



Ethics of Translation and Journalism: Truth, Accuracy and Cultural Sensitivity in Media Communication

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1. Abstract:

There is a growing inclination towards the hybrid fields of translation studies and journalism practices as a space where journalism and translation coexist, or as a hybrid arena of textual production through translation. Because of the significant influence of media, journalistic translation has been viewed as a subfield research of translation studies. This is reflected in the use of terms such as transediting (i.e. translation and editing), news translation, journalistic translation and journalistic translation research, and journalator (i.e. journalist-translator). This perception can be understood in the broader context of how translation studies, several decades after its formal establishment in the second half of the 20th century, opened up to interdisciplinary research studies, and of the attempts to extend this scope to include contemporary media and communication studies by integrating the unique aspects of translating and utilizing proper methodologies. The application of this interdisciplinary framework requires ethical commitments covering journalism and translation professional frameworks.

Keywords: ethics, translation, journalism, media communication, truth, accuracy, cultural sensitivity,

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2. Ethical Principles of Translation and Journalism

Theoretically and historically, as well as in terms of how they have developed within the field of translation studies, there are several noteworthy synergies between journalistic ethics and translation ethics.

Accuracy, faithfulness, fidelity, loyalty, and, most importantly, impartiality are concepts that have long been considered ethical requirements for translating practice (Koskinen and Pokorn, 2021: 112).

These ideas are similar to those found in journalistic ethics on truth, objectivity, impartiality, neutrality, and fairness. Fairness (in the creation of news) also offers a parallel to the pursuit of justice, an idea that has dominated translation studies, particularly since the start of sociological movement during 21st century. The expansion of interpreters and translators' roles in media and communications at large is the expression of this movement. These concepts are related in that they suggest an endeavor to attain a kind of invariance to the source material, particularly with regard to truth and objectivity (in journalism studies) and fidelity or faithfulness (in translation studies) (Floros, 2012: 251).

Ethical standards in both translation and journalism are necessary for integration, accuracy, and truthfulness in communication, media, and journalism. Despite the fact that these two areas work in distinct environments, experts in both follow fundamental ethical principles. These guidelines guarantee that the material is accurate and benefits community welfare. Floros (2012: 924) examines news translation scenarios where changes are made because of ideologically competing discourses by utilizing the idea of ethical relativity, which is the fluctuation of ethical grounding in translation as a result of subjective values and norms. He comes to the conclusion that the subjectivity of the standards controlling the majority of the profession (journalistic norms) pushes ethical thresholds to relatively low bounds in the case of news translation.

2.1 Core Principles of Journalism Ethics:

Journalism ethics encompasses the core principles of journalism ethics, which are the fundamental rules that journalists use to guarantee that their work is truthful, impartial, and serves the public interest. These guidelines are



intended to uphold the profession's ethics and foster audience trust (Flore, 2022: 254). Below is a thorough summary of these fundamental ideas:

1. Truthfulness and Accuracy Framework:

The truth and accuracy of the topic they report is a top priority for journalists. This calls for careful fact-checking, source verification, and an ethical commitment to provide the facts honestly and accurately. If errors happen, they should be fixed right away. Clear and accurate communication of information is used to prevent misunderstandings by the audience. The objective of journalists is to eliminate any doubt and give the public sufficient background information to comprehend the facts. To illustrate his concept of pragmatic objectivity - a re-establishment of objectivity in news production and presentation methods, not in the sense of absence of personal opinion, i.e., impartiality and/or neutrality.

Ward (2009: 72) provides an overview of the various methods in which truth and accuracy have been understood since the 19th century, while Zelizer & Stuart (2010: 162) specify the ultimate goal to maintain truth as fidelity with the real world.

2. Objective Views

In the media, journalists report on stories and facts without regard to organizational or personal prejudice. This entails presenting news in an impartial manner, taking into account all pertinent points of view, and refraining from advancing any one agenda. Even though total impartiality could be difficult to attain, reporters should make an effort to keep their own beliefs out of their reporting. When it comes to media coverage, objectivity is avoiding editorializing and speculating in favor of factual information. Similarly, considering different notions of peace and otherness, the application to journalistic practice has resulted from the definition of journalism as serving a higher, common good and speaking otherness (Atay 2016: 24; Lee, 2019: 167). In journalistic ethics, conflicts occur from the endeavor to balance general ethical imperatives, including impartiality, with the expression of judgment and opinions, which translators are somewhat denied of. Journalists view editing as an objective representation of their function. According to Zelizer & Allan (2010: 63), ethics of professional



responsibilities of editors primarily entail reporting, language style, analysis, narrative, and judgment.

3. Independence:

It is the responsibility of journalists to deliver a fair and impartial portrayal of all sides of a story, guaranteeing that many viewpoints are heard. This entails looking for a variety of sources and preventing any group from being marginalized. Because of their independence, they are able to report on events without fear or favor, ensuring that the public interest is served by their work rather than that of private interests. Conflicts of interest that can taint journalists' objectivity and career should be avoided. Avoiding circumstances where their reporting could be influenced by financial interests, personal ties, or other variables is part of this. Journalists are accountable for their work, so they should be open to answering questions about it. This entails owning up to errors, fixing them quickly, and being open and honest about the procedures followed in the collection and reporting of data. It is the responsibility of journalists to accurately report the facts, and it is the duty of translators to accurately reflect the original text they are translating.

