

THE VITAL ROLE OF TRANSLATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

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Abstrac: *An expanding field of study in translation studies examines the translations that Deaf translators create between written texts and signed languages. For centuries, members of the Deaf community have been providing spontaneous translations within their group (Adam, Carty & Stone, 2011; Bartley & Stone, 2008). Deaf translators have started to work as paid professionals more lately, giving rise to a new and as of yet mostly untapped topic within Translation Studies. This pilot research looks at two Deaf people's mental processes as they translate an academic article from written English into American Sign Language (ASL) using qualitative data. Four themes emerge from the participants' early analysis: 1) the significance of planning; 2) the requirement for contextualization, 3) switching between free and literal translation; and 4) keeping the audience in mind. According to this research, Deaf translators create and execute their translations based on their past translation experience and linguistic expertise. This conclusion is consistent with studies on the workings of hearing translators in some areas. Furthermore, though, it appears that Deaf bilinguals rely on a store of extralinguistic knowledge (ELK) that has been cultivated by their experiences as people who live at the crossroads of two languages, one of which uses a modality that is rarely employed by majority populations. The purpose of this exploratory study was to look at the mental processes that Deaf translators use in their work and to see if Deaf translators may offer fresh insights into Translation Studies.*

Key words: *translation, deaf community, hard of hearing, sign language, access to information, communication barriers, cultural inclusion, social inclusion, educational opportunities, healthcare access, legal rights, community development, language rights, accessibility, inclusion, equity, empowerment.*

INTRODUCTION

Translating a text from one language into another while preserving the spirit and content of the original work is the aim of translation (Bell, 1991a). It has been said that translation is an activity that is shaped by the translator's own thought processes in addition to their intimate interaction with the source material (Bell, 1991b, 1994; Gutt, 1991). Thus far, the majority of research on translation activities and procedures has focused on people who translate between spoken languages and written documents. But recently, there has been more focus on the job done by Deaf translators who translate written literature into signed languages. Deaf individuals have probably translated throughout history, despite the paucity of research on the subject (Adam, Carty & Stone, 2011; Bartley & Stone, 2008; Boudreault, 2005). There are records of Deaf individuals getting together to provide written and signed translations of different literature for one another (Stone, 2009). Deaf bilinguals still carry out this activity today, translating on-demand texts such as newspaper articles, media announcements, captioned films, letters, and official documents for other Deaf community

members (Adam, et al, 2001). In describing the Deaf community as a collective body where Deaf people have historically helped each other in many practical ways (e.g. trading manual skills), Ladd (2003) draws attention to the importance of this kind of interdependence. Deaf translators are engaged in Europe to provide documentation, serve as docents at museums, and assist with television shows and other public information platforms (Adam, 2011). Deaf people are often asked to translate written English writings (such as novels, poetry, and theatrical plays) into American Sign Language (ASL) for use in creative genres in the United States (Boudreault, 2005; Langholtz, 2004). Although there aren't many academic papers and essays in this topic, there is a collection of video recordings of early American translators working, such as Patrick Graybill, Ella Mae Lentz, and MJ Bienvenu. These are only a select handful whose creations have been documented and conserved. If, as some contend, translation develops through cooperative and internal mental processes (Bell, 1991b; Gutt, 1991), then concerns regarding the particular mental processes that Deaf translators experience arise. This study examines the viewpoints that Deaf translators bring to their profession, which may be shaped by their experiences in society, their membership in the Deaf community, or their proficiency in a signed language. In a world where oral and auditory languages predominate, deaf cultures speak visual and spatial languages as a linguistic minority.

Deaf individuals have historically experienced social marginalization, and systemic linguistic persecution of signed languages has been the norm (Lane, 1992).

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

As a result, These days, studying translation is a recognized academic field that advances our knowledge of the essential function of human communication (Bassnett, 2008). Some see translation as an interdisciplinary field that is entwined with sociolinguistics, linguistics, and critical discourse analysis (Munday, 2001; Venuti, 2004). Translation studies is today recognized as a provider of critical views on human communication, supported by theoretical paradigms and technical advancements (Bell, 1991a; El-dali, 2011; Gutknecht, 2001; Schaffner, 2004). Levy (1967) asserted that translation is fundamentally a process of making decisions. Making decisions while translating is a socially, cognitively, and linguistically grounded activity (Wurm, 2014). According to Wolfram (1994), translation is a socially constructed action that is shaped by the translator's background knowledge as well as the social, cultural, and historical environment in which it is performed. Because of this, translators are continuously speculating and coming up with fresh concepts and insights based on their experiences working on translation projects. There is now a wealth of study on translating between written languages, but few studies have examined the ideas that Deaf translators use when translating from written language sources into signed language (e.g., Stone, 2009; Forestal, 2011). We are seeing the beginnings of scholarship on this distinct translation process as investigations into this as-yet-undiscovered field of study commence. Furthermore, fresh insight is being gained into the minds of Deaf translators who operate between signed and written languages. Stone examines this cutting-edge area in his paper "Toward a Deaf Translation Norm," covering its history as well as its manifestations in public spaces.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The fields of signed language translation and interpreting differ greatly from one another in terms of their respective techniques. For almost fifty years, signed language translating has been acknowledged as a legitimate profession in the United States (Boudreault, 2005; Stone, 2009; Forestal, 2011). Both hearing and Deaf people can obtain training opportunities and accreditation processes through organizations and professional associations for signed language interpreters. However, signed language translators have not had access to any such chances (Wurm, 2014). The increasing complexity of video recording and streaming technologies has resulted in a rise in the number of signed language translators working and in the development of new paradigms for their profession. Leneham (2007), a trailblazer in signed language translation methodologies, proposes six possible domains of translation, like as

- spoken language to signed language, signed language video to spoken language, and spoken language to signed language video. Written text to signed video, written text to signed language video, and signed language video to written text are all possible combinations.

There are two other ways that signed language translation might take place: Translation can take two forms:

- 1) translation using International Sign;

- 2) translation from a signed source text to a contextualized signed translation that is provided to Deaf people who are semilingual or do not speak a language with a standard structure (Boudreault, 2005).

The fields of interpretation and translation are complementary in many ways; the goal of both is to translate meaning presented in one language (the source) into another language (the target). Signed language translation and interpreting both entail linguistic and cultural mediation. However, there are aspects of timing and form that set each apart and require quite diverse skill sets. Written (static) texts are usually involved in translation. The translator gets time to think things through, analyze the text closely to find its meanings and nuances, do extensive research, and use consultation strategies like having a discussion with people about the work. This enables the translator to precisely do final analysis and apply adjustments while staying true to the form, substance.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, future research with larger sample sizes may focus more intently on the work that Deaf people undertake, what they know about translation, and what underlying problems influence translators' judgments. In order to comprehend what common knowledge is shared in a particular scenario, Deaf translators' decision-making techniques can be understood via the lens of a theory of norms in translation (Toury, 1995). Additional analysis of the individuals who have never had formal instruction would be very interesting. It is acknowledged that one of the most difficult language jobs that people do is translation. Some argue that in order to keep meaning from being "lost in translation" across languages, proper training is required. Research in the future has the potential to impact research.

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