

Book Beat

TRANSLATION AND TRANSLATING

Theory and Practice-

Roger T. Bell

Applied Linguistics and Language Study

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Being a professor of linguistics, Roger Bell in this book, deals with both translation and linguistics. Translation is a process which transforms “a text originally in one language into an equivalent text in a different language retaining, as far as possible, the content of the message and the formal features and functional roles of the original text” and from this definition we can see that translation involves language to a greater extent in its process. The book examines and explains the way translation is treated both by translation theorists and linguists.

The book aims at specifying and solving the dilemma between the translations theorists who have used little systemically the techniques and insights of linguistics and on the other we have contemporary linguists who at best are neutral to these positions. Bell also suggests two motivations in the process of translating, within a systemic model of language, one being the intrinsic and the other utilitarian.

The goal of this book is to outline the essentialities and necessary knowledge of a translator, who must have the ability to translate without hindering the originality of the original as well as the translated text. In this context the author marks his interest in

psychology and attempts to apply it to linguistics, so that it may help in understanding the meaning “beyond the sentence”.

The book is divided into three unequal parts: Model, Meaning and Memory.

Model is a general introduction to the nature of translation and also it presents an outline for translation. It highlights the fundamental aspects of translation; Model questions the fidelity of the translator: The skills and technique that the translator should follow while translating and the manner in which the translator can establish him in translation and lastly, the integration of the translator in finding the “Meaning” of the related text is emphasized in Model.

And then in Meaning, as the title itself suggests, there is the quest for meaning—both of the traditional word and sentence meaning and the modern semantic sense of logic and grammar; the communicative value [rhetoric], sets all the three in a Functional [Systemic] model of language. The meaning of the “meaning” and the problem of the “meaning” takes a lion’s share in this section. Also the conceptual distinctions introduced in the various aspects of meaning like sense and reference, denotation and connotation and other aspects like the nature of semantic meanings i.e. the cognitive meaning through Transitivity and interactional meaning through Mood are discussed in this segment. The segment explains the importance in distinguishing a text from a non-text, it values sentences and also it points out the relationship between the addresser and the addressee. The segment at once looks like a miniature of the communication model.

The final segment is the Memory part of the above two. It takes care of the specific issue of the text-processing and the generally related issue of the storage & retrieval of information. It deals with the typology of texts, synthesizing and analyzing of texts

along with the psycholinguistic processes included in memory and in information. Finally the building of a model in the process of translation and integrating the information into long term memory is aimed at.

In fine, the book acknowledges the need for a scientific mode in developing translation process not discarding the importance of linguistics. The book emphasizes the fact that in translation both the technique and knowledge of the text is important. Translation is not only a process of recycling the original text but also it is a process wherein recreation takes place.

Lives in Translation

Bilingual Writers on Identity and Creativity

Edited by Isabella De Courtivron

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The book explores the problem of “being bilingual”. The authors facing the dilemma of “in-between ness” ponder the strange itineraries that have led them from a childhood in one language to a writing life in another. Each author for one or the other reason has been rendered helpless by inevitable circumstances to enter a new world, which is quite different from their own in which they had inhabited, cohabited and lived their childhood. The new challenges, adjustments, reconciliations in the new world lead to another crisis, the problem of identity. This duality extends to writing. The writer who has placed language at the center of his or her creative life doubts whether bilingualism is a curse or a boon to creativity.

Anita Desai feels “floundering midway” between old and new territory, it is only then that she decides that her work should be

“...comprehensible to readers who did not share (her) precise inheritance.” Assia Djebar expresses her desire to bring into light the hidden of her Arobo-Berber past origin in the French language.