Furthermore, because of particular practice contexts, particularly those involving conflict and conflict mediation, the majority of the ethical requirements in translation studies have also been contested and reexamined (Baker, 2006: 61). Theoretical perspectives of the nature of the mediation offered by translators and interpreters are first introduced by Inghilleri (2012: 55). There are already many similarities between current journalistic ethical issues and ethics in other fields and domains. Borden & Bowers (2009: 353) outline several significant ethical conflicts that media and other professions have in a genuinely cross-disciplinary piece.

4. Ethical Decision-Making:

Journalists make moral decisions, especially in difficult situations when the best course of action might not always be obvious. This frequently entails looking up ethical standards, getting input from colleagues, and thinking about the bigger picture of their work. It becomes clear that the ethics guiding both translation studies and journalism studies are rather ambiguous in their epistemic character. This is another notable resemblance between the two fields of study. This means that approaches based on virtue ethics, which seek



to determine what is right or wrong, coexist with consequentialist ethical approaches in both domains. The former seeks to assist in weighing decisions based on the potential benefits or damages to the professionals themselves or their organizations (Borden & Bowers, 2009: 354).

2.2 Core Principles of Translation Ethics

In much of the work on news translation to date, the topic of translation ethics has been covered, if not overtly. The majority of research works that look at local or global news translation situations (Valdeón, 2015: 552). Significant textual changes, such as domestication processes, textual modifications, interlingual transformations, choices, strategies, translation shifts, complex processes of change, etc., are highlighted by Matsushita (2019: 13). These changes are made by journalists and journalators without being explicitly framed by theoretical accounts of translation ethics, even though they are ethical issues of the highest caliber. A few methods specifically include translation ethics theories to raise ethical concerns about these changes (Flore, 2022: 256). Translators use translation ethics as a set of guidelines to make sure their work is correct, equitable, and considerate to all stakeholders. These guidelines aid in preserving the integrity of the translation process by guaranteeing that the result is morally and culturally sound in addition to being accurate to the original material. Expanding the definition of translation ethics to clearly incorporate concerns about institutional and national translation policy is another kind of compromise that translation studies must make. Examining procedures and crucial subjects like gatekeeping and newsworthiness in journalism may be greatly aided by researching how translation policies are developed and run from an ethical standpoint (Flores, 2022: 257). The following is a thorough summary of the fundamentals of translation ethics:

1. Accuracy and Fidelity

It denotes adherence to the source material. The goal of translators is to faithfully capture the meaning, tone, and style. This entails maintaining the style while avoiding changing the original text or adding personal interpretations that might distort its meaning. It is possible that the translation will need to be exact, employing language and terminology that appropriately represent the original text. Translators have to be careful not to include



anything that might mislead the audience. Translational work involves filtering, altering, adapting, and audience-orienting. Given that quote marks are meant to indicate complete truth and faithfulness, it is not by accident that translators do not include their translations in them (Floros, 2022: 251).

2. Confidentiality:

Translators frequently deal with private documents, including corporate, legal, and report formats. They have an ethical duty to safeguard their clients' privacy and the confidentiality of the data they manage. Translators should only divulge information to those who are authorized to receive it from the texts they translate. This involves making certain that both paper and digital copies of documents are kept in a safe location. Taking a slightly different tack, Matsushita (2019) investigates pure cases of translation in journalistic work by concentrating on direct quotations, as these maintain the pre-existence of a source text and permit translational analysis in the conventional sense (Floros, 2021: 253), in contrast to hybrid instances that cast doubt on the idea of a source text in news translation.

3. Respect for Cultural Differences:

The cultural distinctions between the source and destination languages should be recognized and respected by translators. This entails being aware of and communicating idioms, cultural allusions, and context-specific scenarios effectively. Translators may need to modify some ethical criteria while translating culturally sensitive content in order to preserve the original meaning and intent while making the translation intelligible or acceptable in the target culture. The ethical aspect of translation as it relates to news creation is frequently discussed, either explicitly or implicitly, but more typically in terms of journalistic ethics, reporting ethics, or media ethics in general. Van Doorslaer (2010:182), Baumann, et al. are illustrative instances of this more comprehensive perspective on the moral dilemmas surrounding translation in news creation (2011: 135). Thus, one crucial topic to consider when thinking about the role of translation ethics in news translation is how experts and scholars in the fields of translation studies and journalism studies understand ethical dilemmas. Even a basic comparison of the two appears to add



something to the conversation about the role of translation in journalism as well as the ethics of translating texts (Chen, 2011: 119).

