

Translation: A Tool of Power and Dominance

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The significance of translation has increased unprecedentedly since the latter half of the 1980s. This has resulted from the changes in the global landscape due to the drastic reshaping of the political, economic, and social systems with the culmination of the world wars, and most importantly, due to the expansion of global communication systems. The status-quo further intensified recently, owing to the new normal dawned in the midst of Coronavirus pandemic, where uninterrupted and timely information flow across borders has become an integral element of human existence. Hence, the present study explores the position of the translation in the modern social milieu, as a tool of power and dominance between different linguistic communities. Since the study is an exploration of dimensions embedded within the societal level, a highly qualitative, in-depth textual analysis of secondary data was conducted to garner the necessary data for the study. Books, research papers, newspapers, and historical records apropos to the investigation were thus analysed to devise a constructive outcome. The findings suggested that the act of translation is not just a linguistic exchange rendering a text written in one language in another, but rather a transnational phenomenon involving multiple dimensions of individual identity and community representation. The cultural mediation across transactions that cease to explicitly involve linguistic exchange provided a testament to the matter within the analysis. Moreover, the findings illustrated the formidable role portrayed by translation within the global power networks negotiating understanding amid global and local systems transferring information across linguistic boundaries. The garnered data indicated that institutions and authorities around the world, employ translation as a metaphorical tool in power relations to micromanage the information flow across the nations to assert their dominance in the affairs of the states. For instance, an international news bulletin is primarily a modulated form of translation transmitted to an audience to elicit a desired, pre-calculated response. Similarly, the findings suggested that the superiority of the English language in the international space is also promoted with the aid of translation, consolidating its' position as a link language. In contrast, the analysed data also suggested that the importance of fashioning and nurturing a national literature mostly subjugated by imperial languages, particularly English, also effectively reinforces the role of translation in the linguistic landscape. The findings also encompassed the impact the translation of literary texts such as the plays of William Shakespeare or the poems of Lord Byron had over revolutionary struggles of the yesteryear including the independence in the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empire. Hence, it is evident that in the globalised context of today, translation holds considerable prominence as an instrument of power and dominance in terms of its' universal and multidisciplinary nature.

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