

Translation as a Three-dimensional Phenomenon: A Proposed Definition

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Abstract

This paper aims at redefining translation and exploring its nature, drawing on translation theories. So, old as well as new perspectives on translation are demonstrated, discussed and accentuated. The current researchers' attempts to define translation as a science, an art, a skill, a process or a product are, thus, concentrated to highlight the tenets of each philosophy. No chronological order is sought, but rather notions are launched as if in a stream of consciousness where each concept triggers the one following it. However, theorists have had no consensus on what translation is, and have given diverse definitions to describe its real nature. A possible compromise among all the perspectives on translation can help to decide what translation is and what its dimensions are. As translation is one of the highly sophisticated activities conducted by man, looking at its different dimensions gives a clearer vision of its nature. It comprises some elements that can be seen as creative (artistic) features and some others as attributes of science. When these are fused together the process which involves cognitive efforts will result in a product that can be perceived and judged differently by different people. Finally, it is hoped that the proposed definition of translation as a three-dimensional phenomenon, and the calls for triangulating research results in translation studies will present a more realistic and comprehensive look at translation.

Keywords: Art, skill, process or product, science, translation

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