

Translation Studies and Film Studies as Interdisciplinary Disciplines: An Overview

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Abstract

Translation Studies is always interdisciplinary in nature as different disciplines try to own it up and claim it as their realm and it goes beyond the boundaries and its place keeps changing. In a way, Translation Studies is situated at the crossing lines as the assumed boundaries of many disciplines. The interdisciplinarity of Translation Studies with Film Studies could be featured in many ways. Both Translation and Film focus on how people perceive the product. This paper observes some interrelationships between Translation Studies and Film Studies and describes the correlation by citing some instances. Some general observations are pinpointed regarding the interdisciplinary nature of Translation Studies with Film Studies. The observations are helpful in identifying various scopes and indispensable demands for translation. The relationships are discussed by classifying the process and the classification systematically clusters the types of translations practiced.

Keywords: Interdisciplinary, translation studies, film studies, process, product

Introduction

Translation Studies entertains almost all domains, and it embraces various elements such as semiotics, grammatology, narratology, bilingualism cum multilingualism, and language learning, and it fills the gap of semiotics, stylistics, literary studies, aesthetics, history, and linguistics. Translation Studies draws its theories from allied areas like literary studies, post-colonial theories, etc. Interdisciplinary refers to the involvement and combination of two or more academic disciplines or fields of study. Interdisciplinary disciplines encompass knowledge and methods from different disciplines. When the object of inquiry does not fall under any of the disciplines, it is known as interdisciplinary. For instance, looking at Translation as a profession and industry, as in many countries, it contributes to the national or capital income, so there is a scope for an Economic or Political point of view as the object of inquiry can be derived from the discipline named Economics or Political Science. So, the study of Translation as a profession or industry inevitably incorporates disciplines such as Economics and Political Science.

In this regard, the interdisciplinary nature of Translation Studies and Film Studies has become a relatively new and essential area of focus, and this focus has

become increasingly significant due to the contribution to the dissemination of popular culture through audiovisual media. The move towards process-oriented descriptive translation studies and the technological turn in Translation Studies focus on the impact of new technologies and the evolution of audio-visual translation. There are various types of audio-visual translations and challenges are being encountered by professionals in the field.

Moreover, there are implications of audio-visual translation for Translation Studies, which necessitates a re-evaluation of concepts such as text, authorship, and translation strategy. In short, the multifaceted nature of translation encompasses both process and product, and there are challenges in providing a formal definition of translation due to its diverse phenomena and metaphorical nature. While looking at theoretical aspects, Translation Studies accommodates reflective theories, representational theories, and constructive theories in the conceptual framework of Translation Studies. Besides decisive shift occurs in translation studies with discursive subjects (Hermans, 2009). Traditional concepts get new dimensions with the march of time.

With the integration of image and sound in texts Translation Studies also observed an 'audiovisual turn'. The experience from translation practice is properly formulated as theories in Translation Studies, and those theories are utilised in translation practice. Translation practice is observed both in the physical sense, as the movement or displacement, and in the symbolic sense, as the shift from one way of speaking, writing, and interpreting to another. In other words, both linguistic and experiential languages are involved in translation. Film as a medium encompasses both linguistic and experiential languages and involves translation practices in various ways. Thus, this study is significant in highlighting some instances of the interdisciplinarity of Translation Studies and Film Studies.

Literature Review

Translation as an ongoing process covers many factors. Everyone and everything differ from each other and becomes separate subjects with an identity. Translation binds variety and uniqueness. There is always a relationship of 'fidelity or 'integrity' in translation especially when it comes to the negotiation between the verbal and the visual translation with cultural assumptions as multiple para-textual aspects involved. On the other hand, nowadays, local practices balanced by new trends, available budget and time, programme genre, the status of the source and target languages (e.g. world, major, minority languages), and the power relations existing between them, may all be factors that affect to differing

degrees the decision to opt for dubbing or subtitling (O'CONNELL, 2007). However, in the assimilation of alien concepts, there are negotiations as a reinvention in the globalized world and the impact of globalization is on the translator and the translation as well. In this respect, translation seems to be productive rather than a reproductive effort. The meaning is produced not reproduced and it invites more criticism of the application of deconstruction in translation. In other words, translation negotiates meanings. The same negotiation is felt and observed in Film Studies as it is an intermediary zone of mediation. Thus, both share relationships by going with some commonalities, features, and objects of inquiry even to the extent of being identical to each other and enriching one another in a better way.

