




At the Crossroads of Words and Worlds: Translation, Cognition, and Pedagogy

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Abstract: *This issue of the journal presents a rigorous collection of fourteen scholarly articles, systematically covering the key domains within translation studies, language pedagogy, intercultural communication, and applied linguistics. Collectively, the contributions offer a comprehensive investigation into the multifaceted dimensions of translation processes, linguistic competence, and cultural mediation across a diverse range of languages and sociolinguistic contexts, including Arabic, French, Spanish, English, Ukrainian, and Tolaki. Several articles investigate translation strategies in media and literature, such as the adaptation of movie titles, comics, and news discourse. These studies highlight the interplay between fidelity, cultural adaptation, and audience reception. Further studies examine the challenges inherent in specialized text translation, particularly within religious discourse, emphasizing the necessity of negotiating ideological, theological, and fine-grained semantic dimensions. Pedagogical approaches are also a core focus in this issue, with studies exploring the efficacy of cultural immersion techniques, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) models, targeted phraseology instruction, and the strategic integration of generative artificial intelligence (AI) into modern language curricula. Finally, research on communicative competence, sociolinguistic attitudes, and self-translation in political discourse. Further contributions explore communicative competence, sociolinguistic attitudes, and the distinctive dynamics of self-translation in political discourse, shedding light on the intricate relationships between language, society, and professional practice. Taken together, the articles highlight the complexity, interdisciplinarity, and applied significance of contemporary translation and language research. This foreword situates the contributions within current scholarly debates, elucidates their thematic interconnections, and underscores their implications for research, pedagogy, and professional practice.*

Keywords: *Translation Strategies; Religious Text Translation; Intercultural Competence; Language Pedagogy; Artificial Intelligence; Communicative Competence.*

Translation and language studies fundamentally operate at the intersection of multiple academic disciplines, firmly establishing their status as inherently interdisciplinary fields that draw upon the theoretical and methodological apparatuses of linguistics, cultural analysis, cognitive psychology, and pedagogy (Baker, 2018; Pym, 2014; Didenko et al., 2024). In an era characterized by accelerated globalization, these fields face a dynamic array of unprecedented challenges and emerging opportunities (Cronin, 2013; O'Brien, 2012). These transformative pressures stem notably from the rapid advancement and proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies within machine translation, which necessitates a critical re-evaluation of human expertise and professional practices. Concurrently, there is an escalating imperative to cultivate and enhance intercultural communicative competence among language learners and professional practitioners (Kokkonen, Jager, Frame, and Raappana, 2025). This growing recognition strategically positions translation not merely as an act of linguistic substitution or textual transfer, but rather as a complex mediating practice that critically engages with nuanced cultural and communicative dimensions.

Recent research highlights how translation tasks embedded in language pedagogy can enhance communicative competence and learning outcomes, particularly when integrated with communicative and culturally oriented activities (Ping, 2024; Hoyte-West, 2024; Ouahmiche& Bouguebs, 2024). Furthermore, contemporary studies decisively show that the systematic development of translation technology competence, encompassing critical components such as emotional, innovation, and psychological factors, constitutes an essential prerequisite for effectively preparing students to meet the

evolving demands of the technology-driven language service market (Zhou et al., 2024). Moreover, recent empirical work focusing on the context of AI-assisted translation education reveals that students' engaged interaction with advanced generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT, can effectively support the acquisition of complex translation skills while simultaneously illuminating nascent challenges related to effective feedback mechanisms and critical revision practices within the learning process (Xu et al., 2024; Sahari et al., 2025). Broader investigations into translator training and market needs suggest that aligning curricula with technological competencies and intercultural effectiveness remains a pressing concern across regions (Adapting to technological change, 2024). Together, these contributions provide empirical, theoretical, and applied insights into translation processes, language pedagogy, and intercultural communication, situating them within contemporary debates about technology, cognition, and global educational practice. The fourteen contributions in this issue collectively address these concerns, offering empirical, theoretical, and applied insights into translation processes, language pedagogy, and intercultural communication.

*At the heart of this issue is how translation strategies vary across different types of texts and formats. Rodpan and Khamchaiya study how English romantic movie titles are translated into Thai. They find that translators use several approaches: direct translation, partial translation with extra Thai words, transliteration, or even leaving out the original title entirely. Their work shows that translators must balance staying true to the original with making the title meaningful and appealing to Thai audiences. This supports Venuti's (1995) idea that translation is not just about language; it's a purposeful, culturally shaped act. Similarly, Squatrito examines how Guy de Maupassant's short story *Boule de Suif* was turned into a graphic novel by Li-An. Because the graphic novel format has its own visual and structural limits, the translator had to add, remove, or rework parts of the text. This study demonstrates that translation is not only about words; it also involves images, layout, and storytelling choices, broadening how we think about translation beyond just written text.*

In the field of specialized discourse, particularly religious texts, translation requires careful attention to semantic, ideological, and cultural fidelity. Gunawan and his associates investigate the translation of interfaith Qur'anic verses into Tolaki. Their study reveals the employment of seven translation techniques, including established equivalence and modulation, to preserve both theological meaning and cultural intelligibility. Sahki further examines the translation of Islamic religious texts from Arabic into French and Spanish, comparing human translators with the AI system ChatGPT. While AI demonstrates general translation competence, the study highlights its limitations in preserving nuanced religious and theological meanings, confirming the irreplaceable role of human translators in specialized domains. Collectively, these studies illuminate the delicate balance between linguistic accuracy, cultural adaptation, and ideological fidelity in translating religious texts.