4. Technological Proficiency:

It is the duty of translators to employ AI toolkits and CAT (Computer-Assisted Translation) technologies in an ethical and efficient manner. This entails being aware of the strengths and weaknesses of these instruments and making sure that their usage does not jeopardize the accuracy or privacy of the translation. Translators should always be learning how to use new software and technologies as they become available so that they can integrate them into their workflow in a way that improves, not lowers, the precision and caliber of their translations. While access to previously unheard-of volumes of news products and their translations is now possible because of digital and cloud technology, the amount of material from AVT's pre-digital era is still restricted. One of the primary obstacles to study is access to TV shows. While translators wonder how much automation and artificial intelligence (AI) will change their field, educators might justifiably wonder if it would be possible to diversify ethical curricula even more than in the past by enhancing students' skills in project management, revision, and post-editing in addition to teaching them how to use these new technologies. It may be necessary to partially rethink training for the translation curriculum to include ethical profiles that could potentially work more upstream in journalism production and media in an increasingly globalized world where translation ethics appear to be part of more centralized localization strategies and practices (Bucaria, 2021: 321).

2.3 On the synergy between translation and journalism

Translation and journalism have long been seen to share many similarities. Since editing and translation are so closely related that it can be difficult to distinguish between the two, news translation is a hybrid activity in international news creation. Furthermore, there are a lot of ethical parallels between translation and journalism—even when it comes to producing news in a single language. As a result, it is unexpected that journalists do not acknowledge translation as a standard component of news creation, as was said in the overview. The remarkably comparable ethical frameworks used in journalism studies and translation studies suggest that journalists may believe



their own ethical reflections are sufficiently comprehensive to include their own area. To put it another way, journalists can think that journalism ethics already include translation ethics (Floros 2021: 256). Journalists may feel less attached to a source text than translators do, and they may view translation as just one of many techniques used in news production rather than holding a more prominent position, due to the breadth of ethical concepts used in journalism and the significant differences between translation and journalism regarding the standing and function of opinion. Consequently, there is room for a synergy between translation studies and journalism studies as disciplines, not only as practical endeavors, exactly in their divergent ethical perspectives. Stated differently, given that these two activities are not the same, the two disciplines may converge at the theoretical level rather than at the level of their practical parallels. Here, synergy is purposefully chosen over hybridity because it suggests the convergence of disparate activity rather than the combining of related endeavors to coexist in a certain domain. How precisely translation studies and journalism studies may collaborate conceptually is an intriguing subject. According to Pym (2018: 204) words, translation studies must become more inclusive in order to place "translation (also) at the exporting end," by teaching professionals from other fields how to translate more effectively and providing a framework for how translation studies may inform other disciplines in terms of ethical standards (Floros 2021: 246). For example, the TOLC (Translation in Other Learning Contexts) framework is now being used to study pedagogical translation. This contributes to the creation of new ethical norms. According to Floros (2021: 246), the acronym TOPC (Translation in Other Professional Contexts) was coined to justify ethical training because the spectrum of fields that translation studies may inform is growing. Recognizing that non-professional translators can also work in other professions, we should make an effort to connect with them by understanding their unique goals and adapting conventional translation studies concepts to meet their unique requirements (Baker, 2019: 247). The concession made by journalism studies is to recognize that translation is a rich and sensitive activity that goes beyond translation itself and is subject to complex ethical criteria. With today's sophisticated toolkit of functional and other theories, translating is more than just extracting correspondences.



Translation, then, ought to be viewed by journalism as an activity that, within a professional-sociological framework, resembles journalism rather than diverges from it. According to Valdeón (2018: 254), there is evident common ground worth pursuing, such as multidisciplinary initiatives, and communication experts are obviously interested in translation as an essential component of the news creation process. Lastly, Lee's study (2019: 166) demonstrates experimentally which standards are more helpful in encouraging moral behavior in journalism, and this type of research is also necessary for translation studies. An essential consideration that affects how newsrooms may operate more effectively and efficiently is the applicability of standards. However, as previously said, this matter might also be crucial for improving the efficiency of translators' jobs. Translators seldom experience this kind of collectivity, in contrast to journalists who work in newsrooms and may benefit from peer observation and engagement. Thus, the challenge facing translation studies is not only to explore at the theoretical level the kinds of norms that encourage moral behavior in translation, but also to devise strategies for fostering these kinds of advantageous norms among translators in the actual world, who typically operate alone. Actively debating and shaping professional rules of practice and ethics is one strategy to promote positive norms.

Conclusions

Even while there are many similarities between journalism studies and translation studies, such as their shared interest in mediation, their ethical frameworks show notable distinctions that border ontology. These distinctions, however, are insufficient to separate them because, in reality, they collaborate in clear and nuanced ways that appear to foster a conceptual synergy as well, at least in the context of news translation. The following points can be used to describe conclusions:

1. Journalism and translation depend on accuracy and truth. In media communication, journalists and translators work together to ensure that information is reported accurately and without bias.
2. Journalism and translation require cultural differences to function properly. Misrepresentation or misinterpretation has the potential to cause misunderstanding, offense, or conflict.



3. Translators and journalists are faced with ethical challenges when trying to balance the need for impartiality with sensitivity.
4. Journalists and translators are now more accountable for their actions in the context of digital media in a global society.
5. Constant learning and adaptation to meet new obstacles in media communication is necessary to be accountable on social media and online platforms through online news and social media.

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