



## Translation: Apparatus for effective communication in the era of globalization

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26648652.2023.v5.i1a.38>

### Abstract

Translation plays a significant role for accomplishing an effective communication in the era of globalization. Through translation, communication becomes easier between people of different languages. These days, more often than before, we get in contact with foreigners wherever we go and the only means through which effective communication can take place since we do not speak the same language with the foreigners is, translation or interpretation. Translation therefore, is one of the apparatus for achieving effective communication in this global era. It helps in mediating and bridging the distance between people, languages and the multicultural world thereby enhancing effective communication. As a result of translation, people have become familiar with various linguistic communities and cultures; it is a key factor and a necessity in the multicultural world we live. However, in order to achieve effective communication through translation globally, a good knowledge of two or more foreign languages is required. This paper examines translation and its relevance or roles for attaining effective communication in this era where the world is now seen as a global village.

**Keywords:** effective communication, globalization, translation, multicultural, foreign language

### Introduction

To keep up with the rapid speed of global development in today's globalized world, translation must be viewed as more than just a means to an end. Globalization is a trend that began in the economic sphere but has spread to permeate virtually every aspect of human life on a global scale. One author highlighted that people in a variety of fields and organizations are increasingly looking to expand their work outside their own region or country. One may, in a nutshell, claim that international boundaries no longer exist. As a result of globalization, barriers that once prevented free trade and travel between countries are now only partially in place. Inevitably, this gradual process of people joining a single global community has led to a greater degree of interdependence and connectivity among all of its members. This shift necessitates translation services as a means to facilitate better communication in a globalized, multilingual society. Therefore, translation helps advance globalization and foster friendly relations between states. So, it's a way for people from different languages, cultures, and parts of the world to talk to each other and share their ideas.

Due to globalization and the resulting increase in cultural diversity, linguistic barriers have become increasingly difficult to overcome. There are many different facets to the significance of translation in the modern world. According to Sharma (2018:13) <sup>[11]</sup>, the act of translating literature has a significant impact on the reader's ability to understand and appreciate it. This means that we can learn about other cultures and get insight into societies with diverse values and ways of life by reading works originally written in other languages and having those works translated for us. Through translation, we can learn about developments in sectors like communication, medicine, science, and

technology; the management of global businesses; and the discovery of previously undiscovered information. To satisfy people's insatiable thirst for knowledge in this age of globalization, translation has become increasingly important. According to Dinatu (2013:104) <sup>[4]</sup>, one of the ways in which the interests of different groups of people are being reconciled is through translation, since it can teach individuals to value and respect each other's ways of thinking and cultural backgrounds. Because it promotes understanding between people of diverse backgrounds in different countries, it has become an important tool for fostering international cooperation and effective communication.

### Effective Communication

The definition of "successful communication" hinges on a firm grasp of "communication" itself. The Latin term "communis," meaning "to make common or share," is where we get our English word "communication." Thus, to communicate means "to make common, to make known, or to share." So, communication is the process of sharing ideas, messages, or information through spoken words, nonverbal gestures, written text, or actions in order to build mutual understanding and trust.

Communication, according to Shuchi and Rachna (2015:3) <sup>[12]</sup>, is "the process of exchanging thoughts, feelings, and information with another person." Communication is "the act of conveying or sharing informative ideas," according to the Oxford English Dictionary. In contrast, "communication" is defined by Hasanat (2020:2) <sup>[6]</sup> as "the exchange of information, ideas, emotions, and attitudes between two or more individuals via verbal or non-verbal means."

It is clear from these definitions that communication is the process through which ideas are sent from one person to another or from one group of people to another, either verbally or in writing. Information transfer is only part of what we do. Any information, concept, or emotion needs to be conveyed with some degree of success. If you want to do this, you need to get rid of anything that might get in the way of clear communication.

Given these several definitions, it's clear that "effective communication" refers to the process of conveying one's ideas and information in a way that guarantees reception and interpretation in the same way that the sender intended. Susanne (2019:1) [16]. It is generally agreed that communication has taken place when a desired effect has been produced and is being maintained as a result of the sharing of information, whether that information has been shared intentionally or unintentionally, and whether or not the individuals involved have understood each other correctly. Facts, feelings, and convictions must be communicated clearly so that they can be acted upon as the sender intended. In order for the intended meaning of the message to be communicated, it is essential that the message not be corrupted in any way during transmission. There is no effective communication if the intended goal or result is not accomplished, which could be to elicit, modify, inspire action, build knowledge, inform, or transmit particular ideas or points of view.

