

Globalization and translation assignment

Sociology



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GLOBALIZATION AND TRANSLATION GLOBALIZATION AND TRANSLATION Two fundamental features of Globalization are crucial for the overcoming of spatial barriers and for the crossing of knowledge and information, thus resulting in the mobility of people and objects; and a proper contact between different linguistic communities.

Globality is manifested not only in the creation of supra-territorial spaces for finance and banking, commodity production (transnational corporations production chains) and global market, but also in the significance of travel and international movement of people (mass tourism, business travel, migration and exile) and the consolidation of a global communications system: that distributes images and texts to any place in the world. These developments emphasize- in spite of the fact that English is a predominant language on the globe ??? an important growth in the significance of translation, which becomes a key mediator of global communication.

Yet language and translation have been neglected in the current literature on globalization. Globalization is generally associated with the shrinking of our world and the possibility of instant communication across the globe.

Widespread metaphors – like a superhighway which flows with information- creates an image of the world as a network of interconnected places in which space ceases to be significant. This globalization theory focuses on mobility and deterritorialization, trying to obscure the complexities involved in overcoming cultural and linguistic barriers and made the role of translation in global communication invisible.

However, translation is a key process in the development of global connectedness. Therefore it is central for understanding the material conditions that make possible this connectedness and translation has important consequences for the way that globalization is understood today. First, globalization has been defined as ‘ the widening , deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life and is notably not a new phenomenon, but was already present in the world religions and empires of antiquity’ (Susan Basnett 2008: 19).

Moreover, globalizing tendencies are inherent in the development of capitalism, which functions through its geographical expansion; and the nineteenth century was a major period for the development of global connections. While some theorists point to the deep historical roots of globalization and maintain that ‘ different processes of globalization have developed at different times, followed different trajectories and tempos’ (Susan Basnett: 19)it is believed that the origins of contemporary globalization are to be found in the early modern period, when Europe’s political and military expansion took place.

What is new about the present phase of globalization, which Roland Robertson designates as the ‘ uncertainty phase’, starting in the late 1960’s is the intensification of global interconnectedness and of global consciousness. This is generally related to several key developments. The first is the new extreme mobility of capital, associated with the disorder on financial markets and new information technologies which dramatically enhanced the communication capabilities of firms. Second, David Harvey

emphasizes the fall in the cost and time needed to move commodities and people and the overcoming of space as a crucial factor.

The movement of people involves not only highly skilled and unskilled labour, but also holiday travel which has become widespread after the fall in price of train and car travel first, and later of the jet plane. Third, Robertson gives a meaning of global communication and the consolidation of a global media system. Manuel Castells speaks of a communication revolution led by television since the 1960s ??? while in the 1980s and 1990s- two factors contributed to the radical transformation of the global television market.

The first of these is the development of satellite communications, which would make possible instantaneous and simultaneous transmission around the globe 24/7. The second development refers to the global expansion of ownership of television sets which did not become generalized outside the West until the 1980s and 1990s. Today, through the use of fibre optic cable and satellite technology, it is possible to communicate instantly and cheaply with any place and to follow significant world events from our television screens with images and commentary in real time.

These developments have led to the constitution of supra territorial social relations and to the overcoming of spatial boundaries, either virtually in cyberspace or materially through instant communications technology. This supra territorial dimension, which refers to the territorial geography in social relations, is what distinguishes , following Jan Aart Scholte, contemporary globality from earlier periods of globalization in which trans-planetary connections between people were already widespread.

Thus, on the globe, simultaneity and instantly are new features which express that social relations now take place substantially beyond territorial space and distinct from an earlier longer-term trend towards a shrinking world through the development of transportation technology, which still took place within territorial geography. a) THE ANALYTICAL PLACE OF TRANSLATION IN GLOBALIZATION Globalization interpolates elements from distant cultures abstracted from the social contexts in which they have emerged, this creating a fragmented and discontinuous experience.

In this experience of simultaneity of the world's geography an important key is the social relation that obscured translation, which mediates between different linguistic communities. The globalization theory focuses mainly on mobility and flows being compelled to repeat this negation, because the circulation sphere prevents it from being able to deal appropriately with the social processes and relations of production that gives a shape to contemporary globalization.

A notable exception to this is Saskia Sassen's analysis of global cities. Sassen explicitly speaks about the partiality of theories that emphasize the hyper-mobility of capital and information, the capacity for instantaneous transmission around the world rather than the infrastructure it presupposes. For her, 'introducing cities into an analysis of economic globalization allows us to reformulate processes of economic globalization as concrete economic complexes situated in specific places'. Susan: 27) The conception of the global city as a frontier zone, a key place for the articulation of the global and the local, for the organization of the material infrastructures that make globalization possible, introduces an important theoretical move in <https://assignbuster.com/globalization-and-translation-assignment/>

globalization theory. On the overall, Saskia Sassen provides a general framework within which it is possible to theorize basic processes, such as translation, that intervene in the material production of globalization. Translation is a key infrastructure for global communication and can also be conceived as an analytic borderland where the global and the local are articulated and is in cultural globalization, the equivalent of global cities in economic globalization. A characterization of cultural practices as a material production states that translation exposes a fundamental idealism in philosophy by calling attention to the material conditions of concepts, their linguistic and discursive forms, the different meanings and functions they come to possess in different cultural situations. Therefore, translation is considered a material precondition for the circulation of meaning on a global scale.

Only by challenging invisibility, which obscures the social conditions under which translation is performed as well as its role in mediating between cultures, will the mechanisms of cultural globalization be more fully understood. Furthermore, if globalization is defined as increased connectivity it is possible to identify a basic similarity between globalization and translation when we remind ourselves that 'translation is all about making connections, linking one culture and language to another, setting up the conditions for an open-ended exchange of goods, technologies and ideas'(Susan: 28).

An exploration of the processes of global connectivity on a concrete, material level is the fundamental contribution of translation to an understanding of the nature of globalization. b) GLOBALIZATION AS TRANSLATION The
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asymmetries of globalization and the current inequalities in the production of knowledge and information are directly mirrored in translation, and this becomes visible when the directionality of global information flows, starts to be questioned.

Thus, some accounts of globalization have pointed to the number of book translations from English and into English as an indication of the power distribution in global information flows, where those at the core do the transmission and those at the periphery merely receive it. The global dominance of English is expressed in the fact that, in 1981, books originally written in English accounted for 42 per cent of translations worldwide, compared with 13, 5 per cent from Russian and 11, 4 per cent from French.

At the same time, British and American book production is characterized by a low number of translations: 2, 4 per cent of books published in 1990 in Britain and 2, 96 per cent in the United States. On the other hand, globalization has caused an exponential increase of translation. The global dominance of English has been accompanied by a growing demand for translation, as people's own language continues to be the preferred language for access into informational goods.

An area of significant growth in the translation industry in recent decades has been the activity of localization, through which global products are tailored to meet the needs of specific local markets. In an informational economy characterized by instantaneous access to information worldwide, the objective of the localization industry becomes simultaneous availability in all the languages of the product's target markets.

Translation values and strategies in localization and elocalization (website localization) are not uniform but combine elements of domestication to market products that have to appeal to their target buyers, but often retain exciting connections to the language of technological innovation. Similarly, translation plays a central role in negotiating cultural difference and in shaping the dialects between homogeneity and diversity in the production of global news. Esperanca Bielsa and Susan Bassnett- Translation in Global News, published by Routledge, New York, 2008.