



Problems of Cultural Differences and Conceptual Gaps in Conference Interpretation Process Concerning English and Kurdish

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Abstract

The study deals with the conference interpretation process. It tackles cultural and conceptual gaps in the process of interpreting from English to Kurdish and vice versa. The study tackles the interpretation and consecutive interpretation process in the conference and language of media, attempting to determine the strategies that interpreters should follow. Interpretation recently has become one of the most significant required areas in this field of language study. The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1- Do interpreter's backgrounds, knowledge, and viewpoint, and needs have specific significant roles in the quality of interpreting problems?
- 2- Do consecutive interpreters work as cultural mediators?
- 3- How to deal with cultural differences and conceptual gaps?
- 4- Do cultural issues affect the quality of a text and how to solve the problem of interpretation?

Keywords: Translation and interpretation, cultural translation, cultural misunderstanding, conference interpretation, conceptual and cultural gaps, and interpreters are cultural mediators.

Introduction

Translation: there are many definitions of the term translation, taken from a different perspective of many experts in the field, such as *Catford, who defines translation as replacing textual materials in one language (SL) with equivalent textual materials in another language (TL).* (Catford.1965, P.20). The translator deals with two different texts in two different languages. His mission is to find an exact replacement somehow of the original text to the target text that holds the exact or close meaning and structure in the target language. The process of rendering a text is not an easy one. However, it requires specific skills and knowledge from the translator to practice such a task. The world replacement indicates all levels of the text from Word to sentence. The translation is a not new task; it occurs wherever humans live and interact with each other. There are many types of translation.

Methodology Tools used in the research

The tools used are; conference interpretation tasks in actual formal settings, meetings, and TV interviews from English to Kurdish and vice versa.

Interpretation: *interpretation means explaining or understanding something. It may also mean the oral translation of a speech (e.g., conference interpretation) and re-expressing it in a form that will make it understandable to people from another culture. The sense of interpretation as it used to depend on the context of the situation. i.e., it is context-bound, but it should be not that the term used to in its negative or positive connotation of distortion.* (Al-Sulaimaan. 2016, P. 259).

Interpreting is the most challenging task; it requires high skill, memorizing what has said, and rendering it in another language. Interpreting is an embarrassing task as the interpreters do not



have enough time to think about the text and write the translation because it should take place immediately. Interpreters cannot do their job if they do not understand the whole speech. Without understanding the message of the speech, they cannot do the task of interpretation. Dealing with two languages and two thoughts from a different culture is not an easy thing to do. However, with practice and experience, interpreters will gain skills and practical experience. As speaking comes before writing, people thought interpreting comes before translation. In early life, when people interact for many reasons like trade or agriculture, people were working there and having contact with more than one language and culture. They practice to manage the language of both and try to interpret. There are many types of interpretations.

Conference interpretation

There are two types of conference interpretation; simultaneous conference interpretation and consecutive conference interpretation. Consecutive interpretation comes before simultaneous interpretation because of the lack of having enough equipment for the second. Conference interpretation might be used for the political session and business meetings, seminars, lectures, medical conferences.

Interpreters usually stay at booths to hear the conversation and the talk through a microphone and write their notes and render it into another language. *Usually, this occurs in a specially designed booth. The interpreter listens to discourse through earphones and renders his translation by speaking into a microphone as the input discourse proceeds. (Al-Sulaimaan. 2016, P.257).*

Indeed, translators and interpreters should be more careful and adequate about using their words, terminology, and equivalent. They also need to concentrate, have a good memory, have a pleasant voice, and have an adequate general education level.

Culture

Is the way of life and its manifestations peculiar to a community that uses a particular language to express? More specifically, I am a distinguished culture from (universal) and (personal) language. (Die), (live), (star), (swim), and almost virtually ubiquitous art facts like (mirror) and (table) are universals- usually, there is no translation problem there. (Monsoon), (steppe), (dacha), (tagliatelle) are cultural words- there will be a translation problem. (Newmark. 1988, P. 94). Culture is the lifestyle of communities that lives with each other's and shares the same moral ethics and habit. While translating some words and expressions is related to one language, the translator will find difficulties translating it. These words would be terminology, general name, ecology (geographical features), and some words and expressions. The translator must have information about many cultures or at least two culture; for example, in Kurdish society, we have faience and wife, but we do not have girlfriend, such a relationship in our society is not common and very strange, here the translator should paraphrase or explain it to the audiences, even with close Kurdish equivalence that refers to the exact meaning.

