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Vermeer's Skopos's Theory: As a paradigm Change

Ayman Nazzal
An-Najah National University
West Bank, Palestine

Abstract

Globalization seems to have imposed a new paradigm on us whether we approve of it or not we ought to adapt and adjust to the matrix we live in and this involves complying with what appears to be practical and feasible. This appears to be consistent with what Thomas Kuhn (1996) conceives of the conditions and circumstances which induce 'paradigm change' in the theories and mechanisms we use in some of the social sciences or humanities which we subscribe to in order to account for a particular transaction be that translation or a communication encounter between two individuals. To be precisely candid, what takes place in the process of translation along with the heightened debate among translation scholars concerning the question of 'equivalence' has ushered in such a state of affairs which calls for a real solution or a paradigm change in our overall approach to translation equivalence. This particular approach has taken into account the applicability of the mechanisms with which one can account as intelligibly as possible for both the fragility of the notion of translation 'equivalence', and the possibility of considering the act of translation as an act of inter-cultural communication encounter. Therefore, this paper is designed to underlie the existence of a paradigm shift in the process of translation equivalence and underscore the countless merits of adopting the proposition which subscribes for 'skopos theory' or a functionalist approach as a viable solution to so many problems confronting every translator as well as communicators. My rationale for such a claim comes from various but highly salient reasons one of which is that the existing translation approaches on 'translation equivalence' do not seem to provide inclusive remedies to what confront the translator in translating technology terms, nor do some of these approaches acknowledge the significance of the elevation of the role of the translator to an author status; and the merit of prioritizing the target text over the source text on a more practical and rational basis.

Keywords: Translation, functional equivalence, technology terms, paradigm change

1. Introduction

A quick and calculating look at the state of affairs that has been taking place in translation equivalence is likely to induce one to see that there is some sort of a genuine shift of focus from 'translation equivalence', (see, Nida 1964; Catford 1965; Newmark 1981; House 1981) to 'translation resemblance' (see Gust 1996) and then to 'skopos' theory or functional equivalence (Schaffner 2003; Honig 1998; Vermeer 2000). This shift represents or can be construed as the culmination of the heated debated which has been taking place concerning the approaches on translation equivalence and thus it has given way to the evolution of other theories which might be considered more adequate and practical for such a task. Such a state of affairs has resulted in the evolution of what is called 'skopos' theory. (See, Schaffner, 1998, 2003; Honig 1998; Vermeer 2000).

This shift has resulted in the adoption of the functional (skopos) approach due to the limitations of previous translation theories such as the 'linguistic equivalence' approaches and the tenability and practicality of 'skopos theory'/functional approach in comparison with the previous approaches for which I shall provide my rationale in this paper. This shift of focus is tantamount to a paradigm change by all means since such a shift of focus involves the existence of some real changes in some of the primary concepts involved in the process of translation such as the elevation of the role of the translator to higher status and the priority of the translated text, TT, over the source text, ST. Such a priority should not be interpreted as if the TT is more important than the ST but rather the imparting of information along with the target audience, would be seen as the most affected party in such transaction.

This shift of perspective or approach on translation equivalence in my opinion, can be parallel to the one which Chomsky (1986) talks about in his book, Knowledge of Language –the shift of focus from E-language to the I-language. This shift in and of itself constitutes 'a paradigm change' in the way language has been treated and looked upon. This modest paper is intended to account for the fact that this shift of translation approach from a linguistic and semantic approach to a functionalist approach or skopos theory can potentially be considered a 'paradigm change' a concept which is originally coined and founded by the prominent linguist, Thomas Kuhn (1996); and that such paradigm change is justified and warranted on ideological, conceptual, and other pertinent constraints embedded in the process of translation.