To cater to the evolving landscape driven by technological advancements and changing audience needs Translation Studies has its practice in Film Studies as observed earlier. Traditionally, subtitling and dubbing have been the primary modes of audio-visual translation with voiceover as a third option. However, the proliferation of audiovisual texts led to the emergence of new modes. Michael Anthony Cronin in the book 'Translation Goes to the Movies' delves into the role of translation within the realm of cinema, asserting that examining its portrayal in films can shed light on interlingual and intercultural dynamics, while also highlighting the crucial role of translators and it addresses the oversight of translation in film studies and encourages its exploration to deepen our understanding of how movies depict language variances and translation procedures (Cronin, 2009). Interdisciplinary frameworks such as Descriptive Translation Studies, Polysystem Theory, and Functionalist Translation Studies are influential in current research trends. Aline Remael in the article 'Audiovisual Translation' discusses the evolution of Audiovisual Translation within Translation Studies, noting its transition from the periphery to the center of focus in the past two decades and it traces the historical development of audio-visual translation from translating intertitles in silent films to the emergence of subtitling and dubbing to meet the needs of the film industry (Remael, 2010). As such the interdisciplinary features between Translation Studies and Film Studies appear interesting for exploration especially when being shaped by technological advancements and socio-economic developments.

Method and Materials

Question arises regarding the interrelatedness of Translation Studies and Film Studies and this study intends to cite some salient instances showcasing the

interdisciplinary correlation between Translation Studies and Film Studies. Relevant sources are referred to and the notable dimensions of translation involved in the process of filmmaking are highlighted in this study. Though a host of studies are being ventured into Translation Studies and Film Studies the interrelatedness of both fields is rarely pinpointed. Therefore, this study intends to recognise some instances of interrelation and discuss those instances. The observed instances are discussed in this study.

How are Translation Studies and Film Studies Inter-disciplined?

Many instances and practices in the association of Translation Studies and Film Studies could be observed. Translation Studies deals with the process of translation and the concepts or aspects or even manipulations behind it. The goal of Translation Studies is to produce a comprehensive theory that can be used as a guideline for the production and creation of translations. Meanwhile, translation as a product has a significant contribution in almost all fields. Thus, translation as a product is useful throughout the world, as a process it is practiced, and Translation Studies involve studying of the process and understanding the product. The same distinction is observed among 'Film' as a product, 'film making' as the process, and 'Film Studies' as an academic activity that investigates various aspects related to Film/s and Film Making. Film Studies explores the theories concerning filmmaking practices as same as Translation Studies. Both disciplines together implement the theories and practices interchangeably.

A translation is contextualized and linked with a specific task where reality in the outside world is represented through a sign system. Reality, language, medium, and representation contribute to the meaning and the combination of these is the axiom for Translation Studies. Translation goes beyond the forms and sign systems and negotiates the implied meaning. The substance of the original is spread throughout the translation irrespective of the differences in form, aspect, and diction. Besides, Translation Studies is firmly rooted in its practical application. Translation Studies links the theory with practice. Encountered challenges and strategies are compared with practical experience, and the experience is discussed theoretically. From a theoretical perspective, the challenges encountered are compared with practical experience and so on with the procedures. This is how theories and practice are intertwined and continue as a circle in Translation Studies. Likewise, the production of film and the study of it as Film Studies contribute to and enhance each other.

Translating for filmmaking is also viewed as one of such relationships. Filmmaking may require translation from the native language to understand and construct the setting and narrative of that culture. The source texts, notes, documents, filmscript or screenplay, and such materials are translated especially to narrate that culture and to construct the setting. Apart from this, even the filmscripts or screenplays are translated from one language into another either fully or partially. In such circumstances, Translation Studies looks at the challenges, issues, problems, barriers, feasibilities, and non-feasibilities of translating these kinds of materials.

Anything can be portrayed through a film. Sometimes a real translation scene may be represented in a film. Some materials require translation for filmmaking to construct the narration in the film as discussed earlier. Furthermore, translations serve as evidence for films and films serve as evidence for translation. Subsequently, the resources related to Film Studies are being translated and it is like translating the knowledge of Film Studies. The knowledge that is produced and generated by Film Studies is translated from one language into another or even one sign system into another sign system. The texts related to Film Studies are also being translated. The problems, issues, challenges, and barriers are studied as Translation Studies does with other disciplines.

Films are translated into one of the facets of screen translation namely Dubbing, Subtitling, Voiceover, Interpreting, Narration, and Remake. This kind of translation is usually based on the film as the product where the film is the source text. Sometimes these happen simultaneously. Screen translation is also known as audiovisual translation, media translation, constraint translation, and multimedia translation cover interlingual transfer or visual and acoustic transmission usually but not necessarily via some electronic devices. As Connell rightly points out, while digital technology has undoubtedly enhanced the speed and capabilities of subtitling workstations and dubbing studios, it is of utmost importance to uphold a steadfast commitment to the linguistic, pedagogical, cultural, commercial, and political dimensions of screen translation alongside technological advancements.

