

The End Justifies the Means: A Functionalist Approach to Translation

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ABSTRACT The contemporary research in translation has shown that there is a shift from the straitjacket of the prescriptive and normative approach to translation. However, in some Sesotho translations, the source text (ST) still serves as the norm against which a translation is judged. Sesotho translators sometimes disregard the fact that the purpose of the source text does not necessarily have to be the same as that of translation. Viewed from the perspective of the functionalist theory of translation, this particular problem culminates in stilted translations that are non-communicable and inaccessible to Sesotho cultural communities. Within the context of this study, the problem will then be discussed within the functionalist theoretical framework. The idea is to demonstrate the crucial role that the purpose of translation (**the end**) plays as part of the translation brief and as one of the determining factors towards a meaningful translation process (**the means**). A total disregard of the socio-cultural aspects as embedded within the translation '*skopos*' (Vermeer's concept) of the Basotho target readership as enshrined in the whole translation process, characterizes itself as a formidable problem in Sesotho translation. The purpose of translation will therefore be operationalized to put Sesotho translation process into its proper perspective. The results show that Sesotho translation as a multi-faceted, culturally based phenomenon needs to consider the translation purpose as its guiding principle in every act of the translation process.

INTRODUCTION

Many Sesotho translations still cling to the idea that a good translation has to be source-text oriented and have a particular relationship with the source text. Many reasons have been propounded that could be taken as causes of this particular problem. Deviation from the basic purpose of translation affects not only the choice of translation methods and strategies but the actual transference of the intended message itself at the level of the translation process. The communicability of the translation then becomes questionable on the part of the Basotho target readers. The paper focuses exclusively on this problem. The problem will be discussed within the context of the functionalist theory of translation. According to Schaffner (1996: 2), "Functionalist approach is a kind of cover term for the research of scholars who argue that the purpose of the target text (TT) is the most important criterion in any translation". This approach is selected as the most appropriate because functionalism presupposes a shift from 'linguistic equivalence' to 'functional appropriateness'. In other words, the theory presupposes the relevance of translation within the context of the socio-cultural norms and beliefs of the target readers.

The end justifies the means simply implies that the functionalist approach to a meaningful

translation suggests that the process of translation should be based on the purpose of translation. It therefore presupposes the top-down approach where the purpose of translation determines the translation strategies to be applied.

Vermeer (2000: 221) maintains that "*skopos* is a technical term for the aim or purpose of a translation". Vermeer (2000) is of the view that any translational action has an aim, a purpose. This particular purpose will be adjusted and contextualized within the culture and norms of the Sesotho target readers. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 156) assert that the translator interprets the source text information by selecting those features which most closely correspond to the requirements of the target situation". The article demonstrates that if there is no correspondence to the requirements of the target situation, then the resultant product becomes a stilted translation that is non-functional to its target readership.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the paper is to reflect on a functional and communicable translation presented in the language combination (English-Sesotho).

It therefore speaks on its own that the methods and strategies that are applied in the translation process should actually be determined by

the aim or purpose of translation. Toury (1980: 34) quoted in Bassnett et al. (1990) maintains that:

"A translated text can be located on an axis between the two hypothetical poles of adequacy (source text oriented) or acceptability (target language oriented.)"

The context in which this paper is presented is such that the socio-cultural background of the target group would be demonstrated to be the underlying factor giving more meaning to both the linguistic and semantic aspects applied in the translation process. The paper purports to illustrate that translation in fact does not occur in a void but within a particular cultural context. It is for this particular reason that Nord (1991: 9) opines that:

"The function of the target text is not arrived at automatically from an analysis of the source text, but is pragmatically defined by the purpose of the intercultural communication."

It is the aim of the researcher in this paper to demonstrate that a source text merely provides an information without necessarily appearing as an exclusive original. Honig (1998: 9) concurs with the view that the source text merely provides information in terms of the expectations and the needs of the target readership. In other words, the translator has a particular freedom to deal with the source text and being conscious of the expectations and the needs of the people he translates for. Even though the translator can apply his freedom in translating the source text, Honig (1998: 10) emphasizes the responsibility of the translator towards his clients in the following statement:

"[The translator] may be held responsible for the result of his/her translational acts by recipients and clients. In order to act responsibly however, translators must be allowed the freedom to decide in co-operation with their clients what is in their best interests."

