

## Specialized Translation: The Contribution of Intercultural Communication and Strategic Management to the Competitiveness of Multinationals

Euphrosyne Efthimiadou

(1. Department of Aviation Science, Hellenic Air Force Academy, 2. School of Humanities, Hellenic Open University, Greece)

**Abstract:** Nowadays intercultural communication and strategic management are necessary in order to provide new challenges, aiming at multicultural negotiation in global marketplaces; they also contribute to the global growth and the creation of a professional network. Due to the globalization of the world's economy, the interdependence of the economic, production and consumption activities and the markets requires that managers of all levels develop sensitivity to cross-cultural communication, intercultural negotiation, and decision-making. On the other hand, intercultural communication and strategic management can lead to the sustainable development and the efficient use of resources. Undoubtedly, cultural diversity gains ground in the professional sphere but it presupposes a diversity of practices on the part of the translators specialized in ways of thinking and acting. The development of the tools promoting intercultural communication creates new synergies. Overcoming the barriers of language, intercultural skills aim at the management of team work through negotiation in all its forms, drawing upon experience and the expertise in multicultural activities within multinational corporations.

**Key words:** specialized translation, intercultural communication and strategic management, terminology databases

### 1. Introduction

Currently, intercultural communication and strategic management represent the indispensable condition to obtain new market-shares in the global business context and the creation of a professional network. It also contributes to the sustainable development and the efficient use of resources. In the act or process of translating, it is vital to strengthen *the cultivation of transversal competencies*, in order to explore multicultural negotiation in global settings.

It is not only a question of designing the common practices but also the necessity of providing new challenges in the field of building multicultural negotiation in the global marketplaces. Universities and large corporations are now using interdisciplinary approaches to achieve efficiencies and promote innovation, and since translation students are given the tools to become active participants in creative or executive processes, they can improve industry standards and practices (Fiola, 2013).

On the one hand, we will refer to the contribution of — intercultural communication and strategic management in the professional environment. On the other hand, we will consider the strategies of the specialized

---

Euphrosyne Efthimiadou, Ph.D., Assistant Professor at Hellenic Air Force Academy, Tutor at Hellenic Open University (HOU); research areas/interests: didactics and methodology of French as a foreign language, French for special purposes, innovation and creativity in teaching/learning strategies. E-mail: [efrosin13@yahoo.com](mailto:efrosin13@yahoo.com).

translation demonstrating the qualifications of future specialized translators. Finally, we will focus on applications of new technologies for terminology purposes and especially on multilingual development and multimedia, while observing the ambiguities of translation which arise in intercultural communication and strategic management.

## **2. Intercultural Communication and Strategic Management in the Professional Environment**

Because of the impact of globalization, intercultural communication and strategic management contribute to the enhancement of the professional environment not only by obtaining new market shares but also by the sustainable development and the efficient use of resources. The ability to transfer ideas from one context similar or even diverse to another, allows the construction of concepts while respecting cultural values.

### **2.1 Skills Development for Intercultural Communication and Strategic Management**

The learning skills have been designated to cultivate knowledge, intellectual abilities and operational capacities. Under this aspect, cultural and linguistic skills must join the discursive and pragmatic linguistic abilities. According to Byrne (2009), Gerhard Hempel, in his study of technical manuals in Italian and German, shows how culture manifests itself in texts and how interference between cultural conventions can affect the quality of translations. The cultural factors are part of the language of specialty and lead to the adoption of behavioral strategies.

Referring to intercultural communication, it can become a strategic management tool because it encompasses various identities in a multidimensional framework. Facing challenges in an intercultural context in order to balance the tensions which may occur, is a matter of great importance. In this sense, we must design a schema of interaction where the cultural factor becomes a challenge, in our attempt to acquire a competitive market. Professions of multilingual communication have developed rapidly over the last 20 years, either due to the pressure from technological changes or as a result of the transformation of the markets, linked to globalization, outsourcing and flexibility (Gambier, 2009).

### **2.2 Intercultural Communication and Strategic Management under the Perspective of Global Economic Competitiveness**

Because of the globalization of the world's economy, the interdependence of economic and production and consumption activities and the markets aims at managers of all levels who should develop sensitivity to cross-cultural communication, intercultural negotiation, and decision-making. The process of making decisions, reaching agreements, and building consensus has changed, requiring an understanding of cross-cultural communication competence (Okoro, 2012).