2. Discussion and comments

In his book titled, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, Thomas Kuhn talks about 'paradigm change' and the circumstances under which the call for such a change becomes justified. According to Kuhn, "a Paradigm theory is meant to define the problem and provide a stable solution to it." (1996, P.98). To explicate the applicability of his theory further, Kuhn claims that the discovery of X-rays has "necessitates paradigm change- and therefore change in both procedures and expectations-for a special segment of the scientific community". (1996, P. 61). What Kuhn really implies is that the discovery or invention of X-rays has compelled medical scientists to adopt new set of mechanisms and abandon or forsake other tools which are deemed impractical.

I am inclined to draw on his theory as a parallel analogy between what Kuhn claims and what the dictates of globalization impose on us in terms of adopting a different approach concerning the question of translation equivalence which is more consistent and harmonious with 'skopos theory' and functionalism which seems to treat translation as a communicative act with an intended message or a function to be imparted carefully to a target audience and thus complying with such culture requires that we subscribe to a more optimal approach in translation

which places an awesome responsibility on the role of the translator in terms of being able to adequately extract the information from one linguistic code to another taking into account the target audience, the most affected party in this transaction. . Take for instance how the translator would be inclined to opt for the transliterated term over its Arabic equivalence when translating the English term 'domain' on basis that the arabicized term "دومين" has gained more circulation than the translated term "نطاق".

Byrne (2007) claims that Skopos theory is affords translator to choose from a variety of translation strategies the proper one to meet the requirements of the task at work. It affords translators the opportunity to act as the skopos requires as long as translators maintain consistence and harmony between the source and target text. Even though Skopos theory includes various strategies at the disposal of the translator, it certainly underscores the importance of maintaining both the coherence and fidelity rules (See, Reiss, 1984; Vermeer, 2013).

Let me cite another illustration from technological translation to point out how a functional approach to equivalence is the proper approach particularly when translators are dealing with inexperienced target audience members and are confronting with technological terms which require translators to convey their functional use rather than their conceptual translation. The infinite number of technology terms which people have been exposed to due to computer technology proves why a functional approach to the act of translation is destined to be an optimal approach to account for its proper equivalence.

Take for instance the English term 'server' while it has an adequate equivalence in Arabic, a competent translator would opt for the arabicized term "سيرفر" instead of the English term "server" on account that the transliterated term has gained more popularity and circulation than the Arabic equivalence "خادم". This situation applies to an infinite number of technological terms where translators need to make certain adjustment and modification to attend to their target audience members particularly when they lack the necessary competence and literacy in technology.

There is a great deal of wisdom to cite some analogical examples to illustrate the point which I intend to advance at this juncture on account of its utility and usefulness. As a humanistic discipline, translation is not really different from any other social science discipline since its history coincides with that of language and consequently drawing on the evolution of linguistics may prove fruitful and one can avail oneself of lots of merits by virtue of doing that. Before the arrival or advent of what is known as 'the transformational generative grammar theory', linguistics, as a social science discipline has evolved and undergone a lot of changes from the traditional approach to the structuralism and then to the post-structuralism due to the type of irregularities and anomalies which this discipline has encountered over the past several decades and by virtue of that both adopted approaches of linguistics have rendered themselves obsolete and impractical and were totally discarded on account that that these approaches were not able to deal with the type of anomalies which have confronted linguists since the mechanisms which existed before the arrival of the theory of generative transformational approach could not provide any remedies to deal or account for linguistic irregularities (*see Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman: 1983:3*).

This prompted some linguists such as Murcia and Freeman to claim that the proponents of 'the transformational model tried to incorporate the insights of both models but provided its own model to account for other anomalies which have not been counted for by the first two models (*see Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman: 1983:3*). Consequently, this situation has

motivated the proponents of the generative transformational approach to provide their own mechanism as an optimal approach for a set of questions primarily the question which deals with one's conscious and subconscious knowledge of one's first language, or the shift from what Chomsky calls 'E-language to I-language', and its inevitability.

