

COGNITIVE PROCESS IN TRANSLATION

Ababakirova Marjona Sherzodbek qizi

Student of Uzbekistan State World Languages University

marjonamuk412@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the sophisticated mental mechanisms that underpin the difficult translation task. It explores how translators use cognitive mechanisms to negotiate linguistic variation, make conclusions, and generate accurate and fluent translations, drawing on findings from neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and cognitive psychology. This paper clarifies the cognitive complexities associated with translating tasks from a multidisciplinary lens.

Keywords : Cognition, comprehension, problem solving, memory.

INTRODUCTION

Translation can be, and has been, studied from historical, sociological and other approaches as well as from functional, technological or linguistic perspectives, without any consideration of cognition¹. The area of translation studies is multifaceted and can be treated from different aspects, such as functional, technological, linguistic, historical, and sociological. As demonstrated by cognitive translation studies, cognition is not the only lens through which translation can be studied, even if it plays a key role in translation. Translation has comparable interpersonal, social, and physical aspects. While it is feasible to translate mentally without trying to portray the translation in a media, sharing a translation with others will require that our mental translation be represented in a physical code that other people can likely and relevantly interpret. In order to convey meaning from one language to another while maintaining the spirit and subtleties of the source text, translation is a cognitive process that calls for complex brain operations. To interpret, encode, and reconstruct words in a foreign language, translators need to use their working memory, attention span, language understanding, and decision-making abilities. This paper investigates the relationship between cognitive processes and translation performance, providing a better understanding of the mental machinery involved in translation tasks.

The Impact of Translation on Comprehension In order to convey meaning from one language to another while maintaining the spirit and subtleties of the source text, translation is a cognitive process that calls for complex brain operations. To interpret, encode, and reconstruct words in a foreign language, translators need to use their working memory, attention span, language understanding, and decision-making abilities. It investigates the relationship between cognitive processes and translation performance, providing a better understanding of the mental machinery involved in translation tasks.

¹ [The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Cognition](#)

Losing cultural context and subtleties is one of the main ways that translation can affect comprehension. As Venuti (1995) argues, translators often face the challenge of capturing the full meaning of a text in another language, which can result in the omission of subtle nuances and cultural references². This could result in the translated text to lose some of its depth and richness, which will make it harder for readers to understand the original meaning. Additionally, comprehension may be impacted by the terms and phrases used in the translation. As Nida and Taber (1969) point out, translators must make decisions about how to render the meaning of a source text in a target language, which can involve choosing between literal and idiomatic translations³. This can impact comprehension, as readers may interpret the text differently depending on the translator's choices.

Furthermore, a language's grammar and structure might influence how well a translation is understood. Different languages have unique sentence patterns and grammatical norms, as noted by Hatim and Mason (1990)⁴. This can make it difficult for translators to translate words into another language and retain the same meaning. Readers may become confused and misunderstand this as a result, especially if the translation does not faithfully capture the organization of the original work. Beyond language barriers, cultural variations can also affect how well a translation is understood. According to Schleiermacher (1813⁵), in order to accurately express the meaning of a book, translators must take into account the cultural background of both the source and target languages. Because readers might not be familiar with the cultural allusions or conventions included in the original text, failing to do so could lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. So, the effect of translation on understanding is a complicated and diverse problem. Translators have to overcome linguistic, cultural, and institutional barriers to effectively translate a document into another language. While translation can help people who speak different languages communicate and understand one another, it can also present difficulties that impair comprehension.

The ability to solve problems is a crucial cognitive skill in translation. Wordplay, cultural allusions, and colloquial idioms that can be challenging to translate accurately present a frequent obstacle for translators. In these situations, the translator needs to accurately express the meaning of the source material by innovative solution-finding that draws on their expertise of both languages and cultures. In order to accomplish this, the translator must be adaptive and flexible in addition to possessing a thorough comprehension of the original text's context. Handling linguistic and cultural disparities between languages is one of the main translation issues. Translators have to negotiate these distinctions to faithfully reproduce the original text's meaning. This calls for analytical, creative, and critical thinking abilities in order to solve problems. Translators need to locate analogous terms or explanations that make sense in the target language, for instance, when translating colloquial expressions or cultural references. This procedure entails determining the issue, assessing the surrounding circumstances, and determining an appropriate resolution that maintains the original intent.