Conference interpretation *Interpretation is a concept that refers to the oral translation of a spoken message or text. Usually, it depends on the interpretation of the text or messages. (Al-Sulaiman. 2016, P. 263).*

Interpretation is an old activity; no one knows the interpretation date because there is no exact documentation to improve it. Hence speaking precedes writing, interpreting also precedes translation. This concept means oral translation. That oral translation requires no writing, only speaking. Sometimes, the interpreter takes notes such as; numbers, dates, names, and others. The interpretation has many types; conference interpretation is one of the essential types of interpretation. It usually occurs during conferences and meetings. The interpreting process



developed over the years. *According to (Bennett. 1986, P.56), individuals have the opportunity to progress towards the ethno relative stages*

It is of different fields and types; conference interpretation, liaison interpretation, court interpretation, and consecutive interpretation depend mostly on the verbal message. Interpretation is a complex practice requiring the interpreter to understand, analyze, and interpret spoken utterance fully. The interpreter renders the message into another language after processing this information. It is useful to understand the modes of interpreting, the areas of interpreting, and some of the required qualifications in the process of interpreting.

Cultural awareness n interpretation

Culture consists of the derivation of experience, more or less organized, learned, or created by a population's individuals. These images or encoders and their interpretations (meaning) are transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals. (T. Schwartz 1992; cited by Avruch. 1998, P. 17).

Almost every group of people belongs to a particular society that shares the same cultural behavior either learned from other communities or culture or created by a group of people and individuals passed from one generation to another. When people from different cultures communicate and interact with each other differently, they will face many issues and difficulties in understanding and interpreting. Understanding a language requires knowledge about the culture; when cultures are different, one will face difficulties in dealing with the target language. Such differences exist in every language, such as the place of silence, tone of voice, the appropriate topic of conversation, and expression as speech act function (e.g.: apologies, suggestion, completions, refusal), which refers to the reality that language is part of the culture and culture is a part of the language. Cultural differences should be restricted by cultural awareness in many ways. Before shading lights on the cross-culture differences, one should talk about each. Kurdish society is mostly Islamic society. Many other religions and nations live together in peace, sharing the same culture and manner of life. Geographically, such a mountainous area known as Kurdistan is located in the southern part of the turkey, north-western Iran, northern Iraq, northern Syria, and many other countries and cities worldwide. Kurds speak the Kurdish languages and the Zaza-Gorani languages, which belong to the Indo-European family's western Iranian languages branch. Although most Kurds belong to the Shafie school of Sunni Islam, significant numbers practice Shia Islam. At the same time, some are adherents of Yarsanism, Yazidism Zoroastrianism, and Christianity. Most Kurds are either bilingual or multilingual, speaking the language of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. The majority of Kurdish people are Muslims and lived for many years under the system of other communities and countries; they saw many wars and still under the same ideas. *Culture is seen as something much less stable or homogenous than in the concepts proposed by others. Our idea of culture focuses less on patterning and more on social and cognitive processing than older ideas of culture do. (Spencer. 2012, P.33).*

The Sever treaty in 1920 created the modern states of Iraq, Syria, and Kuwait. It included the possibility of a Kurdish state in the region. However, after the overthrow of the Turkish monarchy by Kemal Ataturk, Turkey, Iran, and Iraq each agreed not to recognize an independent Kurdish state. The forbidden their language, traditions, and culture, they try to melt their culture within Arabic, Turkish, and Iranian cultures. The Kurdish issue remained the same even worse until April 1991 as coalition forces announce the creation of (non-fly zone) on the border's Iraqi side. International aids agencies launch a massive aid operation to help refugees. Peshmarga took control over three provincial (Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaimanya). An election held in Kurdistan; Kurds had a parliament and government; they start teaching the Kurdish language and manner their issues and enrich their culture. Simultaneously, the English language is a West Germanic language that was first spoken in England and eventually became a global language. After the angels, one of the Germanic tribes that



