

**ON THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION IN SPORTS
AND THE REFLECTIONS OF MISTRANSLATION**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to present the importance of translation and interpretation in sport. The study mainly focuses on why translation and interpretation is so significant in sports through the explanations and actual translation and interpretation examples. A content analysis of various translation and interpretation examples was conducted. There are numbers concerning translation and interpretation ranging from football to global sports events including the World Cup and the Olympics. I tried to highlight translation and interpretation's crucial contribution in making sports worldwide. Several translation and interpretation examples from different countries and languages were analyzed under "Skopos" theory in terms of functionality of a translation or interpretation.

***Keywords:** Translation, interpretation, skopos theory, sport*

INTRODUCTION

Sport is a field where almost all the countries in the world get closer on a common ground and create a universal language linking people around the world. Lots of tournaments and matches take place around the world and we spend a lot of time watching sports or following it on social media and internet. Behind the curtains there are interpreters and translators in almost all events, trainings, press conferences. And they are the ones who convey us the feelings and excitements of the other sportspeople. We frequently see athletes, soccer and basketball players as well as other sports players performing in different countries and this creates a necessity for translation including translation need within the teams. Today, it is quite normal to see a team

with a German coach, an English assistant coach and Turkish, Spanish, African players. In such a colorful atmosphere, it is inevitable to underestimate the significance of translation and interpretation. McPake and Johnstone express the value of translation as: “Translation should not be neglected because the demand is more invisible. Service users themselves may be unaware of the range of information from which they are being excluded. Furthermore, if translated information is being provided, service providers also “need to be sure that their target audiences are literate in the languages they speak” (McPake and Johnstone 2002). Translation is not only the team or individual sportsperson’s need; it is also a crucial need for the onlookers as sporting councils and teams need translators and interpreters to make sure that all competitors are aware of the regulations and rules. It is of great importance for referees and other officials to have multilingual skills especially if they take part in global sport events. Translation is transferring a text written in another language to the target language. It is a key factor in communication of different cultures. And “interpretation” is mainly conveying speeches from a certain language to another verbally. When we talk about “translation”, people might mainly think of literary translations, however translation is not only restricted to literature, we can assume that non-literary translations are far beyond the literature translations. Readers are usually aware of the fact that they read a translation text or book when they especially read literature, social sciences and philosophy. A reason for that is that they pay attention to the source, author and the source culture of the work (Gürçağlar, 2011). Whereas, from the drink we consume each day to the shampoo we use and the cooking instructions on foods are all translation texts. A translation is done in a certain context, if the subject is sport then the translator must bear in mind the sport context and also have experience or/and knowledge of the related sport. The expectations of the target text readers or the audience are of prior importance during the translation or interpretation process. It is impossible to keep translation apart from culture and context. Although they both serve for a communication transfer, there are some differences concerning how and under which circumstances they are done. In translation, a translator has a certain amount of time to read, review and do research about the text. This time amount might be hours, days, months or even years. Interpretation is, by nature, aims instant communication and has to be performed within seconds or minutes depending on its type/genre. Translation generally takes place at desk, sometimes at home, at work and alone. On the other hand, interpretation takes place in the place

of verbal communication such as conference halls, courts, hospitals, government offices etc. As an interpreter performs his job with at least 2 people or a group of people, he/she works in crowded places. Moreover, they have to travel in their work. During translation process, translators do comprehensive research. They utilize from books, dictionaries and the internet. Whereas, in interpretation process it is limited as there is time limit and inadequate access to research equipments (Gürçağlar, 2011).

Bearing these factors in mind, it can be said that translation process is performed in a more comfortable and convenient setting than interpretation. In today's sport world, translators and interpreters are required to have multilingual skills other than knowing only 1 foreign language as there are people from different countries of the world in a team or at a sport event. With Skopos theory and changing paradigms in translation, in 1984, Hans Vermeer and Katharina Reiss presented "skopos theory" which is a general translation theory based on functionalist view. Vermeer explained translation as an intercultural communicative and actional field. "Skopos" is a Greek word meaning "aim" or "purpose". As it is understood from the meaning, translation or interpretation is a process that is directly related to an aim. According to Vermeer's definition, translational act ends with a "target text" and this target text is constructed according to the adopted purpose. The purpose of the translation is defined by a person or an institution and mostly the employer who starts the translation process. According to this theory, translator is an expert and responsible for creating a target text that is appropriate for the purpose (Vermeer, 2000). Having defined what is meant with "skopos" theory in terms of translation, we will now move on to interpretation. It is without doubt a translation method that has been used since different languages started to exist on earth. It is much older than translation. There are mainly two paradigms in interpretation: the first one is the cognitive paradigm that is closely related to the features of psychology discipline and the other is cultural-social paradigm that has become prominent since 1990s when it started to develop in community interpreting.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method in this study is predominantly built on content analysis of various texts and speeches. There are 2 analyses of translated texts. One is from Turkish to English and the other one is the English translation of a Japanese player's words.