This shift of focus has also been motivated by the fact that linguistic-based approaches are too descriptive and their primary focus was on textual aspects with less attention to matters pertain to culture and ideology. According to Venuti, (1998a:1) linguistics-oriented approaches tend to focus on linguistic matters so that 'they remain reluctant to take into account the social values [and ideologies] that enter into translating as well as the study of it. Time and again, the findings in translation studies have underscored the claim that the process of translation is and has always been ideology-driven (see, Schaffner (2003) and Fawcett (1998).

Fawcett claims that, 'throughout the centuries individuals and institutions applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effect in translation' (p.107).

There is no denying that the call for the elevation of the role of the translator has resulted from the belief that some translation scholars expressed concerning the futility of accounting for the intention of the author. Such a stance is explicitly exemplified in the following comments by Eco.

In some of my recent writings I have suggested that between the intention of the author (very difficult to find out and frequently irrelevant for the interpretation of a text) and the intention of the interpreter who (to quote Richard Rorty) simply 'beats the text into a shape which will serve for his purpose', there is a third possibility. There is an intention of the text (1992: 25)

One can easily conceive of the above quote to mean several important things.

For instance that the intention of the original author of the text is not always important since the interpreter (or translator in this particular context) may or may not be able to pin down for a variety of reasons which have to do with the interpreter's competence or worldview; or when the interpreter is being undermined to pin down the real intention of the author, he/she can and should appeal to the text in which meaning resides. One might argue that translators reflect the views and perspectives which they hold upon accomplishing the act of translation.

I feel inclined to see the merits of drawing on Thomas Kuhn's famous theory by pointing out the reasons for a 'paradigm change' on the ground that the evolution of communication technology has introduced a new culture where the linguistic code is not as relevant as it used to be or it is not at issue any more in translation due its variability. Therefore, what really matters in this process is the information that is being conveyed through such linguistic code rather than the vehicle itself. In today's global world, what really matters most to the participants involved and to the prospective target audience is the message rather than its linguistic style or form. Skopos theory treats translation as a communicative act with an intended message to be imparted carefully to the target audience and thus complying with such culture requires that we subscribe to more optimal approaches in translation.

It is worth reporting that other social science disciplines are undergoing Paradigm shift too. According to Holliday (2011) intercultural communication studies is such a discipline which happens to have several competing perspectives on the question of culture. The 'neo-essentialist paradigm' which is the most dominant paradigm whose ideas seem to entertain the belief that western culture is the most dominant one in comparison with other cultures and by virtue of that it represents the Center and ignores the presence of an emerging world culture

which Holliday calls the discourse of the periphery. The other competing paradigm is 'the critical cosmopolitan perspective' which acknowledges the divide between two distinct cultures, i.e. the western culture which represents the Centre and the Other which represents the periphery.

The 'critical cosmopolitan paradigm' represents the views which claim that culture has blurred boundaries and recognizes the Other as the emerging world which deserves recognition and acknowledgement. What this implies is that the neo-essentialist paradigm is not any more adequate enough to account for the emerging new reality in today's world culture. To explicate his stance further, Holliday (2011: 196) has made the following comments on this matter in the following quote:

" the periphery would no longer be the Periphery, nor the Centre the Centre."

Therefore, I feel convinced of the merits of entertaining the proposition of this research paper which subscribes for 'skopos theory' or a functional approach as a viable solution to so many pragmatic and semantic problems confronting every translator as well as communicators. My rationale for such a claim comes from the existing translation approaches on 'equivalence' which do not seem to provide inclusive remedies to the state of affairs which translators confront particularly when it comes to technology and religious materials.

One can always justify the stance which the poststructuralist and functionalist has taken concerning the shift of focus from the author of the text to the translator as a radical shift which probably has resulted from the strong belief that since uncovering the intention of the author is very much like chasing a mirage if it is not an improbably thing, then it would be better to focus instead on the translated text since the primary purpose of translation according Schaffner (1996) and others is the imparted information in the target text (TT). Consequently, there is a real shift from old approaches such as 'linguistic equivalence' to a functionalist approach in which translation is treated as a communicative act with a specific function and that once this function is being captured and conveyed properly to the target audience the act of translation is seemingly accomplished. Such changes can qualify as some sort of paradigm change.