Furthermore, the multilingualism becomes the link that strengthens the competitiveness of enterprises in an international context. In fact, the English language monopolizes the exchanges among the setting up of multinationals everywhere in the world. It would be desirable to invest to other international languages such as French, to reinforce the competitiveness of the enterprises. In fact, intercultural skills should be acquired in order to retain the markets and increase the number of sales. The Unesco World Report emphasizes that cultural diversity is becoming an increasingly important concern of corporate management, and research is taking place in order to assess the diversity performance link in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Recent research suggests the existence of a positive link between diversity and the financial and economic performance of

multinational corporations (2009). In the world of business, it is question of management of multicultural skills and expertise of practices or the know-how is bound to know how to act.

- The *LanQua intercultural communication group members* argue that intercultural communication comprises a complex combination of knowledge, skills and attributes which are reflected in learners behaviour and are infrequently taught and evaluated holistically (Célio Conceição, 2007–2010). Awareness of the multidimensional applications of languages of specialty in the international organizations and international companies is more than necessary, since it emphasizes the need for intercultural expertise through the use of languages or through the establishment of interpersonal relations, which allows, on the one hand, self-identification and, on the other hand, establishing relationship with others. As Montgomery indicates, “Yet all involve communicative acts of transport between languages — they are all ‘translation’ person-to-person. Their diversity, of course, is the mark of the human dimension in science, its interactive, social qualities and character. What they suggest is that the word ‘translation’ is itself unequal to the reality — a term like ‘conversion’ or ‘transfer’ might be applied to this multi-dimensional and often momentary movement of science among languages.” (Montgomery, 2009).
- For this reason, translators must know how to act in a competitive world market and cultivate these skills which will enable them to exercise their influence in the areas of communication, marketing and human resources management. The implementation of strategies and the maintenance of cultural diversity are intimately linked to the ability to establish intercultural negotiation.

### **2.3 Intercultural Communication and Strategic Management towards Sustainable Development**

Moreover, intercultural communication and strategic management can lead to sustainable development and to efficient use of resources. Like managers, the specialized translators can learn to better understand the behavior of their staff and be flexible to give sense to their international activity.

It is important not to neglect the cultural parameters while planning-strategies for international cooperation, since it is through that cultural aspect that communities and social groups find their identity and draw upon dynamic resources to be engaged in a policy of sustainable development. “In a globalized business world, very different cultures are brought into professional contact across multinational partnerships, mergers and relocations. Today’s managers are increasingly aware of the need to take cultural factors into account in order to optimize company performance.” (UNESCO World Report, 2009). It can hardly be disputed that cultural diversity gains ground in the professional sphere; however, it presupposes a diversity of practices on the part of translators specialized in certain ways of thinking and acting. Thus, a policy favoring cultural diversity could create beneficial conditions to achieve language revitalization. Learning to collaborate creatively with people from other cultures is a vital skill in today’s business environment, professor Roy Y. J. Chua states, whose research focuses on a key measure psychologists have dubbed “cultural metacognition” (Blanding, 2012).

### **3. The Strategic Stakes of Specialized Translation**

It is evident that behind the use of lingua franca different cultures are hidden. For this reason, it is considered essential to evolve specialized translation toward the areas of marketing, negotiation and management. Certainly, the attempt to overcome the barriers of a language encourages the mastery of process, profitability, as well as concentration of innovative forces. As far as the specialized translators are concerned, they must be able not only to control the linguistic skills but also to possess specific experience in the industrial world, as well as deep knowledge of the mentality of the company from their own culture.

### **3.1 New Challenges in Intercultural Professional Contacts**

As we live in a world that perpetually moves, in order to achieve innovation in all its forms, we must take into account the training of persons who aim at making ambitious projects in a multicultural environment.