The researcher hopes to demonstrate in the analysis of the various translation options that the translator has a particular freedom. The researcher has a freedom of choice in terms of selecting relevant translation strategies. The researcher is also free to retain or modify the source text aspects with a view to produce a meaningful and communicable translation for the clients.

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

As already indicated, the functionalist approach to translation will be the theoretical frame-

work within which the article will be based. In the operationalization of the functional approach to translation, it will be prudent to establish the purpose of translation. Knowing the purpose of translation (*the end*) will be demonstrated as the starting point and the guiding principle towards the process of translation (*the means*). The functional approach will be applied with the understanding that it would not necessarily establish rules but support decision-making strategies made by the translator. Nord (2003: 111) identifies three ideological factors that govern the translators' decision-making opportunities during the translating process. The three ideological factors by Nord are also motivated by Toury (2000).

According to Toury (2000) the three norms that regulate the choice of translation strategies of action are *initial norms*, *preliminary norms* and *operational norms*. Toury (2000: 201-203) explicates the three norms as follows:

The initial norms govern the translator's overall decisions to adhere to either the original text with the norms it has realized, or to the norms active in the target culture, or in that section of it which would host the end product.

The preliminary norms govern the decisions to be made concerning translation policy and directedness. The translation policy in this case implies the choice of text types or individual texts to be imported through translation into a particular culture.

Operational norms direct the actual decisions made during the act of translation. These operational norms are subdivided into matricial and textual-linguistic norms. Matricial norms govern the segmentation and distribution of textual materials in the target text. Textual linguistic norms govern the selection of material to formulate the target text in, or replace the original textual and linguistic material with.

In the analysis of the various translation options in this article, the aspects of functionalist theory of translation as explained above would be applied in relation to other information from other translation theorists (not necessarily functionalists). The above strategies will be applied to demonstrate the role of translation purpose towards the development of a translation process. It must be reiterated, however, that the translation process comes into operation only after the establishment and verification of the translation purpose (the end justifies the means).

Operationalisation

The paper will demonstrate how the purpose affects the meaning or message of the text, the language usage as well as the relevance thereof to the socio-cultural aspects of the target group. In the case where source text aspects are retained in the translation, they will be reflected and discussed as such. In the same vein, if source text aspects are transferred to the target text situation, they will be identified and discussed as such. Various examples of English source texts will be identified and discussed as translated to Sesotho in terms of the strategies discussed above.

Example 1:

Source Text (ST): He drives the car being under the influence of alcohol

TT(1): "*O kganna koloi a le tlasa tshusumetso ya tahi*"

TT(2): "*O kganna koloi a tahlilwe*"

TT (1): "*O kganna koloi a le tlasa tshusumetso ya tahi*":

In the analysis of the above translation option "*O kganna koloi a le tlasa tshusumetso ya tahi*" the following points can be identified:

It appears that the translator did manage to transfer the function or purpose of translation. The purpose of translation in this case is informative as perhaps outlined by the initiator. However, the translator decided to choose unusual expression to a Mosotho in communicating the intended message. Besides the uncommon language usage, the translation performs the same function with the source text. It is *equi-functional* in character.

It is unlikely in terms of the idiom of Sesotho language that the message could be communicated as such.

The above translation has its short-fall. Despite the fact that a Mosotho would be able to understand the intended message, the expression does violate the collocational pattern in the phrasing of the Sesotho sentences.

This example clearly indicates the situation where the source text is applied as a norm. An insignificant choice of strategy (namely, word for word) does not necessarily justify the functionality of the translation.

TT(2): "*O kganna koloi a tahlilwe*":

In the analysis of the second translation option of the above source text, we can identify the following:

The translator clearly understood the function or purpose of translation as inferred from the translation brief. The purpose of translation is still informative. It is also important to realize that the translator made a meaningful choice and tried to avoid retaining the same source text aspects in terms of the language usage. This means that the translator made a significant choice to refrain from applying a word for word translation strategy. The translator devised all the means to apply the same expressions that would be relevant and easily communicable to the target group. An expression "under the influence of alcohol" is therefore captured with a functional expression, namely, "*a tahlilwe*" (intoxicated).