migrated to Great Britain that took their name, the language is closely related to Frisian and low Saxon. Another Germanic language has significantly influenced its vocabulary. English has developed over more than 1,400 years. Through the British Empire and the United States' worldwide influence, modern English has been spreading worldwide since the 17th century. English has become a leading language of international discourse through all printed and electronic media types and spurred by the United States' emergence as a global superpower. English is the largest language by the number of speakers and the third most spoken language after standard Chinese and Spanish. More people have learned it as a second language though there are native speakers. English is an Indo-European language and belongs to the West Germanic group of the Germanic language. By the 18th century, the British Empire had spread English through its colonies. Geopolitical dominance, commerce, science and technology, diplomacy, art, and formal education contributed to English becoming the first truly global language. It also facilitated worldwide international communication. England continued to form new colonies. English was adopted in parts of these colonies but then developed, especially those who obtained political independence. They opted to continue using English as the official language to avoid political and other difficulties promoting the local languages. In the 20th century, the United States' growing economic and cultural influence and its status as a superpower following the Second World War and English broadcasting caused the language to spread across the planet much faster. In the 21st century, English is more widely spoken and written than any language has ever been. English has ceased to be the English language in the sense of belonging only to ethnically English people. The use of English is growing country by country, internally and for international communication. After decolonizing the British Empire in the 1950s and 1960s, former colonies did not reject the English language. In some of these countries, they continued to use it for different reasons, such as India's economic reasons. Christianity became the dominant religion in England in the 17th century.

Interpreters as Cultural Mediators

Perfect interpretation is complicated to take because interpreters should convert verbal communications, body gestures. Time, space, and silence within the interpretation differ from one culture to another. Cultures are different from each other's interpreting in terms of transferring verbal messages or written messages from one language to another, considered the oldest activity globally. Although interpreting as a profession is somehow modern, recently, scholars worldwide researched it. During the process of moderating translation and interpretation, many definitions have been made. The mission of interpreters and translators changed from converting words into messages then into cultural interpreting. That is means translation and interpretations go forward towards intercultural awareness and mediation. Everyone thinks that their culture is the best, and it should regard as a model for the rest of the world. Many people feel proud of their culture and never want to abound it. Also, sometimes they see that other cultures are old and poor or lower and urbane.

It shows an individual ability to learn different attitudes and languages or cultures. People are sensitive to each other. Although they are not the same as it differs from one person to another, people respond to other cultures. However, as a part of human's nature, people are sensitive towards each other's interact and respond to others, so the sensitivity is human being attitude towards each other. Once one observes a community, they can notice the interaction among their members and their sensitivity. For example, in accommodation or an apartment for students from the other country or the same country but other states or cities, they will learn the new city's new life. They will interact and be involved in many situations and ceremony, which includes talking. Cultural activities and others, therefore new students learn how to interact and communicate. Eventually, one can notice the students' differences with their fellow citizens when they go back home.



(Catford. 1965, P.94) points out the distinction between linguistic and cultural un-translatability. He was focusing on the question of what is un-translatable. He argues that linguistic un-translatability occurs when there is no lexical or syntactical equivalent in the TL. Cultural un-translatability, he saw as more complex and loosely formulated. Sometimes it is culturally un-translatable when there is no equivalent situational feature in the source language.

That means that Catford thinks differently about translation. He never depends only on the meaning of the words but also goes to the details to find an equivalent to the cultural words. He changed the focus on translation from a linguistic act into a cultural act. In a globalized world with more interaction and communication, translation has turned into a challenging and ambiguous job because some translation problems are related to the culture. There are some vocabularies or terms that is untranslatable because it cannot found in the TL. Translators and interpreters play the mediator's role. They bring two cultures and try to achieve a better sense of understanding.

Katan said that a cultural mediator facilitates communication, understanding, and action between persons or groups who differ concerning language and culture (Katan. 2014, P. 17).

The interpretation role is to communicate between two different languages and two different cultures, which is the same role as mediator. It shows from the above definition that the mediator's role is to facilitate communication, understanding, and interaction between persons and groups. To facilitate communication is to make it easier and let the understanding happened. The translator's mission is to work effectively as a mediator between cultures. The translators and the mediator's role in cultural translation expected to go beyond words meaning. They should understand two cultures and become an excellent bilingual person to make better and sufficient understanding.

