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Beyond Machine Translation: The Educational Power of Translation

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Abstract

Over the past two decades, the call for a reassessment of the role of translation in foreign language teaching (FLT) has evolved from a controversial proposition into one of the central issues of contemporary language education. The long-standing -marginalization of translation can be attributed, at least in part, to its historical association with the Grammar-Translation Method. As a result, the shortcomings of a teaching approach largely focused on grammatical instruction were frequently transferred to translation itself as a pedagogical tool. Today, however, the renaissance of translation in FLT can be regarded as an accomplished fact. Against this backdrop, the present paper explores the educational resources of translation within the broader paradigm of contemporary competence-based education and, more specifically, within modern foreign language teaching.From this perspective, translation should no longer be viewed primarily as a means of ensuring communication. In an era of rapidly advancing translation technologies, this function can increasingly be delegated to digital tools. Rather, translation should be reconsidered as a powerful developmental instrument possessing a unique synergistic effect. The paper argues that translation creates favorable conditions for the enhancement of learners' cognitive capacities, particularly in the domains of metalinguistic awareness, cross-linguistic mediation, and bilingual cognition. It is through these dimensions that translation can make a substantial contribution to the formation of higher-order cognitive skills and to the broader educational objectives of twenty-first-century language learning. The paper therefore proposes a shift from viewing translation as a communicative aid toward understanding it as a cognitive and educational practice capable of fostering learners' linguistic, metacognitive, and intercultural development.

Keywords: (meta)cognition; competence-based; synergistic effect; cross-linguistic mediation