The second translation option therefore identifies itself as more functional in terms of the socio-cultural language aspects of the Basotho as the targeted group.

Despite the fact that the second option is still the same in terms of the function as the first one, it, however, presents a rather more accessible approach to the target group than the first one.

In terms of this particular example, it becomes clearer that knowing the purpose of translation is not only functional to the choice of translation strategies, but also improving the accessibility of the translation by the intended readership. In other words, the translation becomes more reader-friendly and relevant to the Sesotho linguistic and cultural context.

Example 2:

ST: Right of admission reserved

TT(1): *Tumello ya ho kena e babaletswe*

TT(2): *Ha se bohle ba dumellwang ho kena*

Analysing the above translation options within the functionalist theoretical framework, the translator in both TT(1) and TT(2) acknowledge the fact that the intended message is informative in character. However, it appears that the two options do not reflect the same interpretation of the purpose of translation, hence the difference in the two translation processes.

Basically, the purpose of translation is to inform people that there could be restrictions applicable during the entrance procedures at a particular place. This implies that not everybody is allowed the right of entrance. The first translation option seems to misinterpret the purpose of translation and as such affects the translation process. In terms of the initial norms as suggested by Toury (2000: 201) it appears that the translator made an insignificant decision to retain the

source text aspects. The translation now tends to be stilted and questionable in terms of the meaning on the part of the target reader.

It then follows that misinterpretation of the purpose of translation diminishes the possibilities of producing a functional translation on the part of the translator. Nord (2000) regards translation as a purposeful activity because it takes as its starting point the purpose in order to cater for the interests and expectations of the target readers.

Example 3:

ST: Access is at your own risk

TT(1): *Ho kena ke tsietsi ya hao*

TT(2): *Ho kena ho boikarabelong ba hao*

In analysing translation options in example 3 above, we realize that in TT(1) *Ho kena ke tsietsi ya hao* (to enter is your risk), the translator slightly diverted from the explicit message. The message intended was merely an advice to the reader. In this translation option an advice has been changed into a threat. The reader is threatened to enter the premises by the use of “*ke tsietsi ya hao*” (it is your risk). In this way, the translator did not apply the loyalty principle effectively. The fundamental message intended for the target readers has been changed. This is so because the interests and expectations of the readers have not been cared for.

The actual intended message for the target reader is correctly captured in translation option TT(2) “*Ho kena ho boikarabelong ba hao*”.

This implies that the same person who enters the premises has to be accountable for doing so. He is not necessarily threatened to enter the premises but reminded of his responsibility for his actions. Once more we realize the supremacy of the purpose of translation towards in the whole translation process. Of importance is to note that the message is translated in such a manner that it talks to readers. A meaningful translation choice of strategy has been made in order to present a functional translation

It will be noted in the above example that an awareness of the requirements of the *skopos*, Vermeer maintains, ‘expands the possibilities of translation, releases the translator from the corset of an enforced – and hence often meaningless – literalness’ (Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997: 156).

Example 4 (A):

ST: “It rains cats and dogs”

TT(1): “*Pula e na dikatse le dintja*”

In this particular example, the end does not justify the means in the sense that it is obvious that the translator might not have clearly understood the purpose of translation. He appears to have made a less meaningful choice of translation strategy. It therefore implies that a meaningful choice of translation strategy is dependent on a thorough understanding of the purpose of translation. He might have acted against the basic expectations of his intended recipients. The translator needed to do the text analysis as suggested by Nord (2000) before the actual translation process can commence. It is incumbent on the translator to always verify the text type as well as the field from which the source text is derived. The translator would then contextualize his translation against the relevant socio-cultural aspects of his target readership. It becomes clear in this example that the Sesotho translation does not make any sense to its target group. Other reasons for this flaw could also be that:

- Within the life experiences of the Basotho a heavy rain is not traditionally expressed in terms of the dying of cats and dogs as suggested in the above-given English source text;
- Language is expressive of culture as part of life experiences of its target group;
- In Sesotho culture, heavy rain can be expressed differently rather than using any references to these animals as in the source text.
- This particular translation characterizes itself therefore as non-functional on the part of the target group.
- It is obvious that translation is excessively source-text based but unfortunately diminishes possibilities of accessibility and communicability to the intended readership.
- It appears that the translator did not apply his own subjectivity in order to reformulate his own translation to improve on its accessibility.