Dorfman suggests two remedies for this “doubleness” – Assimilation and Rejection. Shirley Geok-Lin Lim opines that living in two languages is not important but the experiences as bilingual humans should pave way for new aesthetics of modes of imagination encompassing two cultures and two languages. Eva Hoffman explains how he came out of his first self-polish language and learned to love English –“the forbidden external object.” According to Nancy Huston languages are not mere languages, they are worldviews and hence untranslatable. Sylvia Molloy opines that the writing of a bilingual writer always needs to be altered and never “dis-altered”, never satisfied. Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill claims that Irish is his language of emotions and English is a bridge to him to the outside world. Jose F.A.Oliver declares that both German and Spanish to him are the “I” and the “Other”, both searching for a tongue. Leila Sebbar, her mother being French and father Arab, is the accomplished daughter of her teacher-mother. She says that she reads French writers and also Arabic language in translation. She wants to write about her father’s land, colonized, mistreated in her mother’s language. She tries to trace her roots to gain access to her father’s culture. Anton Shammas discusses the problem of writers as cultural translators. He tries to translate himself into English but in the attempt he loses his Hebrew and Arabic, just as his Arabic books drowned. Ilan Stavans wants his work to be of some use to his own people. He soon realises that grammar is an investigation on the nature and conditions of a language. In the case of Yoko Tawada, the haphazard meeting of languages as radically different as German and Japanese has not been resisted; on the contrary, the odd juxtaposition has provided an unexpected aesthetic liberation, bringing with it discovery of a style filled with playfulness, humor, and surrealist encounters. Isabelle De Courtivron relates her situation with Helen Wolf’s saying: “I am someone with two exiles and no

country.” It is in English that she decides to write about her French mother’s story, ironically, English had poised her mother’s life; same had been the language that transformed the author’s life.

Edward Said admits: “I have never known which my first language was, and have felt fully at home in neither.” The authors in this volume seem to be comfortable and more “one’s self” in the second language or the acquired language. Each has developed a very personal style that owes its elegance and power, in part, to this initial struggle. These writers master the adopted language and they navigate between words and between worlds in search of “self”. As Isabelle De Courtivron observes the experience of being caught between the two cultures, two languages is like neither returning home nor leaving home, it is probably a bit of both.

Translation and Globalization

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The new world is now the United States of the world and the ‘English race’ has conquered the globe. The effects of the dramatic changes in technology and in the organization of economics and societies at national and international level are wide-ranging and *Translation and Globalization* examines the specific consequences of these changes for translation and translators. It is truism in translation studies to point out that most of the work done in translation is in the area of scientific, technical, commercial, legal and administrative or institutional translation. Though both literary

and non-literary translation are examined in this work, the focus is largely on non-literary translation. This book takes a broad look at translation and new technology in a world transformed by the forces of globalization, with three aims in mind. Firstly, the study attempts to understand the specific role of translation in this particular moment of human history. Secondly it shows translation students and teachers that translation is not only useful but interesting. Thirdly, the work wants to demonstrate, who not translators are and why translation is interesting and important. **Chapter 1** examines the major changes in the economy and information technology over the last three decades which have impacted on translation. The chapter also considers the role of the social in conjunction with the technical as translation is not identified as a means of instant communication but as a channel of transmission over time. If all translation is a vivid demonstration of interdependency, then any real independence of spirit can come through a grateful acknowledgement of our many cultural and linguistic dependencies. **Chapter 2** deals with contemporary models of translation and asks what the role of translator might be in the twenty-first century. The concept investigated in the chapter is that of the network and how the properties of networks can be explored to describe features of translation activity worldwide. **Chapter 3** takes a close look at the changing geography of translation practice and how translation in one small country, Ireland, has been affected by contemporary globalization. As more people become inhabitants of global cities, the issue of translation and indeed indifference to translation is raised in the context of an argument for a new, polyglossic civility. **Chapter 4** examines key features of globalization which impact on any future politics of translation, namely time, the rise of supra-national institutions and organizations, automation and the economic might of specific languages. The chronostratification of languages, the invisibility of translators as mediators and the dangers of a new 'clonialism' are examined in the light of debates about the gradual impoverishment of the planet. It demand a more self-aware and activist dimension to

the role of the translator in the age of globalization. **Chapter 5** looks at the world in a minor key. The difficulty for communities in defending their languages against outside pressures is examined in the context of all resistance to translation being seen as uniquely regressive and essentialist. An argument is advanced in favour of a new translation ecology which attaches due importance to particularism and place without a reactionary retreat to ethnocentric smugness.

Translation is important not simply because it gets us talking to each other or allows each of us to read what the other has written but because it gives us insights into why we find it difficult sometimes to speak to each other and why we particularly like or understand what the other has written. If contemporary reality is inescapably multicultural and multinational, then it makes sense to look to a discipline which has mediation between cultures and languages as a central concern to assist us both in understanding globalization and in understanding what it might mean, and why it is difficult to be a citizen of the world.