The issue also foregrounds translation pedagogy and language acquisition, with multiple studies exploring strategies to enhance learner competence and engagement. Mahmoud investigates the impact of cultural immersion on advanced Arabic learners,

using CEFR-based measures of fluency, spontaneity, and cultural awareness. The findings highlight the efficacy of immersive, context-rich experiences in fostering authentic language use. Similarly, Taleb Abderrahmene Karima et al.) examine the teaching of Spanish phraseology in Algerian higher education through the integration of generative AI. Their experimental study demonstrates significant improvements in comprehension, retention, and contextual application. These findings reveal the potential of AI as a supportive pedagogical tool in second language acquisition. Ouarniki et al. examine the application of Soft CLIL in electronics courses, showing how technical content and English language skills can be integrated within a hybrid learning environment. Together, these studies highlight the pedagogical value of contextualized, technology-enhanced, and interdisciplinary approaches to language instruction.

Another key theme is the development of communicative and intercultural competence. Didenko et al. investigate how Ukrainian and English learners are prepared for professional communication, noting the role of cultural context in shaping interaction. Rugigana et al. study intercultural competence among French teachers and students in Rwanda, showing how awareness of one's own culture and that of others can support mutual understanding and reduce personal biases. These studies align with Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence, which describes how attitudes, knowledge, and skills interact to support communication across cultural contexts.

In the cognitive and linguistic field, Chau et al. explore self-regulatory strategies used by learners to manage foreign language classroom anxiety. They identify metacognitive, affective, social, and appraisal strategies as important for supporting learner autonomy and learning effectiveness. Peršurić Antonić examines code glosses in Croatian and English tourist brochures, showing how textual clarification strategies improve accessibility and persuasiveness, particularly in translated materials. Together, these studies offer insights into the cognitive, metacognitive, and discursive aspects of language use and translation.

The issue also includes research on the sociolinguistic and political dimensions of language. Sleiman et al. study gendered linguistic attitudes in Beirut and find that perceptions of dialects show little difference between genders, which may reflect the influence of multilingual urban settings. Bouchikhi explores self-translation practices among high-ranking Algerian government officials, showing how foreign language proficiency and self-translation shape political discourse. These studies highlight the connections between language, society, and power, illustrating how linguistic choices are shaped by social and political contexts.

Finally, several contributions examine metaphorical and cultural dimensions of language learning. Büyüksaraç examines learners' metaphorical views of French as a second language and finds a range of conceptualizations, such as links to music, art, love, poetry, and lifestyle. These metaphorical representations offer insight into how learners cognitively and emotionally relate to the language, supporting the relevance of cultural and context-based approaches in language teaching.

The fourteen articles, while diverse in focus, point to several interrelated themes in current translation and language studies. First, the tension between fidelity to the source and adaptation to the target context appears consistently, whether in the translation of films, comics, news, or religious texts. Translators in these contexts navigate the balance between retaining original meaning and meeting the expectations of target audiences. Second, the relationship among language, culture, and cognition is reflected in research on polysemy, metaphor, code glosses, and communicative competence. These studies illustrate how language processing and translation involve cognitive and metacognitive processes. Third, pedagogical approaches that incorporate cultural immersion, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and AI-supported instruction are associated with improved learner outcomes, contributing to both language proficiency and intercultural competence. Finally, the social, political, and professional aspects of language use highlight the wider roles of translation and communication, showing how language functions in relation to power, identity, and cross-cultural interaction.

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This issue also represents the collective engagement of our readership, encompassing scholars, academics, and students, whose intellectual curiosity and active participation continually propel the dialogue forward at the intersection of “words and worlds”. Contributors anticipate that the discussions presented herein will catalyze continued inquiry and collaborative research within translation studies and related fields. Authors respectfully dedicate this issue to the sustained pursuit of knowledge across linguistic, national, and cognitive frameworks.

Authors' Biodata

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Authors' Contribution

The Foreword of this volume is the product of a collaborative effort involving scholars from Algeria, Nigeria, and Kenya, a combination of expertise that significantly elevated its regional and scholarly depth. Contributors from Algeria established the conceptual and structural foundation. Their contribution focused on establishing the broader intellectual context and defining the work's overall significance. Furthermore, they coordinated the structural development and ensured rigorous thematic alignment with the publication's core objectives. Contributors from Nigeria enriched the Foreword by providing critical reflection on regional applicability and practical implications. This perspective offered essential context-specific commentary, thus strengthening the Foreword's

resonance within the region. The contributor from Kenya supplied key editorial guidance and comparative input. This input was vital for refining the narrative, ensuring its ultimate clarity, coherence, and intellectual balance. Accordingly, the final version of the Foreword underwent a comprehensive review and received formal approval from all participating contributors.

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The authors declared no conflicts of interest to the article's research, authorship, and/or publication.