



TRANSLATION IN THE AGE OF COMPUTER

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Abstract

The present study is devoted to the scope of language translation in modern and especially in the technologically rich and varied world. It encompasses the history of the manual as well as translation technology. It surveys the limitations and merits of the two methods. What is the importance of translation in the modern world? Whether its importance is declining or increasing? It concludes in the line of due importance and having its need is still in vogue as the world coming near and near due to spread of internet and fast logistic facility.

Keywords-*Translation, Translation Technology, Machine Translation, Manual Translation, Computer Assisted Translation.*

Introduction

Translation is the quite essence of human beings all over the world as no two person belongs to the same lingual community and there must be quite essence of interaction between them to share any issue, feelings, or thoughts. Even it is essential as more than 7000 languages are spoken all over the world. In India 700+ languages are spoken. Though the world had become a global village, the need of language and spread of communication has increased widely. To fulfil this requirement in the past certain Dubhashis (translators) were there in the court of kings in India as well in the globe. They used to make the communication possible between the foreigners and the native people. Too many hardships they headed and came over the challenges. Though it was too hard but not totally impossible. The numbers of such translators were very few and even not too much needed as the business was not at high and even logistic system was too slow and tedious. People used to live happily in their village, and they (people of villages) were independent. History tells us that there was too much problem aroused even in the 15th and 16th century to communicate with the French, Dutch and English people as



they want to establish themselves as merchants. Due to such miscommunication several deaths also took place. It means that translation was need of the past.

Definition of Translation

Translation has been defined by various scholars and practitioners. One of the significant scholars in this context Peter Newmark, British translation theorist, in Approaches to Translation (1981) rightly states that “translation is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the writer intended the text.” (5) Another significant scholars Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday in their well-known book Translation An advanced resource book for students (2019) define translation as “the process of transferring a written text from source language to target language.” (6)

Translation Technology and Its History

The translation technology historically takes us to the 9th century backward when Arabic Cryptographer named Al-Kindi evolved the method of frequency analysis which is used even today. But it really took shape after the emergence of computers. In the modern era in 1950 Georgetown University and IBM prepared the world’s first Machine Translation System. But it was preplanned and programmed on the set rules and dictionary. Unfortunately, this first attempt proved unreliable and was quite slow. Still, it paved the way for future evolution and worked as a stepping stone for coming advanced technology. Next to this United States department of Défense and Défense Advanced Research Project Agency started developing speech recognition technology which evolved the voice to text technologies. In 1980s the electronic dictionaries and terminological databases was another major turning point. Later on in the 1990’s the IBM researchers introduced Statistical Machine Translation (SMT). In these systems were given training to translate one language into another by with the comparison to the most used similar text in both languages.

Most important thing and the computer evolution took place in the 1990’s and milestone in the field of translation technology took place i.e. CAT Computer Assisted translation which transformed the whole panorama and enabled a whole new generation of translators to work effectively and efficiently. In late 1990’s IBM initiated Statistical Translation Engine. It was time phrase based and not word based. It survived till the 2006 whenever Google’s Neural



Machine Translation (NMT) appeared in the field. TMS solution appeared then into the global market with more flexibility and collaboratively with other companies. 2006 proved milestone when Google launched Google Translate, which was statistical and was vaguely welcomed and accepted. It translated the input content into the English and use predictive text i.e. it can guess what would be the next word. In 2016 Google introduced Neural Machine Translation (NMT) which made CAT Tools outdated and established new commercial standards. It was an artificial neural network to increase fluency and accuracy in Google Translate. Nowadays it is used widely in the globe.

Limitations of Google or Machine Translation

Most important thing is that the meaning can be lost in translation as there is no way to incorporate context. The content cannot be translated without the real knowledge of language, and it can commit many mistakes. There are shades of meaning to the word, it may have contextual, regional, cultural, and religious, and meanings cannot be added by Google translator. Google translate can't guess the implied meaning behind the any context used by the user. It may cause even great confusion on the part of the reader or listener. A writer can put intentionally certain words with the single inverted comma to emphasize. It means something different literally while it will connote implied meaning, may be totally opposite to the literal meaning. Machine will recognise such 'Pun' made by the language user. The Grammar of the two languages is not the same. Then there will be a problem while using that tool. Even one can say 'moon' belongs to the male gender in Marathi, while in English it belongs to the female gender. Then will be great fuss over such issues. Sentence patterns and structures are not the same.