FINDINGS AND COMMENTS

Having stated the basics of translation and interpretation as well as the generally accepted theory, we can now move on to several statistics and numbers related to global sport events and examples of translation and interpretation with some mistaken parts and their correct alternatives. For instance, in the World Cup there are 32 teams all from different country. Although there were only 15 languages presented at the 2014 World Cup as some of the countries used the same language.

It was Spanish which was the most used language, shared by the teams from Ecuador, Spain, Colombia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Honduras. The English language came second, shared by Ghana, the United States, Nigeria, Australia and England. After English was the French language as residents of France, Belgium, Cameroon and Ivory Coast speak it. Then came German, spoken in Germany and Switzerland; and Portuguese, which is language of Portugal and Brazil. 10 other languages were also spoken within the other World Cup teams and that made translation and interpretation a crucial factor. They included Bosnian, Dutch, Korean, Italian, Japanese, Arabic, Greek, Russian, Persian and Croatian. In such a multilingual atmosphere without doubt translators were needed a lot. During the game, language is not very important however, everything else around the play requires speaking, translation and interpretation. That is the reason why interpreting and translation are important at the World Cup. The referees need to communicate with the players in a common language; and the spectators need to understand what goes on in the games and the tourists need translation and/or interpretation help as they get around the place of the event. In addition, written materials concerning the games need to be translated into various languages. When we come to the World Olympics, interpretation and translation services were of great importance. Nations from 207 countries attended the 2016 Rio Olympics with almost 500.000 viewers from around the world. Interpreters work with the teams to help them with their organization and planning (Davies, 2017). In order to be able to host different teams and viewers from all over the world, a country or organization has to provide adequate communication so that everyone understands rules, instructions and all about games. Translation and interpretation are not only important in the games and organizations but also in global sport broadcasting. As many leading sports are demanded throughout the world, we need translators and interpreters for the transfer of contents,

comments and other communicative parts. For instance, the UK Premier League and Spanish football league La Liga are broadcasted all over the world. After explaining the numbers concerning the languages and translation-interpretation in sport, we can try to handle problematic translation and interpretation examples and offer the ideal versions under “skopos” theory’s purpose and functionality aspects.

The following example is from a Turkish sports news website called “Ajansspor”. In their news dating back to 2012, they reported the Slovakian football player Miroslav Stoch’s Turkish translation of a message from its English version for the target Turkish readers. However, the translation of the text was mistaken.

The message and the translation were as follows:

RESULTS

Source text	Target text
(Source language: English)	(Target language: Turkish)
Sender: A football player	Recipient: Turkish People, Turkish Sport Media
“I am sick of this guy”. (The player’s words about his coach)	“Bu adamın hastasıyım”. (Turkish translation by Turkish Sports News Website “Ajansspor”)

The table above shows us the mistaken translation. “To be sick of someone” in “I am sick of this guy” is an idiomatic expression in English, meaning: “to be excessively exposed to someone with the result that you are annoyed”. Although it is an expression with a negative meaning, it is translated into Turkish as: “Bu adamın hastasıyım”, which is also an idiom in Turkish, meaning: “I am crazy for this guy”. The problem with this translation is that it has a positive meaning. Such a mistaken translation misleads the sport media and the people following sport. In order to avoid this kind of problems and inadequacies, translators of good talent and expertise should be hired.

Another mistranslation happened between Manchester United's former Japanese player Shinji Kagawa and the former coach David Moyes. On having no chance to feature in the team, he said: "You would ask the manager", in an interview. However, the English sport media such as "The Guardian", "Evening Standard" etc. translated it as: "Please ask David Moyes why I'm not in the side" or "Ask David Moyes why I'm not in United side". Although he did not mean to sound tense in his statement, the media chose to convey it in a sensational way. In both cases, we observe inappropriate translation and interpretation.

CONCLUSIONS

Sport and translation/interpretation have never been apart since sport took on the responsibility of joining different countries and nations. What we tried to do here was to reflect its critical role and how mistranslation and misinterpretation can lead to misunderstanding and/or ambiguity. As it is emphasized in "skopos" theory, translators or interpreters should be expert in the related field for an appropriate target translation or interpretation. They should be aware of the needs of the target audience. They should also consider the crucial effect of the cultural aspects for an ideal translation/interpretation because translation is beyond just language skills.

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