Consequently, Screen translation is both an enabling and a constraining form of language transfer. To illustrate this, intertitles helped in clarifying the development of dialogue and plot immediately after the silent era and these intertitles are the direct forerunners of subtitles. The promotion of interdisciplinary research is strongly encouraged, as it allows for a comprehensive exploration of the intricate nature of screen translation (O'Connell, 2007). Some facets of

translation are applicable in both the processes of pre-film and post-film productions even in simultaneous tasks. As a result, the recent developments in digital technology render improved access to screen translation through the various forms of the linguistic, pedagogical, cultural, commercial, and political facets of Translation Studies.

When the translation is studied metaphorically, the screenplay is translated into a visual medium as an intersemiotic translation. The scripted ideas are translated into audio-visual form as a combination of various sign systems. Both translation and film focus on the process as well as the product. It is the common standpoint that translation is possible with physical entities whereas it is not always precisely possible to transfer all the abstract things like emotions, feelings, norms, traditions, culture, and aspirations, whereas audiovisual expression makes it possible. The process of setting these abstract elements as soul in a sign system as body is the noble art of translation. Without this abstract element as a soul, a sign system is merely a corpse or this abstract element without a sign system, is merely a spirit. Nevertheless, it is possible to transfer and construct the abstract aspects through a combination of various media. Film encompasses various media of expression and translation practices that are lavishly observed in Film Studies. In a way, the process of filmmaking is regarded as the process of intersemiotic translation. The process of filmmaking itself is an intersemiotic translation as various semiotic systems are involved.

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Translation Studies has a close association and merges with Film Studies, especially in the case of screen adaptation. Mostly screen adaptation is the

combination of two translations. One is the translation from the literary text into the screenplay and the other is from the screenplay into the film. When it comes to the translation of a written text into an audiovisual text, many translators are involved in the process. An audiovisual text is a collaborative process with many people like screenplay writers, directors, editors, composers, actors and cinematographers. The screenwriter transforms and dramatizes, and then the director, cast, and crew create the film. The scriptural (re)innovation brings out the narrative towards the cinematic framework and leads to the audiovisual cinematic rendition which enriches the experience of viewers bereft of the linguistic barrier. Having observed the above-mentioned translations it could be inferred that Translation Studies and Film Studies as well as translation and the film are mutually dependent entities even to the level of being merged in some circumstances.

Implications

Overall, there has been a relationship between Translation Studies and Film Studies, and the influence and operation on one another have been observed for ages and these observations are helpful in identifying the scopes of translation and the avenues of Translation Studies regarding Film Studies.

Limitations and Future Research

This study lays a very basic foundation to proceed with all the dimensions of translation especially concerning Film Studies. As this study tries to highlight the instances in general, the instances are to be explored and tested deeply with case studies. Though there are a host of studies available and being taken up in the interdisciplinary area of Translation Studies and Film Studies, each dimension of screen translation is to be studied and analysed further, especially in a particular context. Each of the findings could be delved deeply and explored with many scopes.

Conclusion

There are some notable observations from this study to be pinpointed as findings. Film (as a product) itself could be perceived as a translation as it represents reality. The process of translation is like the process of filmmaking as both translate ideas. As recognized generally, film is a translation of a film script or screenplay. Translation Studies understand, evaluate, and analyses the process of translation. Likewise, Film Studies understand, evaluate, and analyse the process of filmmaking. Translating materials for filmmaking is a relationship. Sometimes film scripts or screenplays are translated from one language into another language.

Real translation situations may be represented in some films. Some translated materials serve as evidence for the film. Moreover, Film Studies are translated between languages. Sometimes the knowledge is translated for Film Studies across languages.

When film is considered as a source text translation is possible through multiple perspectives such as dubbing, subtitling, voiceover, interpreting, narration, and remake. Dubbing is the process of adding or replacing sound in a recording usually for a film. Translation is the most familiar way of dubbing where the original dialogue is translated by considering the lip movements of the actors on screen. Subtitling is the process of displaying text on the screen that represents the audio content of a video, mostly a film. Translation allows the viewers to understand the dialogue. Voiceover as a production technique adds voice to a film, video, radio broadcast, or other presentation. Voiceover is a translation of what is on the screen. Interpreting is also another facet of translation where the content shown on the screen is translated as an interpretation. Narration is the translation of the content on the screen either originally or as an added narration. A remake is a translated movie based on and retells the story of an earlier film. Sometimes films are translated into other text forms as an infrasemiotic translation.

Above all, when film is considered as a target text screen adaptation is a significant translation where a film is translated from an already existing text. The intersemiotic translation process of screen adaptation involves many translations and scholars claim it is ultrasemiotic translation where many channels are engaged. Thus, translation as a practice could be observed in the process of filmmaking, Film Studies, from film as a source text and into film as a target text.

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