In cases where this is not the case, efforts are being made to better understand the factors that serve as roadblocks to effective communication in order to better understand why the conversation was so unsuccessful. The language barrier is one of these constraints. Due to a lack of mutual understanding, whatever message is intended to be transmitted may be distorted by this barrier. Effective communication is hindered by the language barrier; therefore, translation is essential. There should be no linguistic barrier that might hinder communication in today's period of globalization, when people need to talk to each other for so many good reasons. Therefore, the use of translation is essential for efficient speech.

### Translation in the Era of Globalization

Translation which started many centuries ago has grown into a major form of communication, a strong channel for the circulation of ideas and opinions especially in the era of globalization. Though the exact origin of translation is not really known, but we do know a surprising amount about ancient translations and their impact.

Translation is not only necessary for the spread or circulation of information, knowledge and ideas but absolutely necessary for effective communication. The world is populated with different races and as such, there are diverse languages and cultures. So, to be able to facilitate effective communication among these diverse languages and cultures, translation is therefore the way out in resolving the language barrier problem.

Due to its relevance and prominence, translation has been viewed differently by authors and theorists in different ways. According to the British English Dictionary, translation is the act of translating the conversation of a text from one language to another. This simply means putting the text of a particular language into a different one while maintaining its original meaning. In line with that,

Newmark (1988:5) [9] defines translation as "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text." Ghazala (1995) [5] opines that translation is generally used to refer to the process and method used to convey the meaning of the source language into the target language. This definition also focuses on the notion of meaning as an essential element in translation, meaning that when translating, understanding the meaning of source text is important in order to have appropriate equivalent in the target text. Catford (1995:20) [2] defines "translation as the replacement of a textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)." Barzegar (2010:1) [1] on the hand, sees "translation as an attempt to replace a written message and or statement in one language by the same message and or statement in another language."

Based on these different definitions of translations, we can see its purpose or relevance to effective communication. It does not only convey the original tone and ink out of a message, but take into account the cultural and regional differences between source and target languages respectively.

Translation has its many roles or relevance in enhancing effective communication in the era of globalization. With the aid of translation, understanding among nations with different languages is achieved. Through translation the diffusion of knowledge in various domains such as; education, literature, science and technology, business and commerce, politics and diplomacy and tourism industry is also enhanced.

In the education sector for instance, translation plays a key role in the sense that currently, learners or students across the world may no longer go to foreign countries for higher studies since it is possible for them to have quick and easy access to open electronic translated educational resources and texts which can be easily retrieved, parsed and aligned to make teaching and learning more effective. These translated texts available in digital forms, are a great help to students and teachers who use them for all practical purposes. They help the learners to become acquainted with the different kinds of texts, their translation and the vocabulary used in the target language. Also, teachers and learners in both developing and developed countries depend upon the translations of the knowledge texts in the languages of their choice.

Translation is also playing a major role in the diffusion of literary works. With the aid of translation, a famous writer of one language gets translated into many other languages and receives worldwide recognition within a short while. The works of Brazilian writer Paulo Coelho, for instance, have been popular with readers across the world because of translation. He is acknowledged to have the status of Guinness World Record for being the most translated living author as his work *Alchemist* has been translated into eighty languages. Similarly, Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *Love in the Time of Cholera* and Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* were appreciated by readers all over the world when they got them through translation. Here in Nigeria for instance, the works of Chinua Achebe - *Things Fall Apart* (*Le Monde S'effondre* in French), *Anthills of the Savannah* (*Les Termitières de la Savane* in French etc.) as well as the works of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie – *Purple Hibiscus* (*L'Hibiscus Pourpre* in French), *Half of a Yellow Sun* (*L'autre Moitié du Soleil* in French etc.), have also received

much recognition in francophone countries and beyond because of their translated works into other languages. It is through translated books that readers get an idea of literatures and cultures across the world. Indeed, translation in the era of globalization has given global or international identity to some texts or writers by making them accessible to all.