The Role of Conference Interpretation in Bridging Gaps

Concept words: these words have different emphases in a different community (liberalism, liberty, obedience, bureaucracy) (Newmark. 1988, P. 89).

Concept words are general ideas of something that happened in one country then become a path to others like democracy. Even these concepts are not the same from one country to another. For example, in some countries, they think that the parliamentary system is the best way to apply democracy other than a said presidential one. So the concepts are racial and depend on peoples understating of the concept.

The conference interpreter's role is to transfer the message from the source language into the target language and make the understanding happen as they are doing the mediator's role. Interpreters mediate between the speaker of the conference and the audience, which is quite a difficult job. As people communicate, they also share ideas and thoughts. Ideas and thoughts are releases through languages. Different people from different nationalities communicate with each other, so interpreting spread worldwide widely facilitates this communication. Interpreters are performing an important task. They facilitate the process of communication. Things change in roughness in our area, so we need to do things shortly and quickly to follow globalization.

Hen's simultaneous interpretation is one type of interpreting used in conferences and meetings and for those who widely deliver a speech. Of course, it is not easy to fulfill. Interpreters face many complications and problems of many types. However, studying and figuring out these problems also mastering them, and training helps to facilitate this process. By attending meetings, seminars, public speaking, and updating our information in many fields, one can overcome these problems by practicing repeatedly; imagine the world without translation or interpretation. No one could understand what others are talking about in different sessions and conferences. It would also take more time and effort to learn more than three languages. Especially for people who do not have time to learn a new language or



cannot learn or do not earn enough money to have courses and books to study. Interpreters play a role in connecting people from different nationalities and regions and try very hard to find replacements and synonyms all the time. Conceptual gaps and cultural differences among languages create gaps in understanding, research, and practicing in this field. They pointed out these differences and dealt with them to find a better solution. The interpreter's role is very critical because most of these meetings are very important. So the interpreter is working as a mediator that brings together two different cultures and brigading them together and lets the connection and the understandings occur.

Mediation is a process in which an impartial third party- a mediator- facilitates the resolution of a dispute by promoting voluntary agreement (or self-determination) by the parties to the dispute. A mediator facilitates communication, promotes understanding, focuses the parties on their interests, and seeks creative problem solving to enable the parties to reach their agreement. These standards give meaning to this definition of mediation Sridhar, Chen, Bangalore. 2013, P. 22)

Suppose one imagines the interpreter as a third party who does not have any opinion or idea. In that case, he or she is transferring the speak from one language to another. As a mediator, his role makes him have a mutual position without having any feelings or emotions to be added. Each speaker represents their language, and the interpreter tries to save both languages' interest by being mutual. He solves problems of understanding and communications.

Conclusion

One can observe:

1. The English language is a dominant language; it is a language used in many countries superpowers of Great Britain and the United States that have power over many countries. It is the language of one of the world is ever power pole that has a strategy for many countries and regions. Simultaneously, the Kurdish language is the Kurdish nation's language that lived in a challenging era and was always under the ambition of countries divided (Iraq, Iran, Syria, and turkey). As a strong reason for its weakness and threaten to be lost or forgotten.
2. The United States and Great Britain have the most robust economy globally, so people need to learn it for economic reasons and because English has become a common language. At the same time, Kurdistan shares the same economy as Iraq. It needs help from many aspects, especially from the United States and European countries. It made them need to learn the English language to transfer the Kurdish image and issue to the world.
3. Christianity is the most dominant religion in England and the United States. In contrast, the Islamic religion is the most followed in Kurdistan. As we know, both religions are God sending one. However, there is diffidently many difference between them.
4. Due to the English Language's importance internally and internationally, English goes through many steps and forms until it reaches its modern version. Many studies in the different fields occur, for example, in (scientific, education, agriculture, medicine, media, theatre). Moreover, spread worldwide even translated into many languages, which helps develop the English language and spread it worldwide. However, the Kurdish language was a forbidden language in the four major countries, which was a good factor that the language did not change. Some of the literature text has lost for political reason. The less using of Kurdish language make more threat about its existence as UN last report declare this fact. However, after the uprising of Kurdish in the north of Iraq in 1991, the Kurdistan region government gives the Kurdish language a great interest. It becomes officially used in all aspects of life. In 2005, after shutting down the Saddam regime, the Kurdish language and the Arabic language became official languages, according to the Iraqi institution. One can observe the period of using the Kurdish language and compare it with using the English language.