On the other side of the coin, let us focus on the following example:

Example 4 (B):

ST: “It rains cats and dogs”

TT(2): “*Pula e na ditlwebele*” (*Pula ho na ya dikgomo le batho*)

Unlike in example 1(A) above, the analysis of example 1(B) presents the following observations:

The following are some of the points identified in the analysis of the TT(2) above:

The translator has to decide which aspects of the text will need to be changed in order to fulfill the expectations of the new readership. The translator decided to change the ST aspects completely. In doing so, the translation tends to be translation-oriented. The target reader is considered as the center of focus in order to cater for his interests and expectations in this translation.

The text happened to be reformulated according to the translation brief (especially the purpose of translation). Translation appears to be purpose-driven.

The purpose of translation is still informative as in the case of the original text even though the source text aspects had been changed to suit the target readers. In terms of the loyalty principle, the translation is functional. In terms of the fidelity principle, the translation has a particular relationship (in terms of the meaning) with the ST.

That the target language becomes effective and communicable if applied within its original cultural context. Language and culture identify themselves as inseparable.

Extra-textual experiences among the intended receivers have a direct reference to the textual coherence and its thematic content. The previous knowledge that the translator had about the target readers had been considered.

Translation in this case identifies itself as functional seeing that it is essentially relevant to the cultural experience of the Basotho people within their socio-cultural background. A meaningful choice of text-type had been quite relevant to cause the translation to be functional. In this case, the translation used an idiomatic expression to match the ST. A combination of the fidelity as well as the loyalty principles have been applied in order to secure the functionality of the translation.

Seeing that Baker (1992) as well as other linguistic translation exponents (name few of them) are opposed to the equivalence principle as a result of which Newmark (Date) even refers to 'equivalence principle' as the '*dead duck*', the article suggested the 'loyalty principle' as propounded by Nord (1991) as a corrective to ignorance of the extra-textual factors such as belief system, norms, values and culture that declares the translation as functional on the part of the target readership.

It is precisely at this stage where functional approach to translation becomes effective in

terms of its embedded loyalty principle to attack the dominance of the source text over the target text. Based on the loyalty principle, it becomes evident that the target text emphasises on the appropriate interpretation and translation of the target text in such a manner that its receivers would feel that it is in fact meant for them and relevant to their cultural and social situation. It is for this reason that the article emphasises the fact that translation is not only a linguistic transference but also a cultural transference. It therefore becomes obvious that through the loyalty principle, the target text is supposedly declared as having its own status, self-independence and uniqueness in its own right.

Of great importance is the fact that the source text is not merely a yardstick against which the target text is judged. Functionalism presupposes a paradigm shift in the sense that unlike the previous linguistic theories, it characterizes itself as pragmatic in the sense that it proceeds from the premise that translation does not occur in a vacuum. There are a number of dynamics of translation that need to be taken into consideration, as some of the following:

It occurs simply because there is/are reason(s), namely, the purpose why it should take place. This purpose is embedded within the translation brief;

The reasons for the occurrence of a translation are delinked from the reasons for the creation of a source text; for that matter the supremacy of the source text over the target text has to be dethroned.

Kruger et al. (2008) is of the view that unlike the source text author who is self-motivated, the translator is usually stimulated to begin translating by the initiator or someone else. So, the translator has an obligation to satisfy the needs of the target group to whom he is obliged and mandated by the initiator to communicate with.