More also, in science and technology the role of translation is very pertinent. In the era globalization, Information and Communication Technology has made the world a very small place. Though we now live like cyber-neighbours and are also able to get connected to our neighbours with the click of a mouse, but we cannot share our thoughts as we speak different languages. In a context like this, translation becomes relevant because it fills the global communication gap between the communities speaking different languages. In Business and Commerce, translation is also playing a major role. With the emergence of internet and the removal of trade barriers across borders, big companies as well as small enterprises are encouraged to go global. This changed business environment has given rise to the use of translation on a large scale for the promotion of products through advertising in many different languages. As such, the advertising industries use the services of specialized translation agencies or individuals to localize their products, boost their businesses and project their image in the popular media in different parts of the world. Even the descriptions of nutritional facts on the wrapper of most products contain translated texts. The user manuals of many multinational companies are now available in the regional or local languages to enhance the reach of products in larger markets.

Furthermore, translation is very relevant in the tourism industry. Globalization has dismantled the barriers between nations and as a result, migration of people from one nation to another has become much easier than before. This new development has encouraged lovers of nature and adventure seekers to move from one country to another in pursuit of happiness. Tourism industry has been the greatest beneficiary in this changed context being responsible to attend to the inflow of tourists from different countries speaking different languages into the new countries. With this, the need for translation and interpretation has increased manifold and it has resulted in the need for professional translators and interpreters to be hired by the tour and travel agencies to translate the brochures to help tourists visit places of tourist importance and as well act as tourist guides for tourists speaking languages other than theirs. Translation is also needed by these industries in order to update the information about their services on their respective websites to keep tourists from other foreign countries informed and contact them as and when required.

### **Globalization**

Having talked much about globalization, what actually is it all about? Globalization is a process of interaction and integration among many people, companies and goods of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investments and aided by information technology. This process has effects on the environment, culture, political systems, economic development and prosperity on human wellbeing in societies around the world or globe (Sunny 2017) <sup>[14]</sup>.

Globalization is not something new though, for thousands of years, people and later, corporations have been buying and selling to each other in lands at great distances, they have also invested in enterprises in other countries. However, it is generally believed that there is great difference between the world before globalization and the world after globalization in terms of trade, communication, transport and technology. It has been noted that there have been qualitative changes in lives of people and the growth of nations due to positive impact of globalization. Products and services that are available in one country now easily move to another country because of improvement as well as reduction in the cost of communication and transportation and this, is as a result of the wave of globalization.

This current wave of globalization has been driven by policies that have opened economies domestically and internationally. The policies and technological development of the era of globalization have not only spurred increases in cross-border trade and investments, but has also make migration from one country to another so large and this has make many observers believe that indeed the world has entered a qualitatively new phase in its economic development. Many governments have adopted free-market economic systems vastly increasing their own productive potential and creating a lot of new opportunities for international trade and investments. They have also negotiated dramatic reductions in barriers to commerce and have established international agreements to promote goods and services as well as investments. With the advantages of new opportunity in foreign markets, corporations have built foreign factories and have also established production and marketing arrangements. Globalization has indeed created a qualitative new and positive phase in business and commerce across the globe distinguishing the era of globalization from before the era of globalization. Research has shown that since 1950, for instance, the volume of world trade has increased by 20 times, and from just 1997 to 1999, flows of foreign investments nearly doubled from 468 billion dollars to 827 billion dollars, no wonder Thomas (2000:87) <sup>[15]</sup> could say that today, globalization is “farther, faster, cheaper and deeper”.

Not only has globalization brought nations closer, increase the volume of trade, it has also enhanced interactions between people and cultures of different nations. These interactions have made it possible for people to learn new languages and to remain connected to fellow people in neighbouring countries. The desire of people to learn new languages and understand foreign cultures has now boosted the need for translation services requested by educational institutions and private companies than any other time as they endeavor to share common interests and concerns, ideas and ideologies. This trend has slowly made the world to be multicultural as more cultures strive not only to be able to communicate in the other languages, but also have an understanding of cultural context, of those they deal with in order for their businesses to succeed. Globalization with the support of information and communication technology has made the world a small place.

### **Multiculturalism**

Multicultural is a situation in which ideas and beliefs of people from many different countries and cultural backgrounds are incorporated. Multiculturalism therefore, is a system in which people of different races, nationalities,

religions, languages and ethnicities live together in the world. It describes the manner in which a society or the world deals with cultural diversity and based on the underlying assumption that members of different cultures can coexist peacefully, the system expresses the view that the world is enriched by preserving, respecting and even encouraging cultural diversity.