The problem of accuracy is also present with the computer-based translation system. Still, they are trying to improve the accuracy, but it depends upon the language pair. It means that there is high rate of accuracy with most used languages like Chinese, English, French, German, etc. as there are high rates of translation due the high rate of data which is available. But it is not about the less common languages and its pairs, as the less data to train with available data. Automated machine translations may have struggle with idiomatic expressions and subtle and complex language use. We know that human can write and speak differently. such translation sound unnatural and untrustworthy and even create great fun. Same is the condition about



proverbs and idioms. They can mean differently, word to word translation may not be possible and the receiver can get nothing from the original speaker.

Cultural things also affect the language, and its meanings may be different in such cases there may be great problem in translating such things. There are too many different things in each culture, they can't be translated for that purpose one has to search for synonyms and similar words, but they can't be replaced but must accept as they have no proper religious and cultural equality e.g. Hindi word "punya" which is opposite the English word 'sin'. There is no word for such find word 'punya', because the cultural or religious need was not there to create or evolve such word as the origin of English Language is from Europe and particularly from England, i.e. from Christian countries. Christianity tells that "We are all sinners" as all human beings are Sinners and as it blocked the road to the invention of the word opposite to sin i.e. 'punya'. As Indian culture is of the view that certain people are sinful and certain are opposite to it. One can use words like virtue, merit, but they have shades of meaning. It doesn't mean 'punya' in Marathi or Hindi. There is difference in the scripts from the world language. No two scripts are same. They have different phonological symbols and sounds. Certain language has more sounds while some have less symbols. Devnagari scripts have symbol of ऋ which is not in any other language. Even not in Hindi also though it has same Devnagari script. Same is the condition with of 'न' and 'ण'. English can replace the same /s/ sound with many alphabets like s, c, Ch. Here may have confusion about the pronunciation and use of its. /t/ can be as symbolized by t, d, ed, etc. in the English. So, there is too much controversy in the translation of such words. Many scripts have not even written form even today. Unfamiliar person may not have certain idea of the use and function of target language. Even a single character may not be identified. A foreigner may feel Chinese script may like the rounds of 'Jalebi' and will not read and write, same will be the condition with Southern languages from India. Even the translation method is not useful for long phrases and complex sentences from any languages, as these tools allow only 3900 characters to translate at one time. After studying all these pitfalls one can say that computer assisted or Google translation is not worthy to use.

Then what are the other sources of translation as it is essential because people speak regardless of the language from any country. It is getting more and more importance as the world



getting more connected and coming closer and closer. People from all over the world becoming one and more sensitive and aspiring for high quality things or products and services and ready to bring to their threshold from the corner of the world. They have become choosier and strive to fulfil their specific needs as per their own expectations and demands and ready to pay for it, as the globe becoming more & richer and more cultivated, even they are culturally and religiously becoming sensitive. They need all the things whatever it may be smooth functioning and uninterrupted functioning and that must be user friendly and all time accessible. Nowadays Economy is that Information based, if anybody wants to be globalized one must have rich and varied content in multiple languages across the world. It provides him a wide range of audiences or customers, etc. Translation technology provides the maximum speed of spending the data and its quality as well as it is too much cheaper. It means that translation technology allows the companies to go global, rapidly as well as easily with low cost. It provides the tool that they need to create to make them local, to manage publish the available content, the audiences, and readers available worldwide. “Scalability, automation, intelligence and accuracy become achievable.” it will unlock the opportunity which seems too imaginable with manual translation process.

