential group, i.e. native speakers of English and the dominant, hegemonic variety they speak are steadily losing influence in the world today.

ELF can further not be described as a language for specific purposes, a sort of pidgin or a Creole language, and it certainly is not some kind of "foreigner talk", nor is it a type of learner language. The interlanguage paradigm introduced in the late sixties of the last century in Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition Research with its focus on the deficits of learners of a foreign or second language vis a vis the native

¹ Firth, A., "The Discursive Accomplishment of Normality On 'lingua franca' English and Conversation Analysis". *Journal of Pragmatics*, 26 (1996): 237-260.

² Kachru, B., *The Other Tongue: English Across Cultures* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992).

norm are not valid in the context of ELF.³

Instead of an ELF speaker being regarded as a learner of English as the “target language”, it is rather the multilingual individual and his or her ‘multicompetence’⁴ who is to be taken as a norm or yardstick for describing and explaining what an ELF speaker does when he is engaged in ELF communication. Here we can look for support from the rich literature on bilingualism and multilingualism, where the notion of a “simultaneous activation” of speakers’ native tongue and ELF in the cognitive structures of bilingual or multilingual subjects is widely accepted today.⁵

Another interesting suggestion with regard to capturing the notion “ELF” comes from Henry Widdowson⁶, who has suggested that ELF is a type of “register”, a term well known from systemic functional linguistics and linguistic stylistics, the idea being that when the English language as a “virtual language” is employed in different contexts of use, for different purposes, by different people, fulfills different functions and is changed accordingly.

In sum, we can say that the main characteristic of English as a lingua franca is its multiplicity of voices. English as a lingua franca is a language for communication, i.e. a medium that can be given substance with different national, regional, local, and individual cultural identities. English as such does not carry these identities; it is not a language for identification. When English is used as a language for communication, it is in principle neutral with regard to the different socio-cultural backgrounds of its users, and has thus undoubtedly great potential for international understanding - precisely because there is no fixed norm, and because lingua franca speakers must always work out anew – in different communities of practice- a joint linguistic, intercultural and behavioural bases for their communication.

³ Firth, A., “Doing not being a foreign language learner: English as a lingua franca in the workplace and (some) implications for SLA,” *IRAL* 47/1 (2009): 127-156.

Firth, A. and J. Wagner, “Second/foreign language learning as a social accomplishment: elaborations on a reconceptualized SLA,” *Modern Language Journal*, 91 (Focus Issue 2007): 800-819.

⁴ Cook, V., *Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993).

⁵ Grosjean, F., “The bilingual’s language modes”. In *One Mind, Two Languages: Bilingual Language Processing* (MA: Blackwell, 2001) 1-22.

⁶ Widdowson, H., *Defining Issues in English Language Teaching* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

English as a Lingua Franca Viewed from Four Perspectives

1. The Socio-Political Perspective

We may ask the legitimate question: “Why should it be English and not any other language which is currently the world’s most frequently employed lingua franca?” David Crystal⁷ has pointed out that the British Empire, present day US global power, and an ever increasing technology-driven need for easy international border-crossing communication as well as a preference for a type of (assumed) “neutral ground”⁸ has paved the way for ELF. This holds particularly true in countries with very many different languages and dialects (e.g. India). Another reason often given is that English is preferred by many people because it is supposedly “a simple code” – a rather dubious reason.⁹

But what are we to make of the claim made by proponents of what has sometimes been called “liberation linguistics” that ELF poses a real threat to other languages, that it is a ‘killer language’, a perfidious agent of linguistic imperialism? Here one needs to point out that since ELF is a language with the currently widest communicative range, many people- if not most- choose to use it out of their own free will, and they make an intuitive distinction between ELF as a language for communication and their native languages as their language(s) for identification. These indigenous languages and ELF are then NOT in competition, rather they supplement each other, there is not an either-or situation. Claire Kramsch gives a beautiful, moving and poetic example of this perceived difference between one’s native tongue and ELF:

As for English I do speak the language but I don't think I'll ever talk it.
English flows from the mind to the tongue and then to the pages of books...
I only talk Vietnamese. I talk it with all my senses. Vietnamese does not
stop on my tongue, but flows with the warm, soothing lotus tea down my
throat like a river giving life to the landscape in her path. It rises to my
mind along the vivid images of my grandmother's house.¹⁰

⁷ Crystal, D., *English as a Global Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

⁸ Svartvik, J. and G. Leech, *English - One Tongue, Many Voices* (Australia: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

⁹ Spielmann, D., *English as Lingua Franca: A Simplified Code*, M.A. Thesis (Hamburg University, 2007).