² L. Venuti (Ed.), *The translation studies reader* (pp. 43-63). Routledge. Venuti, L. (1995). *The translator's invisibility: A history of translation*. Routledge.

³ Nida, E. A., & Taber, C. R. (1969). *The theory and practice of translation*. Brill.

⁴ Hatim, B., & Mason, I. (1990). *Discourse and the translator*. Longman.

⁵ Schleiermacher, F. (1813). *On the different methods of translating*. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The translation studies reader* (pp. 43-63). Routledge.

Technical and practical issues arise for translators during the translation process in addition to language and cultural difficulties. Problems like short deadlines, scarce resources, and technological limitations fall under this category. To overcome these obstacles and guarantee that a translation job is successfully completed, problem-solving abilities are crucial. To produce translations of the highest caliber, translators need to be able to set priorities, use their time wisely, and adjust to changing conditions. Prominent translators and researchers have demonstrated the value of problem-solving in their work. Prominent translation theorist Mona Baker⁶ asserts that a crucial step in the translation process is problem-solving. In her work "In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation," Baker stresses the value of problem-solving abilities and critical thinking in producing precise and efficient translations. She contends that in order to translate texts of a high caliber, translators need to be able to evaluate the original material, spot possible issues, and come up with workable solutions.

Similarly, Eugene Nida⁷, a prominent translation theorist, highlights the role of problem-solving in translation in his book "Toward a Science of Translating." Nida emphasizes the need for translators to be flexible, adaptable, and resourceful in order to overcome the challenges they encounter during the translation process. He argues that problem-solving skills are essential for translators to navigate the complexities of language and culture and produce translations that are faithful to the original text. So, Methods for problem-solving have a big impact on translation and are essential to the project's success. In order to successfully navigate linguistic, cultural, technological, and practical obstacles and generate accurate and efficient translations, translators need to be highly proficient in addressing problems.

Translation is a difficult procedure that entails converting meaning from one language to another while preserving the text's original intent and style. The importance of memory is one vital but frequently disregarded component in translation. Memory is an important factor in translation since it affects the translator's recollection of terms, syntax, cultural quirks, and past translations. Information is encoded, stored, and retrieved during the basic cognitive process of memory. Memory is an essential component of translation in a number of ways. To begin with, translators use their memory to retain grammar rules and vocabulary in both the source and target languages. This is crucial when translating technical or specialist materials that call for an in-depth knowledge of a given vocabulary. Lack of memory strength might make it difficult for translators to locate the correct words or phrases, which could result in inaccurate translations.

Furthermore, a translator's memory plays a role in their recall of colloquial language and cultural subtleties. Translation professionals need to be able to faithfully capture these subtleties in their translations because cultural differences can have a big impact on a text's meaning. Translators who lack a strong memory for cultural allusions run the risk of misinterpreting or omitting crucial details from the text, which could cause confusion or a loss of meaning. Several studies have explored the impact of memory in translation. In a study by Tirkkonen-Condit⁸(2005), it was found that translators rely heavily on their memory when translating texts, particularly when working under time constraints. The study also

⁶ Baker, M. (1992). *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. Routledge.

⁷ Nida, E. (1964). *Toward a Science of Translating*. Brill.

⁸ Tirkkonen-Condit – Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training;2005

highlighted the importance of short-term memory in the translation process, as translators must be able to hold and manipulate information in their minds while working on a text.

Memory is an important component in translation and can affect the precision and caliber of translated texts. Strong memory is necessary for translating words accurately and meaningfully since translators rely on their memory to recall terminology, grammar rules, cultural quirks, and past translations. To further understand the precise processes through which memory affects translation and to create techniques for enhancing translators' memory retention, more research is required.

In Conclusion, Interpreters must use a wide range of cognitive abilities, including memory, comprehension, and problem-solving, in the complicated cognitive process of translation. Translators can create precise translations that effectively express the meaning of the original text in the target language by comprehending and utilizing these cognitive processes through their work. Translation is therefore a dynamic and creative process that necessitates a profound awareness of both languages and cultures rather than just being a mechanical duty.

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