If computer assisted translation had certain limitations, then one has to depend upon the manual translation system. There is not any alternative to this. For that purpose, we must think about the merits and demerits of manual translation.

i. Accuracy: Manual translation can understand the context in which the word is used; certain idiomatic expressions can lead to more accuracy especially the complex content which is implied in meaning.

ii. Cultural sense: Human translator can understand the content while selecting for the special or target group to which he is going to address. It will help in the sound understanding of the audience.

iii. Remedial Assurance: After the completion of task person can read his work on his own and if any mistake on the part of grammar, cohesion and clarity can change and re change the data.

iv. Subject matter: A particular has its own terminology. Expert in that field can use the same terminology suitable to the field e.g. law, science, medical, technical, etc. e.g. heart is addressed as cardiac in medical terms.



v. Confidentiality and trust: In certain fields confidentiality must be followed. It is possible only with manual as machine is unable to do all these things. Majority of the clients trust over the manual as they feel it as more reliable and trustworthy for confidential documents.

vi. Adaptability: It can change as per requirement even in the middle of the work i.e. is during the process that will meet the final needs of the seeker as per his changing situations.

Though there are certain benefits of manual translation still it is not perfect as it has certain errors and limitations that can harm the total scenario of content. They can be summarised as follows:

i. Human Error:“To err is human”, it is totally applicable to the manual translation as human can commit certain mistakes. At one time he may be good at work while other time may be disturbed or confused. Mood variation is great problem with human beings.

ii. Time Consuming: Manual translation can take too much time especially the lengthy documents and be delayed in the project. Due to interruption, it may consume too much time and attentiveness is required which is becoming difficult thing nowadays.

iii. Inconsistency: Same data can be translated differently as per the situation and field. Even there may be change from person to person. The style, tone can add much to the original content.

iv. Lack of Objectivity: A manual translator can add his own opinions, feelings, and biased views. It can harm the subjectivity and mean different things, which may cause difference in understanding.

v. Costs too much: comparing to the machine translation, it is more costly as everyone must pay and hire the translators from large area and outsourcing may be required of such experts from the corner of the globe which requires large amount of money. It leads to the dependency as well, which is too harmful.

vi. Cultural Difference: Such differences may not be handled with proper care if manual translator will be from different cultural background and no idea about the target language.

Need of Translation

i. Business Growth: Using data or content one can expand the business beyond the country, region. It enables to reach the multilingual customers from the world.



ii. Intercultural relations: Translations gives facility between different cultural origin from the world.

iii. Relation Development: Translation lays a vital role in political, social, economic, and diplomatic relations between the two countries.

iv. Personal Development: Translations enable to learn from various languages which shapes critical thinking, confidence which leads to personal and professional growth of the individual.

v. Conservation of Language: Translation keeps the endangered a minority language by translating the rich cultural heritage and makes available to the world community.

vi. Access: It gives vast amount of information, literature, invention, business. News etc. from the corner of the world.

Conclusion

After the discussion of pros and cons of the manual as well as machine or google translation, one must think over the feasibility and availability of the sources and content. Though the limitations to the manual translation over machine translation, it doesn't mean that it is totally outworn and worst. Now adays it is widely used all over the world and it's use getting increased. One can watch the live programmes from the UNO and across country programmes, the speaker speaking in his Native language but the audiences listening in English or in their mother tongue. Manual translation lack speed and can get bored, or attention may get diverted which may harm the flow of the programme and may lead to the misunderstanding of the listener. There are too many limitations to manual translation over the machine translation. One cannot say that Google translation is not useful, on the contrary, it is useful and even playing a vital role in the sharpening of the world's cultural, educational, political, social, literary understanding and widening horizons. "No one is perfect" as per this statement though it had some limitations, but in the future, it will come nearer and nearer to the perfection. Even it has changed a lot from the day of its invention today. Many changes had taken place. It evolved, transformed, changed continuously towards perfection. It has proved a boon to the all-language speakers and listeners. It has widened the horizons at such extent that the Indian philosophy looks taking its place, "वसुधैवकुटुंबकम्" i.e. the whole world is a family.



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