5. Suppose one compares Britain's position and Kurdish position politically. In that case, Britain is and was in a leading position, especially when they add many colonies into Great Britain. That enriches the country and spread the language all over the colonies. However, the Kurdish language goes through difficult times, many wars, and genocides. It was sometimes formal language for small territories and for a definite time under depression.

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كيشه جياوازي كهلتور و دهسته واژه كان له وره گيرانى راسته وخۆ دا له نيوان زمانى ئينگليزى و زمانى كوردى

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پوخته

ئەم ليكۆلينيە هويه له بارهى پرۆسهى بهرپوه چوونى وەرگيرانى كۆنفرانسە كانە و تيدا هەولى چارەسەر كردنى جياوازيه كانى كهلتور و دهسته واژه دەدات له كاتى وەرگيران له زمانى ئينگليزى بۆ كوردى و پيچەوانە كەى. و ليكۆلينيە وهكه له بارهى وەرگيرانى راسته وخۆ و وەرگيرانى يەك له دواى يەكە بۆ كۆنفرانسە كان و زمانى راگەياندن وەكو هەوليك لەم دۆزینە وهى ئستراتيجيك كه وەرگير به كار ييهيتى له كارە كەى.
لەم دوايه دا، وەرگيران بوو به گردگترين بواره كانى پتويست به ليكۆلينيە وه له بارهى زمان، و ليكۆلينيە وه كه كار دەكات بۆ وەلامدانە وهى ئەم پرسيارانه:
1- ئايه باك گراوندى كهلتورى و بىرو را و پيداوستيه كانى وەرگير كار يگەرى دەبيت له سەر جوړى كيشه كانى وەرگيران ؟
2- ئايه وەرگيرى يەك له دواى يەك وەكو مامە لەى نيوندگيرى كهلتورى له گەل دەرئ؟
3- چۆن مامە له بكرپت له گەل جياوازي كهلتور و دهسته واژهى زمانه وانى؟
4- ئايه كيشه جياوازي كهلتور كار يگەرى دەبيت له سەر جوړى دهقه كه و چۆن كيشه وەرگير چارەسەر بكەين؟

ووشه سەر هه كيه كان: وەرگيران و وەرگيرانى راسته وخۆ ، وەرگيرانى كهلتورى، هەلە تەگەيشتنى كهلتورى، وەرگيرانى كۆنفرانسە كان، جياوازي كهلتور و دهسته واژه كان، وەرگيرى وەكو ناوبژيوانى كهلتورى.

مشاكل الاختلاف في الثقافة و المفاهيم في الترجمة الفورية لللغتين الانجليزية و العربية

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ملخص

تتضمن الدراسة مشروع ترجمة المؤتمرات و يعالج البحث مشاكل الاختلاف في الثقافات و المفاهيم خلال عملية الترجمة من اللغة الانجليزية الى اللغة العربي و بالعكس. الدراسة تعتمد الترجمة الفورية و الترجمة الفورية التعاقبية للمؤتمرات ولغة الاعلام محاولا ايجاد استراتيجية معينة يعتمد المترجم في عملة.

باتت الترجمة مؤخر وة احد اهم المجالات المطلوبة في دراسة اللغة. تعمل الدراسة على ايجاد اجوبة للائلة التالية:

- 1- هل خلفية و ثقافة و وجة نظر و متطلبات المترجم يؤثر على نوعية مشاكل الترجمة؟
- 2- هل يعتبر المترجم المتابع وسيط ثقافي؟
- 3- كيف تتعامل مع الفروق الثقافية و اختلاف المفاهيم؟
- 4- هل مشاكل الاختلافات الثقافية يؤثر على نوعية النص و كيف نحل مشكلة المترجم؟

الكلمات الرئيسية

الترجمة و الترجمة الفورية، الترجمة الثقافية، سوء الفهم الثقافي، ترجمة المؤتمرات، الاختلافات في الثقافة و المفاهيم، المترجم كوسيط ثقافي.