Let us focus on the following example:

Example 5 (A)

ST: "Two people lost their lives"

TT(1): "*Batho ba babedi ba lahlehetswe ke maphelo*"

In the given example, it again becomes obvious that culture determines the effectiveness and functionality of the translation in the sense that;

In terms of the Basotho belief system, a person cannot be said to lose his life but lead perpetual life even after death. There is merely a transformation or transition of life from the com-

mon life among the living to the life among the ancestors. Against this backdrop, it is culturally determined that people cannot be expected to lose their lives.

The statement even violates the Sesotho linguistic collocational pattern in the sense that within the above-mentioned statement, "*lahlehetswe*" (lost) cannot always be used adjacent or being syntactically followed by "*bophelo*" (life) as in the given English expression. In Sesotho, life cannot be connoted to be either lost or regained.

It therefore shows that the above translation is flawed not only socio-culturally but also linguistically (syntactically). It is even morphologically incorrect among the Basotho to apply the plural form of "*bophelo*" (life) as "*maphelo*" (lives).

It is also crucial to realize that underlying the incorrectness in terms of the ungrammaticality of the statement at linguistic level is the socio-cultural background against which the statement should be understood.

Let us continue to translate and analyse the same source text as 2(A) and compare with an alternative target text as in 2(B). Let us compare with the following statement:

Example 5 (B):

ST: "Two people lost their lives"

TT(2): "*Batho ba babedi ba hlokahetse*"

In this example, it becomes clear that language is effective to express the belief system as part of the African culture of the Basotho people. It is only within this particular cultural context that the targeted Basotho readers can fully access the meaning of the text and accept ownership thereof. It is also against the following points that the statement appears to be meaningful and accessible to Basotho.

The translator might have had previous knowledge regarding the manner in which Basotho communicate when referring to death. It therefore becomes possible for the translator to communicate the mandate of the client to the readers as he acts on the basis of his preconceptions, knowledge and experience of the Basotho people in order to successfully transfer the intended message to them.

The choice of words also signifies that it is a taboo among the Basotho to refer to someone as being dead (*shwele*) or 'no more living' because it is assumed that he joins the ranks of the ancestors. The deceased is presumably expected to

have been elevated to the life of the respected and the supernatural beings. Mbiti(Date) in his *African Religion and Philosophy* has more information in this regard.

It becomes clearer that translation is not merely a linguistic but also a cultural transference. So, the end should necessarily justify the means for the expected end-product to be achieved.

RESULTS

In the analysis of the examples discussed in this paper, the translation flaws identified in some of the translation options can be explicated as follows:

Errors at Linguistic Level

In example 5 TT(1), it shows that an incorrect choice of words sacrifices the functionality of the entire translation. Sesotho language does not have an expression where people can be thought to lose their life "*ba lahlehetswe ke bophelo*." Here we mark language differences between English and Sesotho. Underlyingly, the problem is rooted by an unusual collocational pattern that is applied in "*ho lahlehelwa ke bophelo*". The concept carried by "*lahlehelwa*" (lose) cannot be matched with "*bophelo*" (life) otherwise translation becomes stilted and less functional to the target readers.

The use of "*tlasa tahi*" in "*O kganna koloi a le tlasa tshusumetso ya tahi*" as an expression to mean "being drunk", complicates the communicability of the translation. The collocational pattern applied in this case is illogical and unusual to any Mosotho. A meaningful translation does not have to be questionable.

Errors at Cultural Level

It becomes obvious that translators characterize themselves as socially and historically constituted subjects. Translators make use of their own cognition and socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-linguistic factors to transform a source text into a functional and communicable document among the target readership. It is for this reason that Toury (2000: 119) opines that; "*cognition itself is influenced, probably even modified by socio-cultural factors.*"

The examples discussed above, clearly illuminates the fact that translators interpret texts

by setting them against the backdrop of their known words and phrases, existing statements, familiar conventions and general knowledge.

However, Toury (2000) submits the difficulty that translators experience to determine the role of socio-cultural factors in the translation process. It is for this purpose that Toury states this point categorically clear in his assertion that:

“One thing I would not venture to do ... is to tackle the intriguing question of how, and to what extent, the environment affects the workings of the brain, or how the cognitive is influenced by the socio-cultural, even though this would surely make an invaluable contribution to our understanding of translation.” (page number??)