3. Equivalence in Translation

Before appealing to 'functional equivalence' as an optimal approach to translation and as a manifestation of paradigm shift, let me first provide an overview of the status of equivalence in translation and then I will provide my own rationale for appealing to functional equivalence since it takes into account the type of problems encountered by translators dealing with technology and religious texts to non-experienced target audience members. Some translation scholars (Jakobson, 1959; Catford, 1988; Baker, 1992; House, 1977; Nida & Taber, 1982;) have provided several approaches on translation equivalence whose primary purpose is to arrive at a more optimal translation approach by relying on a particular perspective with which the task of translation renders itself a manageable act - a task which seems to be inconceivably hard to accomplish without doing any sacrifices whether at the expense of the author's text (See, Eco 1992) or at the cost of accusing the translator of either censoring, suppressing, or tampering with the concerned text (see Bakir, 2004).

In the same vein, translation scholars concede to the claim that while it might be helpful and instrumental to have several approaches on equivalence, the most adequate approach on 'equivalence' if found, has to account for matters which account for the type of problems encountered by translators primarily related to both semantic and pragmatic aspects since the majority of the problems encountered by both students of translation and professional translators are pragmatic and culture-related ones (see, Nida & Taber, 1982; House, 1977).

Equivalence in translation, however, seems to be a far-reaching goal and it is exceedingly difficult to accomplish for several reasons one of which is the overwhelming number of striking differences among languages which makes the task of capturing the distinction between the conceptual and associative meaning of some linguistic lexemes difficult; and therefore there is utterly no complete equivalence in linguistic forms or translation and the term has been used for convenience by many translation theorists. Such proposition or claim has been reiterated and underscored by several translation scholars who consider equivalence in translation sheer convenience (see Farghal 2009; Baker 1992). In fact, Farghal (2009:7) denies the possibility of having 'equivalence' in translation due to both linguistic and pragmatic constraints which undermine the translator from finding linguistic equivalence. The likelihood is that people's perception of linguistic utterances of other languages is destined to be conceived and perceived differently.

The question of equivalence has prompted other translation scholars to negate the existence of complete and precise synonym in languages. Such a claim inclines one to pose the following question: How could there be equivalence when all of us know well that there isn't a precise synonym in any natural language? For instance, Nida who (1969: 73) defines synonym in a language as " words which share several (but not all) essential components and thus can be used to substitute one another in some (but not all) contexts without any appreciable difference of meaning in these contexts, e.g. *love* and *like*. Other translation scholars like Peter New mark (1981:101) who takes a position similar to that of Nida has made the following comments:, " I do not approve of the proposition that translation is a form of synonym".

Bassnett-McGuire claims that even apparent synonym does not yield equivalence. She (1980: 29) claims further that "equivalence in translation should not be approached as a search for sameness. Since sameness cannot even exist between two (TL) versions of the same text, let alone between the (SL) and the (TL) versions. Other translation scholars such as Wierzbicka (1985) who has gone even further in negating the existence of complete equivalence in translation based on her belief that utterances are different in various languages in both ' deep and surface structures'.

To illustrate this further, take for example the synonym of the word 'mature', which happens to be 'ripe', yet one still cannot use them interchangeably in all linguistic contexts even though they are synonymous. Another example which really stands out in English is the synonym of the word 'cool' which happens to be 'open-minded'. While these two English adjectives are synonymous in certain sense, they are utterly distinct when it comes to their linguistic context and use. They have two distinct conceptual (or semantic) and associative (or pragmatic) meaning and therefore they are not always interchangeable. Should the translator be concerned with the linguistic code which really functions as a vehicle or the key information which is being conveyed or transmitted through it? For the functionalists and the proponents of 'Skopos' theory, the second question is a vital one due to cultural and ideological concerns which are usually embedded in the process of translation.