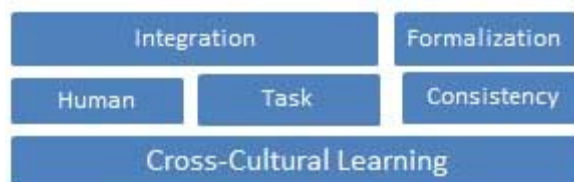
If the companies succeed in increasing the skills of their staff towards the adoption of intercultural management strategies, they will ensure international cooperation avoiding tensions and misunderstandings. To confront the new challenges in intercultural professional contacts, we can be instructed to react with flexibility and effectiveness when we encounter partners of different cultures. The intercultural management is a blend of knowledge, insight and skills necessary to juggle properly between the different regional and national cultures, at different levels of management within and between organizations (Gomerzano, 2009). Thus, the development of tools to promote intercultural communication creates new synergies. Overcoming language barriers, intercultural skills aim at the management of team work by negotiation in all its forms, drawing upon experience and expertise in multicultural activities within multinational corporations.

### **3.2 What Are the Qualifications of Specialized Translators?**

Equally, the training of translators has to be renewed in the purpose of meeting the requirements of the market and of covering deficiencies in the area of intercultural specialization and professionalization. In the field of marketing, the translators cultivate dynamic exchange with advertising agencies to lift the constraints of translation and act with creativity to the challenges while working closely with their partners. It occurs that the performance of the team work can be accelerated if we focus our interest on group cohesion and active participation in common projects. This dynamic exchange and proximity allows the translator to reveal creative and effective solutions.

Due to globalization, we live in a global village that must share different cultures. A single message is addressed directly to the target audience through the use of intercultural strategies. The role of the translators is to make the necessary adjustments to the original text and to intervene effectively, while taking into account its visual elements. The translator may also include the changes for recontextualising the message. Therefore, it becomes the translator's and not the writer's or the expert's responsibility to draft the content of the messages presented in the target culture and to take very important decisions regarding adjustments to be made in relation to the content of the original message (Vandal-Sirois, 2011).

In addition, translators must provide the original text but also the tools and resources to explore all possible solutions and adapt the text in a broader context by integrating it into a dynamic entity. Far from being limited to a single linguistic transfer, the establishment of a genuine situation allows to detect and to better grasp the nature of changes to achieve. As Coisne noted, cross-cultural integration management is a formalized, consistent management process. It builds convergence in alleviating tensions, turns threats into opportunities and reconciles diverging views of reality in achieving task and sociocultural integration. It is based on mindful enactment of both objective and subjective culture through cross-cultural learning (Coisne, 2014).



**Figure 1 The Building-blocks of Integration**

In this way, the function of the specialized translators expands to carry out market studies for the purpose of adopting strategies of communication which will conclude in seeking solutions to face textual constraints. They manage to make evidence of inventiveness and originality, to work in partnership with specialists and to search for the formal qualities of a message, both functional and cultural. The possibility to perform their task in a state of autonomy offers them the opportunity to measure the impact created in the clientele of the target culture. In this case, it is essential to know how to negotiate with their partners but also to be able to change their reflexes and, in general, their ways to adapt in a multicultural environment. This new and multidimensional dynamic opens a range of changes in their professional environment.

#### **4. The Use of New Technologies for Terminology Purposes**

Given that the information and communication technologies have suggested new tools to the specialized translation, such as: automatic processing and computer-assisted translation, it is crucial to train specialists in multimedia communication to meet the new requirements which emerge with the constant evolution in economic and technological sectors. There is a need for real managers of information who can master the new multimedia tools in order to adapt in a diversified environment.

##### **4.1 Terminology and Ambiguities of Intercultural Communication and Strategic Management**

Nowadays, the access to the corpus consisting of scanned documents is facilitated. With the development of the ICT, the possibilities of interfaces with the development of combinatory on line lexicons widens the prospects of applications for the specialized translators.

According to common practices, the translators perform an automatic translation while restricting themselves to a verification of the translation. However, the specialized translators must, on the one hand, use translation tools such as online dictionaries, terminology databases, translation memories and, on the other hand, master the tools of multilingual computing and thus they must be able to evaluate everything, by combining linguistic knowledge with digital skills. According to Humbley “In a didactic approach, we must carry out an assessment in class, in the course of translation studies and scientific English. According to this approach, we may have three types of corpora:

- a corpus aligned: it includes a translation of texts in French.
- A parallel corpus: it includes the articles, in French and in English, which are on the same issue.
- A corpus of articles created in English by the francophone authors, then corrected on condition that the monitoring change form on these articles.” (Matas-Runquist, 2008). This taxonomic task aims at providing terminological knowledge in a multidisciplinary context.