There is a conviction that translation is power – the translator has access to two languages and presumably to two cultures whereas monolingual users of either source language or target language have access to only one. The translator has the power of modifying and occasionally distorting the source text. The translator is not locked into his own mental cocoon where he is not supposed to think out of the box and see the bigger picture in his translation practice. Within the realms of post-1994, translators in African languages can no longer operate within the restricted confines of the source text. Vermeer (1978) determines that:

“It is thus not to be expected that merely “transcoding” a source text, merely “transposing” it into another language, will result in a serviceable translatum ...”

It appears that sometimes it is important to necessary to foreignise or indigenize (Venuti's concepts) the aspects of the source text during the translation process so as to present a meaningful translation. Such a translation would be accessible and communicable to Sesotho readers as the target readership.

Language is expressive of the world view of its speakers. The world view of the African appears to be quite different to the English in terms of their morals, value system, and attitude. These aspects manifest themselves in translation.

Let us focus on the following example:

Example 6 (A):

ST: “I am merely pulling your leg”

TT(1): “*Ke mpa ke o hula ka leoto*”

When we make a critical analysis of this assertion, we realize the existing gap between language and the world view of both the source text writer and the translator. In the first instance, the

translator seems not to be aware that he is dealing with an idiomatic expression as the source text. In other words, he needed to have been aware that his source text is based on an idiomatic expression. He needed therefore to establish whether there could be an “equivalent or matching” idiomatic expression in Sesotho as the target language. The above-given Sesotho translation version totally distorted the essence of the message implied in the original source text version. If in English the idea is merely to imply “teasing someone”, the Sesotho version appears to be very far from communicating the same message.

Let us look at the next version that has slightly shifted from the previous one:

Example 6 (B)

ST: “I am merely pulling your leg”

TT(2): “*Ke mpa ke o tloka feela*”

Following this particular translation option, the translator appears to have realized and recognized the translation type and that placed him in a position that he supposedly knew the purpose of his translation. The fact that the translation purpose had been apparently known to the translator, he then selected an appropriate method and strategy which led him to a suitable and more reader-friendly translation option as in the given example above. Here again we realize that in accordance with the functionalist approach to translation, the end justifies the means.

Example 7 (A)

ST: Procrastination is the thief of time

TT(1): “*Tieho e tswala tahleho*”

The original text identifies itself as performing an informative function. Though translation appears to perform the same function, it has been reformulated to suit the Basotho communication situation. It distinguishes itself as a new act of communication in terms of the socio-cultural needs of the Basotho as the target readership.

Seeing that the translation is appropriate to transfer the intended purpose of translation (an informative function), it qualifies to be a functional translation. In this way, the end justifies the means.

Example 7 (B)

ST: Procrastination is the thief of time

TT(2): “*Kwekwe ya morao e tloha le sepolo.*”

In accordance with the translation purpose in this text, it follows that:

The translator reformulated the text by suggesting a new communicative act.

The aspects of the source text have been altered in order to effectively express the intended message of the text.

By virtue of the socio-cultural aspects of the Basotho readership, the translator decided to use the idiomatic expression in order to effectively express the function of translation.

It becomes obvious that it is the prerogative on the translation to translate in such a manner that the end justifies the means.

DISCUSSION

The translation options have indicated that translators make critical decisions regarding the purpose of translation as well as the relevant strategies to be applied. It is evident also that translators have to accept responsibility of all the choices they have made. In other words, for the translator to preserve the source text aspects (foreignisation) or decide on new aspects that are target text based (in terms of purpose), he would be supported by the guided by the functional approach that he intended to apply. As indicated before, the norms that Toury (2000) are quite significant to determine the decision-making in the translating process.

Sesotho translation is faced with many challenges because of the fast developing technology within our country. It has to cope with the new terms that are currently developed in various spheres of life and various fields in the world of work. However, translators can cope with these challenges if only they align themselves with the basic functionalist principles introduced at the outset of this article.