The difficulty of finding real equivalence between languages stems also from both the cultural and linguistic constraints which are likely to manifest themselves whether in the translator's perception of the conceptual meaning i.e. the semantic meaning of any linguistic concept or its associative connotation which people usually conjure up upon hearing such linguistic lexemes. Such difficulty has been reiterated by other prominent cultural linguists such as Volovshinov (1986) who provided insightful ideas concerning the problem of people's perception of linguistic utterances. In his analysis of the linguistic system of any language,

Volovshinov defines the linguistic system of any language as 'an arena of struggle' on the ground that people's perception of any linguistic term conjures up some variation in meaning and therefore one can claim that it is extremely difficult to say that there is equivalence in translation.

For cultural linguists such as Voloshinov the notion of language as Saussure defines it as a system of socially neutral sign is unsound and untenable. In describing the role of language and its overall impact on social reality, Voloshinov (ibid: 21) underlies the ideological nature of the sign by stating that, "the forms of sign are conditioned above all by the social organization of the participants involved and also by the immediate conditions of their interaction." He added further that, "the sign becomes an arena of the class struggle" (p.23). That is to say, the meaning or interpretation of a linguistic sign is not fixed and it is subject to various evaluations in the social world.

In spite of their commendable efforts to find a remedy to the type of problems which have confronted their perspectives on the question of equivalence, some of their equivalent approaches seem to fall short of providing a complete remedy without sacrificing some aspects at the expense of other ones. An optimal approach, is an approach which is likely to appeal to a functional equivalence. In fact Nord (2005) proposes "instrumental translation" as a species of functional translation to preserve the function of the translation process. The adoption of a functional equivalence in translation seems to draw more support from the stance of other translation scholars like Farghal and Shunnaq (1999:20) who claim that "the major problem facing translators at present is terminology standardization and dissemination in science and technology".

To explicate this further if one examines the word "traffic" when used in computer technology, one can note that appealing to its literal or conceptual meaning would not serve its real function in computer domain and consequently the translator is hard pressed to opt for whatever translation strategy to provide its real function as it is used in computer. This situation applies to an infinite number of technological terms where translators need to make certain adjustment and modification to attend to their target audience members particularly when they lack the necessary competence and literacy in technology. The conceptual meaning of the word 'traffic' would not constitute a proper equivalence for its meaning in computer technology but only its functional meaning which would constitute its real meaning and needed equivalence for the task it serves.

In today's global world we can't afford to pay a great deal of attention to the linguistic code being used as much as to the information being conveyed through it particularly when we know that people's perception of such linguistic code varies from one individual to another even in an intra-lingual communication situation.

4. Skopos theory and its rationale

The utility of Skopos theory stems not only from its main pillars: coherence and fidelity, but also from the fact that the changeable nature of the text which has been noted by Hatim and Mason (1990) makes the task of translation difficult since the original text may or serve different functions. A second important reason for opting for Skopos theory is the fact that Arabic language suffers from semantic void when it comes to supplying equivalences for technology terms which puts more of a burden on translators when dealing with inexperienced people in technology.

Skopos theory represents in my opinion the evolution of perspectives or approaches which can adequately account for functional equivalence which has taken place as a result of the

shift from structuralism to post-structuralism which in turns has resulted in several changes starting from the elevation of the role of the translator to the precedence of the imparted information in the target text and culminating in adopting an audience-based approach. A case in point is the translation of technological materials and terms where translators find themselves hard pressed to attend to the function of a specific term rather than to its literal or conceptual meaning. The example which I cited previously about word "traffic" is an excellent illustration for such a fact.