Multiculturalism enhances inter-cultural relationship and encourages the people to retain, pass down, celebrate and share their unique cultural ways of life, languages, art, traditions and behaviors. The system is the key to achieving a high degree of cultural diversity in the world thereby making it possible to be able to recognize and value the cultural differences in every country.

Proponents of cultural diversity argue that it makes humanity stronger and may, in fact, be vital to long-term survival. In line with this, the General Conference of UNESCO which took place in 2001 took a position when it asserted in its Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, that "...cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature". Today, with the policies and technological development of the era of globalization that have not only spurred increases in cross-border trade and investments, but has also made migration from one country to another so large, the entire world, workplaces and schools are increasingly made up of various cultural, racial and ethnic groups. By recognizing and learning about these various groups, nations build trust, respect and understanding across all cultures. Indeed, individuals and organizations in all settings benefit from the different backgrounds, skills, experiences, knowledge and new ways of thinking that come with cultural diversity.

Translation is as well very pertinent for multiculturalism because it is concerned with breaking language barriers between people of different languages to enhance effective communication. In line with this, Cronin (2003:37) <sup>[3]</sup> affirms that translation is important in the era of globalization because of its major role in the preservation of cultural diversity. Also, interaction between different cultures can produce new and good ideas that can promote global peace. Multiculturalism is related to language diversity and as such, in order for translation to be able to play a crucial role in enhancing effective communication between different countries, knowledge of one or more foreign languages is required.

### **Foreign Language in the era of Globalization**

Foreign language is defined by IGI global dictionary as "a language not widely spoken and used by the people of a community or society or nation." That is to say, foreign language is a language that is originally from another country and is not officially used by the people of a given country even if some citizens of that country can speak, write and understand it. For instance, French is a foreign language in Nigeria.

Nevertheless, learning one or more foreign languages is of great relevance in the era globalization since doing this can enhance effective communication with the aid of translation. Paicu (2016:3) <sup>[10]</sup> observes that, in today's world, experts are often saying that people should learn a foreign language in order to cope with an interconnected and multicultural world. Learning a foreign language involves the acquisition of new language skills and a detailed understanding of the

world because language is an important part of culture and as a person learns a foreign language, his or her cultural horizon expands.

Ivan (2016:41) <sup>[8]</sup> opines that "language is a major branch of globalization and in close connection with aspects such as the new demographic social changes generated by the present wave of migrants from one country to another and the changes in economy, globalization demands more foreign languages, not less." Foreign language learning is of importance because the learning process is more than the simple learning of grammatical rules and acquisition of vocabulary. The learning process is able to put learners in a position where they are able to develop a deeper understanding of cultural specifics underlying the target language which can enhance appropriate translation for effective communication in the era of globalization where the world is interconnected and multicultural.

In addition to that, knowledge of one or more foreign languages helps one to develop the analytical skills needed to be an effective participant in national and international discussions. It helps one to be able to follow international events with insight, opening up perspectives to make you an informed and responsible citizen of your country and of the world. Having knowledge of a foreign language can also enrich your personal life, expands the range professional opportunities open to you and increases your power to act as a global citizen in a globalized world that is presently interconnected and diverse in culture.

### **Conclusion**

This paper examined the relevance of translation for effective communication in a world that is interconnected and multicultural in the era of globalization. Globalization has acted as a unifying and integrating force, bringing all nations together. This development demands the need for translation as a mediator between the different nations for effective international communication.

The paper has been able to let us know that translation is relevant for effective communication because it helps to clearly convey facts, sentiments and convictions of a speaker or writer in one language to the reader or listener in another language so as to be acted on, as desired by the speaker or writer. It also examined the relevance of translation in various spheres in the era globalization such as; Education, Literature, Science and Technology, Business and Commerce and the Tourism industry.

It has as well discussed globalization and its positive qualitative changes in the lives of people and the growth of nations with regards to how it has enhanced interactions between people and cultures of different nations. These interactions have made it possible for people to learn new languages and to remain connected to fellow people in neighbouring countries. This trend has slowly made the world to be multicultural as more cultures strive not only to be able to communicate in the other languages, but also have an understanding of cultural context, of those they deal with in order for their businesses to succeed. It then highlighted the need for the knowledge of one or more foreign languages in the globalization era so as to enable translation play a crucial role in enhancing effective communication between different countries since multiculturalism is related with language diversity.

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