¹⁰ Kramsch, C., “Language Thieves,” in *Sachen Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Hohengehren: Schneider, 2002) 91-103.

But what about the so-called ‘Linguistic Human Right’ which says that everybody has the right to use the language of their choice, here, now, and everywhere? But, in the majority of cases, ELF speakers know exactly what they are doing when they prefer ELF over other languages – to their own advantage. A dogmatic insistence on speaking, e.g. one’s native language, may well be considered paternalistic.¹¹ De Swaan nicely pinpoints the issue:

Recently, a movement to right the wrongs of language hegemony has spread across the Western world, advocating the right of all people to speak the language of their choice, to fight ‘language imperialism’ abroad and ‘linguicism’ at home, to strengthen ‘language rights’ in international law. Alas, what decides is not the right of human beings to speak whatever language they wish, but the freedom of everybody else to ignore what they say in the language of their choice.”¹²

Giving ELF users a bad conscience because they deliberately make use of ELF as a language of communication puts them –unnecessarily- into a double-bind situation, as the present author has often experienced herself at conferences and as colleagues from many countries have testified. Here is an example taken from an e-mail by a colleague from Hong Kong.

"I always feel that non-native speakers of English are forever caught in a kind of double bind. Take for example those of us who were brought up in Hong Kong. I got criticized at school and at university if I didn't speak English, but I also got criticized (mostly by those who pretended to be politically correct) if I spoke English. It was only in the last few years that I stopped wishing I had two mouths. English, I believe, can never replace our mother tongue, certainly not where the emotional intensity of feelings is concerned."

Rather than acting as a killer language, ELF can also give rise to the following paradoxical situation: using ELF as a language for communication often strengthens the use of indigenous languages for identification purposes and as a vehicle of protest against ELF dominance. We therefore witness today strong and healthy counter-currents, even in the modern music scene and the internet, once thought to be classic ELF dominated media. Instead of large-scale language loss, we are thus

¹¹ Brutt-Griffler, J., “Who do you think you are, where do you think you are?": Language policy and the political economy in South Africa.” In *The Globalization of English and the English Language Classroom* (Tübingen: Narr, 2005) 25-37. Fraser Gupta, A., “Language Rights”, *English Today* 50 (2009): 24-26.

¹² De Swaan, A., *Words of the World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).

confronted with a co-existence and sometimes even merging of ELF and native varieties. Thus Bloch¹³ documents the expression of Asian rhetorical traditions in the medium of the English language, and Lam¹⁴ speaks of newly emerging “mixed varieties” of Chinese and ELF strategically used to demonstrate and expand speakers’ multilingual competence.

2. The Linguistic Perspective

One of the main arguments against ELF has been the following: ELF speakers are at a severe disadvantaging vis a vis native speakers of English. They cannot express themselves with the finesse, nuances and subtlety which they have in their native language, and often suffer from the ‘reduced personality’ syndrome. However, we may ask, is this necessarily so? Here we must abandon anecdotal impressions and projections and look at some results of empirical studies that have examined what actually happens when ELF speakers perform in interactions.¹⁵

¹³ Bloch, J., “Second Language Cyber Rhetoric: A study of Chinese L2 writers in an online usenet group,” *Language Learning & Technology* 8:3 (2004): 66-82.

¹⁴ Lesznyák, Á., *Communication in English as an International Lingua Franca* (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2004).

¹⁵ Baumgarten, N. & J. House, “Speaker stances in native and non-native English conversation” In *Receptive Multilingualism* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2007) 195-216.

Firth, A., “The Discursive Accomplishment of Normality on ‘lingua franca’ English and Conversation Analysis,” *Journal of Pragmatics* 26 (1996): 237-260.

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