Reiss & Vermeer (1984/2013) state that the process of translation is determined by the function of the product and the receiver's needs. Having said that then it appears that Skopos theory is a functional theory since it strives to maintain two major pillars to preserve the target text: fidelity and coherence. Such changes are justified since these changes represent the state of affairs which has been manifesting itself in the findings of translation studies. Therefore, opting for 'skopos theory' is highly an adequate way in dealing with the act of translation as an act of intercultural communication encounter (see Farghal, 2009, Nazzal, 2011) since the adoption of this approach could be seen as an evitable outcome of various circumstances conspired together to bring about such an urgent change in the perspective and approach to meet some of today's challenges which confront any competent translator or communicator.

There are so many reasons which induce one to accept the proposition which I am advancing in this paper that the shift of perspective from translation equivalence to a functionalist approach/skopos theory amounts to a real 'paradigm change'. This shift of focus has resulted in paying a great deal of attention to what constitutes the most important matter in the translation process which happens to be the imparted information in the target text (TT) on account that the aim of translation is presumably and supposedly has to do with the conveying of meaning from one text to another and consequently the information in the target text ought to gain more precedence over any other element involved in this process.

The rationale which the functionalists along with the proponents of 'skopos' theory entertain stems from the fact that the findings of translation studies seem to lend a great deal of support to the successful impartation of the intended message in the target culture; and therefore what really matters is not only the conveying of the text's intention but also adopting an audience-focused approach, i.e., knowing the mentality and culture of the target audience to whom the translated material is geared for is a key element in this transaction (see, Schaffner, 1996). What is the value of translating something into another linguistic code, but failing to be able to relay the intended meaning as harmoniously as possible to the target audience with some cultural consistency?

This matter has been underscored by Honig (1998:14) and others who claim that the act of translation is supposed to be audience-focused. One should never underestimate the importance of knowing one's target audience since there is no use of transferring the meaning from one linguistic code to another without becoming acquainted with the culture of the target audience. Adopting an audience-focused approach in translation is also tied up with the question of meaning which lends great deal of support to the proposed proposition, which underscores the importance of context in the interpretation of any utterance.

Carbonell (1996:98) claims that "the nature of the context of signification in both the source and target culture is heterogeneous, meaning changes unavoidably in the process of translation and there will be always a possibility of contradiction between the author's intentions and the translator's (p. 98)". This lends the proponents of 'skopos' theory and functionalists great deal of support based on the finding that meaning is context-bound and that unless the

translator caters to his target audiences' needs and be too sensitive, s/he is destined to fail to impart the translated message as intelligibly as s/he could. To those scholars, translation has a function and what is at stake in this transaction is imparting of information from one linguistic code to another for a specific target audience and unless the translator is both linguistically and culturally competent in the target language s/he is likely to be misconstrued and fail to attend to his target audience needs.

According to Honig (1998: 14), this shift of focus is not only justified but it has obligated the translator to bear the consequences of his action. As Toury (2000) claims, "it is always the translator herself/himself, as an autonomous individual, who decides how to behave, be that decision fully conscious, or not. Whatever the degree of awareness, it is s/he who will also have to bear the consequences' (p.19). Such a shift in the role of the translator is being justified and has grown out of the fact that translators are not always successful in uncovering the intention of the author-an issue which has been articulated abundantly by many translation theorists (see Eco, 1992). Consequently, translators are being confronted with the state of affairs which compels them to assume more responsibility in terms of finding out the real intention and catering to their target audience.

In fact one may see 'skopos' as an evitable evolution dictated upon us due to the demands of poststructuralism, convenience, and practicality. There is no denying that the dictates of our time require that translators be free from the old restrictions, be practical, direct, and explicit in relaying the function or purpose of the message rather than worrying about stylistic and linguistic elements particularly when they are dealing with legal, business, or political genre. Furthermore, this newly adopted approach is being justified by functionalists who have realized the merits of treating translation as a human communication situation with a specific purpose to be conveyed and not as a matter of finding linguistic equivalences between two languages; and by virtue of that those translation theorists have distanced themselves from the views of old and inadequate approaches due to their limitations and the type of restrictions which such approaches impose on translators.

