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Editorial: International Translation Day: a communication perspective

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Editorial on the Research Topic

[International Translation Day: a communication perspective](#)

The art of translation: celebrating multilingualism and the work of language professionals

On September 30th, the world observes International Translation Day, a tribute to the profound significance of multilingualism and the invaluable contributions of language professionals. This date is not arbitrary; it commemorates the feast of St. Jerome, the patron saint of translators, whose seminal work in translating the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin laid the groundwork for bridging cultural and ideological divides. St. Jerome's legacy is a testament to the enduring power of translation in fostering understanding and unity among diverse peoples.

Translation is more than a mere linguistic exercise; it is a conduit for cultural exchange and mutual comprehension. Through the intricate process of rendering text from one language to another, translators enable the transmission of knowledge, literature, and ideas across linguistic borders. This process is fundamental to the development of identity, education, and social integration within and between communities.

The essence of multilingualism

Language is a living entity, constantly evolving and adapting to the changing landscapes of human interaction. Each language encapsulates the history, values, and worldview of its speakers, shaping their perceptions and experiences. Multilingualism, therefore, is not just a practical skill but a rich tapestry of cultural expression and identity.

In a globalized world, multilingualism fosters inclusivity and empathy, allowing individuals to connect with others on a deeper level. It promotes cognitive flexibility, enhances problem-solving abilities, and broadens perspectives. For societies, multilingualism is a cornerstone of social cohesion, enabling diverse groups to coexist harmoniously and contribute to a collective cultural heritage.

The role of translation in society

Translation plays a pivotal role in disseminating literature, culture, education, and media across the globe. It is through translation that the works of literary giants like Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, Rabindranath Tagore, and García Márquez reach readers in distant lands, enriching global culture with diverse narratives and viewpoints. Similarly, educational materials and scientific research are made accessible to a wider audience, fostering innovation and progress.

In the realm of media and communication, translation facilitates the flow of information, ensuring that news, entertainment, and knowledge transcend linguistic barriers. In cinema, for instance, subtitling and dubbing allow films to be enjoyed by audiences worldwide, creating a shared cultural experience. Translation also plays a crucial role in international diplomacy and business, enabling effective communication and collaboration across linguistic divides.

Exploring translation in research

To celebrate the breaking down of language barriers, Frontiers has launched a series of Research Topics that delve into the evolving role of translation in society. These research initiatives aim to highlight the complexities and nuances of translation, showcasing its significance in various domains. This Research Topic features the following articles.

“*Negotiating Intersubjectivity by Interpersonal and Appraisal Shifts in Chinese-English Government Press Conference Interpreting*” explores the challenges and strategies involved in interpreting high-stakes political discourse (Xu and Liang). This study sheds light on the intricate process of conveying meaning and intent between languages with different cultural and political contexts.

“*Functional Relevance as a Principle of Translation Problem-Solving*” examines the pragmatic aspects of translation, focusing on how translators navigate linguistic and cultural obstacles to achieve effective communication (Sang). This research underscores the translator’s role as a mediator, balancing fidelity to the source text with the need to produce a coherent and culturally appropriate target text.

The article “*Reproducing Experiential Meaning in Translation: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Analysis on Translating Ancient Chinese Poetry and Prose in Political Texts*” delves into the translation of classical Chinese literature (Liu and Li). This study highlights the challenges of preserving the aesthetic and cultural essence of the original texts while adapting them to contemporary political discourse.

In “*Transadapting Western Picture Books into the Arabic Culture: The Finnish Snow Queen and the Qatari Desert Queen*,” researchers explore the cultural adaptation of children’s literature (Al-Adba). This article illustrates how translation can be a creative and transformative process, reshaping stories to resonate with new audiences while maintaining their core themes and messages.

“*Culturally Based Semantic Losses in Lonely Planet’s Travel Guides Translations for Beijing, Shanghai, and Sichuan*” investigates the impact of translation on travel

literature (Chen and Zhou). This study examines how cultural nuances and local knowledge are conveyed—or sometimes lost—in the translation of travel guides, affecting the reader’s experience and understanding of the destination.

Finally, “*English as a Lingua Franca in Interpreting and Translation: A Survey of Practitioners*” surveys the use of English as a global bridge language in the field of translation and interpreting (Abi-Mikasa et al.). This research highlights the dynamics of working in a lingua franca and the implications for linguistic diversity and intercultural communication.

The future of translation

As technology advances, the field of translation is undergoing significant transformation. Machine translation and artificial intelligence are becoming increasingly sophisticated, offering new tools and possibilities for language professionals. However, the human element remains indispensable, as the subtleties of language and culture require a nuanced understanding that machines cannot replicate.

Translation is a deeply human endeavor, rooted in empathy, creativity, and cultural awareness. The future of translation lies in the synergy between human expertise and technological innovation, enhancing the capacity to connect and communicate across languages.

Conclusion

International Translation Day is a celebration of the rich tapestry of languages and the dedicated professionals who weave them together. It is a recognition of the vital role that translation plays in fostering understanding, sharing knowledge, and bridging cultural divides. As we honor the legacy of St. Jerome, we also acknowledge the ongoing contributions of translators and language professionals who continue to shape our interconnected world.

In promoting multilingualism and the art of translation, we embrace the diversity of human expression and the shared humanity that binds us. The work of translators is not just about words on a page; it is about building bridges between people, cultures, and ideas. To honor the essence of International Translation Day, this Research Topic tries to celebrate the power of language to unite us and the transformative impact of translation in our global society.

Author contributions

SB: Conceptualization, Project administration, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. AB-B: Conceptualization, Project administration, Resources, Supervision, Writing – review & editing.

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