In cases where it would be helpful to the future translators to be aware of the need to carry out research in corpus and to use advanced tools, we explore the field of experimentation in order to provide new potentialities in the research on specialized translation. Research tools on corpora such as the concordancers arise as an essential support to better manage the terminology embedded in software. The bilingual concordancer Multitrans allows us making reconciliations in similar corpora and better manage its terminological and sentential research. As Frérot C. emphasizes, “(...) of surveys conducted in professional translators showed their keen interest in the use of software for constitution and exploration of corpus as well as terminology extraction from corpus on specific areas, what allows precisely Multitrans”. As well, the choice of this tool is motivated by:

“the contribution of corpus for the translation, the adequacy to the needs and interests of translators, the rapid

creation of corpus aligned, access to entire texts in the two languages, the navigation in the corpus (access to the entire corpus), and, the automatic extraction of terminology and the management of terminology.” (Frérot, 2010).

More specifically, it could raise the ambiguities in the technical and scientific communications and design as in terminological units in context, in order to integrate them in linguistic and discursive practices. Thus, the electronic corpora and multimedia tools such as concordancers and terminological extractors offer the opportunity to combine linguistic resources and computing to the specialized translation.

#### **4.2 Why Improve Intercultural Communication and Strategic Management in Specialized Translation?**

Far from being a fixed entity, a language lives in a perpetual motion by incorporating new terms. The translators must have their data banks renewed with the neologisms which are created each time in the fields of science and technology. Within the framework of the enrichment of the French language specialized commissions of terminology and neology have been created.

Apart from the partnerships with francophone organizations, who work for the international standardization by performing systematic work and multilingual terminological harmonization, there is also FranceTerme ([www.franceterme.culture.fr](http://www.franceterme.culture.fr)), which is the digital platform of resources of official terminology of the general delegation for the French language and the languages of France. With regard to the research in the translation sciences and the intercultural management, the Center for Applied Research on translation, interpretation and language (CRATIL) collaborate with French and international researchers in an interdisciplinary project to achieve an intercultural mediation in the areas of translation, interpretation and management, while considering the economic, political and social implications of the multilingual communication, as well as the intercultural management. In Portugal, as Fernando Ferreira-Alves indicates, “A part from its commercial use, the site ([www.ProZ.com](http://www.ProZ.com)) is based on a strong sense of community where information is shared among professionals and data exchanged between peers and partners alike. It is also a very important search/research tool for its terminology databases, information/knowledge retrieval data and language/domain field directories associated with language pairs and domain fields or areas of specialisation.” (Fernando Ferreira-Alves, 2009).

Intercultural communication and strategic management aim at the construction of new knowledge and know-how in a society that is mobilized with the creation of new scientific concepts and techniques. The challenge of the specialized translation lies in the fact that the perception of reality differs, depending on the culture of the individuals. In this sense, the specialist translator remains ambiguous, since he/she seeks of diversified skills and it is a prerequisite to know how to act and to be flexible to adapt in a multicultural context. On the one hand, he/she is perfected in the techniques of reformulation and, in the search for specialized phraseology while mastering methodological skills, lexical and specific techniques. On the other hand, he/she is characterized by mastery of terminological data and multimedia multilingual tools because he/she becomes a manager of both linguistic and digital services.

### **5. Conclusion**

With globalization, there is therefore a need of creating a new generation of specialized translators which would enrich the professional field in order to meet the challenges of intercultural management. They should be able to acquire methodological skills essential for action within the international companies such as intellectual flexibility, writing skills and openness towards the others. As Gomerzano indicates, the translators of today must therefore rise to the challenge and find the whole place they deserve in the new economic configuration

(Gomerzano, 2009). Whilst integrating it into a market of international work, they will be able to respond to the expectations of the international organizations, the professional associations and the multinational corporations.