The paper demonstrated that the starting point or a guiding principle that culminates into proper translation is in fact, knowing your target group. This means being familiar not only with the linguistic style of the language speakers, but also to engage them as custodians of their culture in your translation process. It is possible to have that kind of engagement by simply making an inquiry through text analysis of the linguistic as well as the socio-cultural background of the people you translating for.

Translators should be mindful of their bilateral commitment to both the source and the target text situations in the sense of having a thorough knowledge of the two. This translates into loyalty principle where the translator will equally serve both the source as well as the target text situations in such a manner that no one will be

left with reservations and questions without answers.

Using the original language of the intended receivers in all our translation processes will not only ensure the functionality of the target text on the part of the readers, but also empower them as we have demonstrated that language is power.

Translator should guard against the fact that a source text is a determining factor in the translation process. African languages as being perceived as official languages and having an elevated status, should be functional to let their original speakers not only access information but also make these languages to make a living for them. These languages cannot be expected to serve their original speakers effectively and profitably if Sesotho translations are always negatively contaminated with other languages or other cultures.

Back-translations should be discouraged as they do not promote the originality and independence of the target languages but they merely suggest the dominance of source texts. Back-translations sacrifice the uniqueness of Sesotho language and slow the pace of the development of this particular language.

Sesotho language does not lack enough terminology as many people may think. If Sesotho language was lagging behind other languages in terms of terminology, Sesotho language speakers could be struggling to express themselves in various aspects of life such as economy, education, law, technology, and others. However, different types of source texts derived from different fields and areas of interest can be effectively and efficiently translated.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is incumbent on the translators in African languages in general, and the translators in Sesotho language in particular, to execute their two-legged task, namely ensuring thorough knowledge in both the source as well the target languages before they can engage themselves in translating the text. As the second leg of the mandate, the translator should be au-faire with social issues underpinning the translated text. The researcher have already pointed out and stressed that having a thorough knowledge of the language implies being aware of its dynamics in terms of its socio-cultural role and its significance as a tool of power and information processing.

Translators have to select voluntarily between different options they have at hand, and should be reminded that they will be responsible for the selection they make. Understanding the importance of decision-making in translation, the translator should try to describe the actual translational decisions made under different socio-cultural and ideological settings in real life situations and explain the perlocutionary consequences resulted from adoption of such decisions.

Every translation has its own aim determined by its translator. Translators could freely choose the options that best serve their intended aim of translation. Even though the source text has been “dethroned” according to the *Skopos* theory, translators are, however, expected to translate the source texts by identifying the translation units and select the strategies that they would apply in dealing with them during the translation process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The realization that the translation processes as well as the socio-cultural dynamics of translation are functional reinforces a shift from normative and prescriptive to descriptive methodology. What is also crucial to remember in the translation process is that translators are no longer engaged in communication with the source text readers (as first readers of the source text), but of importance they are faced with the target readers. They are charged with the responsibility to be loyal to them by presenting the intended message in such a manner that will not only be befitting to their language (as a means of communication) but also their entire cultural situation.

Gone are the days when communication between the translator and the intended group could be reversed and judged or authenticated in terms of back-translation to verify its relevance and effectiveness. The article has already demonstrated that the purpose of the ST may not necessarily be the same as of the TT. The cultural aspects of the ST are not the same as those of the translation. Translators should know that language is expressive of culture and a medium already contaminated with culture traits. It therefore cannot come out as pure as it had been before in case of back-translation.

In terms of the loyalty principle, translators communicate with the target group who look upon them as their reliable source of information. They should articulate the language in an

accessible and conceivable manner. They should incorporate in this language the socio-cultural elements that will ensure and enhance their credibility of readers. Translators should be seen to respect the target languages as languages in their own right and languages that need to stand the test of time, and languages that need to create jobs for their speakers, promote not only the linguistic competence, but also the linguistic excellence.

Well-translated target texts elevate their readers to a position where they will retain the dignity they deserve in terms of language and culture. All these are achievable if the translator operates in terms of a clearly understood translation purpose. This will give guidance to a meaningful translation process. Translation as a purposeful activity ensures that *the end justifies the means*.

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