A second reason which has contributed to such transformation is the fact that linguistic-based approaches are descriptive and their primary focus was on textual aspects with less attention to matters pertain to ideology according to Venuti (1998a). There is no denying that the act of translation is ideology-driven (see, Bassnett, 1996; Fawcett, 1998; Venuti, 1998a; Schaffner, 2003). Venuti claims the current heightened debate that has been taking place among translation scholars concerning the question of 'equivalence', its applicability and soundness seems to usher in an eminent state of crisis and calls for a real change in the adopted translation approach on account that there is no real equivalence in translation; therefore, the translator/communicator is destined to search for other mechanisms with which the task of conveying meaning from one linguistic system to another can be accomplished as intelligibly as possible. Skopos theory appears to be such a mechanism with the least problems which possibly the translator confronts in carrying out his tasks particularly when it comes to the translation of technological and religious materials.

Time and again, the findings of translation studies lend great deal of support to the assumption that relying on old approaches might not prove as optimal as one might hope for. According to Venuti, (1998a:1) linguistics-oriented approaches tend to focus on linguistic matters so that 'they remain reluctant to take into account the social values [and ideologies] that enter into translating as well as the study of it'. The findings in translation studies have also underscored the claim that the process of translation is and has always been ideology-driven (see,

Schaffner 2003: p.23). Such a proposition has been underscored by Fawcett who claims, that 'throughout the centuries individuals and institutions applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effect in translation' (ibid, p.107).

The existence of semantic gap that Arabic language is suffering from is due to the lack of specialized bilingual dictionaries which in turns puts great deal of burden on the translator to cope with the infinite influx of technical leaps. Ali Huassanawi (2009) describes the current status of translation as being predominantly transliteration and borrowing. The following examples stand to prove the validity of such a claim and the type of adjustment and modification that the translator needs to make in order to accommodate the target audience's need. The transliterated term "كمبيوتر" has entered the language and is widely circulated even though the translated equivalent "حاسوب" can also be easily recognized by the Arab audience because it is widely marketed. The second example which incline the translator to opt for the transliterated term over its Arabic equivalence is the English term 'domain' where the arabicized term "دومين" has gained more circulation than the translated term "نطاق".

In today's global world we can't afford to pay a great deal of attention to the linguistic code particularly when we know that the relationship between 'the signifier and its signified' object is never fixed and by virtue of people's perception of such linguistic codes vary from one individual to another even in an intra-lingual communication situation. In this vein, the rationale behind the functionalist approach seems to be justified on the ground that what matters in this approach is having the ability to convey the primary point to the target audience as long as the translator maintains the element of adequacy and appropriateness in carrying out his/her task.

Conclusion

This research paper has attempted to underscore the importance of adopting the functionalist approach or skopos theory when dealing with the act of translation or translation equivalence due to various reasons one of which is that there is no genuine translation equivalence in the real sense of the word on account that the meaning of linguistic lexemes is not a stable one and that the perception of the translators vary from one to another based on their background knowledge and competence. It underlies the assumption that relying or adopting 'skopos theory' as a viable translation approach can potentially have many merits in terms of accounting for cross-cultural communication impediments. Skopos theory is audience-centered approach and by virtue of that it mitigates the impact of cultural and ideological constraints which undermine translators and communicators from reaching a real understanding. And finally, the adoption of a functionalist approach (or Skopos theory) to account for the act of translation resulted from the fact that relying on old translation approaches such as "the linguistic equivalence to account for problems encountered by translators and communicators prove counterproductive to the whole process. (see, House, 1977; Baker, 1992; Nida & Taber, 1982).

About the Author:

Dr. Ayman Nazzal: I am an assistant professor of linguistics and speech communication at An-Najah National University on the West Bank in Palestine. I have also taught at Birzeit University for several years. I have published several articles in various journals. At the present time I am the director of the American Resource Center at An-Najah N. University and editor of the American Journal for Research in Science and Education.

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