## References

- Blanding M. (2012, June). "Collaborating across cultures", available online at: <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/6687.html>.
- Byrne J. (2009, January). "The coming of age of technical translation: An introduction", *Jostrans: The Journal of Specialized Translation*, No. 11, available online at: [http://www.jostrans.org/issue11/art\\_introduction.php](http://www.jostrans.org/issue11/art_introduction.php).
- Coisne C. (2014, May). "Leveraging cultural differences for M&A performance: A cross-cultural management approach", *Le Bulletin du Cratil*, No 12, pp. 22–24, available online at: <http://www.lebulletinducratil.fr/index.php/fr/leveraging-cultural-differences-for-m-a-performance-a-cross-cultural-management-approach>.
- Ferreira-Alves F. (2009, January). "Job perceptions, identity-building and interpersonal relations among translators as a professional group in Northern Portugal", *ILCEA*, available online at: <http://ilcea.revues.org/1119>.
- Fiola M. (2013). "Should the market dictate the content of specialized translation curricula?", *Connexions, International Professional Communication Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 59–63, available online at: <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/6687.html>.
- Frérot C. (2010). "Outils d'aide à la traduction: pour une intégration des corpus et des outils d'analyse de corpus dans l'enseignement de la traduction et la formation des traducteurs", *Les Cahiers du GEPE, Outils de traduction-outils du traducteur*, No. 2, available online at: <http://www.cahiersdugepe.fr/index1164.php>.
- Gambier Y. (2009, January). "Competences for professional translators, experts in multilingual and multimedia communication", EMT Expert Group, Brussels, available online at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/programmes/emt/key\\_documents/emt\\_competences\\_translators\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/programmes/emt/key_documents/emt_competences_translators_en.pdf).
- Gomerzano Nathalie (2009, November). "Management", *Le Bulletin du Cratil*, No 4, pp. 8–11, available online at: [http://www.lebulletinducratil.fr/images/bulletinsPDF/bulletin\\_4\\_novembre\\_2009.pdf](http://www.lebulletinducratil.fr/images/bulletinsPDF/bulletin_4_novembre_2009.pdf).
- LanQua Intercultural Communication Group Members (Coordinator Célio Conceição) (October 2007–September 2010), "Intercultural communication", Language Network for Quality Assurance, available online at: <http://www.lanqua.eu/theme/intercultural-communication>.
- Matas-Runquist N. (2008). "Intégration des problématiques disciplinaires et culturelles dans la langue de spécialité scientifique et juridique", *Le français de spécialité. Enjeux culturels et linguistiques*, Paris: Les Editions de l'Ecole Polytechnique, Palaiseau, pp. 207–218.
- Montgomery Scott (2009, January). "English and Science: Realities and issues for translation in the age of an expanding lingua franca", *Jostrans, The Journal of Specialised Translation*, No. 11, available online at: [http://www.jostrans.org/issue11/art\\_montgomery.php](http://www.jostrans.org/issue11/art_montgomery.php).
- Okoro E. (2012). "International organizations and operations: An analysis of cross-cultural communication effectiveness and management orientation", *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, Vol. 12, No. 23, Version 1.0, available online at: [https://globaljournals.org/GJMBR\\_Volume12/6-International-Organizations-and-Operations.pdf](https://globaljournals.org/GJMBR_Volume12/6-International-Organizations-and-Operations.pdf).
- Peraldi S. (2009, November). "Terminologie", *Le Bulletin du Cratil*, No 4, pp. 22–24, available online at: [http://www.lebulletinducratil.fr/images/bulletinsPDF/bulletin\\_4\\_novembre\\_2009.pdf](http://www.lebulletinducratil.fr/images/bulletinsPDF/bulletin_4_novembre_2009.pdf).
- Peraldi S. (2014, April). "Promoting intercultural competence in translators", in: *ATISA VII Conference: Where Theory Meets Practice*, New York University.
- Scarpa Frederica (2010). *La traduction spécialisée: une approche professionnelle à l'enseignement de la traduction*, Ottawa: Presses Universitaires de l'Ottawa.
- Unesco World Report (2009). "Investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue", pp. 1–38, available online at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001847/184755e.pdf>.
- Vandal-Sirois H. (2011). "Publicités multilingues: l'apport du traducteur en agence de communication marketing", *ILCEA*, pp. 1–22, available online at: <http://ilcea.revues.org/1106>.