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Usmanu Danfodiyo University,
Sokoto

*Corresponding author's email:
syakasai2013@gmail.com

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Bridging the Gap: The Critical Role of Translation in One-Health Programs

Salisu Ahmad Yakasai

Abstract

One-Health programs aim to integrate human, animal, and environmental health to address complex global health challenges. However, language and cultural barriers pose significant challenges to effective communication and cooperation. This paper explores the role of translation in bridging cultural divides and building a stronger future for One-Health programs. We examine the challenges and opportunities of translation in facilitating One-Health programs. Our analysis highlights the importance of translation, and best practices for translation in One-Health. We conclude that translation is a critical component of One-Health, enabling effective communication, building trust and foster cooperation.

Keywords:

1.0 Introduction

One-Health programs aim to integrate human, animal and environmental health to address complex global health challenges. Effective communication across languages and disciplines is crucial for the success of these programs. Translation plays a vital role in facilitating collaboration, knowledge sharing, and implementation of One-Health initiatives. Translation is more than just a linguistic exercise; it is a bridge that connects cultures, facilitates dialogue, and promotes mutual understanding. According to the purview of some prominent scholars, translation can be described under five (5) major areas, as follows:

In the field of linguistics, translation can be defined according to Catford (1965) as “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language (TL)”. While according to the functionalist perspectives, Nord (2018) asserts that “translation is a purposeful activity carried out in a socio-cultural context”. Similarly, under cultural perspective, translation is considered as “not just a linguistic act but a cultural transfer that involves the translator’s interpretation and creativity”. (Bassnet, 2002).

In the modern theoretical view, Munday (2016) describe translation as “a process that consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message” Nida and Taber (1969). Going by the above definitions, translation can be identified as a very important tool which if properly

used can accurately convey the nuances of language and culture hence translation enables us to transcend linguistic and cultural barriers, paving the way for meaningful collaborations.

2.0 The Importance of Translation in One-Health Program

Translation functions as a vital mechanism within cultural diplomacy. It enables the dissemination of literature, policy narratives, historical accounts, and local expressions, thereby opening up spaces for deeper intercultural engagement. Both high culture (such as classical literature and fine arts) and popular (such as media and everyday expressions) are made accessible to foreign audiences through effective translation strategies (Cull, 2008). In essence, translation plays a vital role in facilitating effective communication and cooperation. On the other hand, translation plays a vital role in One-Health programs, which aim to integrate human, animal, and environmental health to address complex health issues. Here are some key aspects of translation's importance in One-Health programs.

- (a) **Facilitating communication:** Translation enables healthcare professionals to communicate effectively with diverse stakeholders, including local communities, farmers, and animal health workers. It also helps to convey critical information about disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of people who may not speak the dominant language
- (b) **Improving health outcomes:** Translation enhances access to healthcare services and information for linguistically diverse populations. It also supports the development of targeted health interventions and education programs that are culturally and linguistically relevant.
- (c) **Supporting collaboration:** Translation facilitates international collaboration and knowledge-sharing among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners from different countries and linguistic backgrounds. It also enables the sharing of best practices, research findings, and policy guidelines across languages and cultures.
- (d) **Addressing health inequalities:** Translation helps to reduce health disparities by providing equal access to health information and services for linguistically diverse populations. It also supports the development of inclusive and culturally sensitive health policies and programs.
- (e) **Implementation:** Accurate translation of research findings, guidelines, and best practices ensures that stakeholders have access to relevant information, promoting informed decision-making. Therefore, translation of health related information enhances the effectiveness of One-Health interventions.

3.0 Challenges and opportunities

Despite the growing importance of translation to One-Health programs, several challenges such as language barriers and cultural differences are identified to hinder effective communication in that regard. In other words, the One-Health Program which aims to integrate human, animal, and environmental health faces significant challenges and opportunities in translation. Here are some key aspects:

3.1 Challenges

- (a) Interdisciplinary communication: One-Health requires collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including healthcare professionals, veterinarians, environmental scientists, and policy makers. Effective translation across disciplines and languages is crucial to ensure seamless communication and coordination.
- (b) Terminology and jargon: Different fields often use specialized terminology, which can lead to misunderstandings or miscommunications. Translators need to be familiar with the specific terminology and jargon used in each field.
- (c) Cultural and linguistic nuances: Translation goes beyond literal translation; it also involves conveying cultural and contextual nuances. One-Health programs often involve working with diverse communities, making cultural sensitivity and awareness essential.
- (d) Data sharing and integration: One-Health initiatives rely on sharing and integrating data from various sources. Translation can facilitate this process, but ensuring data accuracy, consistency, and compatibility is a significant challenge.
- (e) Capacity building and training: Building capacity and providing training for translators, healthcare professionals, and other stakeholders is essential to ensure effective translation and implementation of One-Health programs.

3.2 Opportunities

- (a) Improved collaboration and coordination: Effective translation can facilitate collaboration and coordination among diverse stakeholders, leading to better health outcomes for humans, animals, and the environment.
- (b) Enhanced community engagement: Translation can help One-Health programs reach diverse communities, increasing awareness and participation in health initiatives.
- (c) Increased access to healthcare: Translation can bridge language gaps, enabling individuals with limited proficiency in dominant languages to access healthcare services and information.
- (d) Global knowledge sharing: Translation can facilitate the sharing of knowledge, best practices, and research findings across languages and borders, accelerating progress in One-Health.
- (e) Development of new tools and technologies: Advances in machine translation (MT), natural language processing (NLP) and other technologies can support more efficient and accurate translation, enhancing the effectiveness of One-Health programs. Machine translation (MT) and natural language processing (NLP)

technologies enable the digitization and wider distribution, enabling accessibility of One-Health programs to global audiences. In short, by addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities, translation can play a vital role in advancing the goals of the One-Health program.

4.0 Best Practices for Translation in One-Health

Best practices for translation in One-Health programs are super practical and crucial for effective collaboration among human and environmental health professionals. Before dealing with the key aspects of best practices, let us glance at some strategies for effective translation. To maximize the benefits of translation, effective use of strategies is crucial for fostering meaningful understanding and mutual cooperation. This goes beyond lexical equivalence and accurate transfer, but also involves ideological, historical and cultural meanings. The most important strategy here is dynamic equivalence, which highlights proper conveyance of intended meaning of a source text effectively, rather than following strictly to its lexical forms (1964). This approach is highly effective in diplomatic, literary and intercultural communications, where emotional and contextual tones often outweigh literal accuracy.

Another important strategy is collaborative translation practices which involve linguists, subject matter experts, and native speakers to help ensure both linguistic precision and cultural relevance. The integration of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, while valuable for improving productivity and consistency, must be complemented by human interpretation to maintain nuance and contextual depth (Bowker & Fisher, 2010).

In sum, effective translation in international cooperation hinges on a strategic blend of linguistic expertise, cultural intelligence, and technological support, all of which are vital for building sustainable and respectful intercultural relationships. Furthermore, cultural adaptation, where translators are allowed to localize content in a source language to suit the socio-cultural context of the target audience, is yet another strategy for effective translation. However, this process requires substituting culturally specific and linguistic figures (idioms or metaphors) with equivalent expressions that are comprehensible and appropriate within the target culture (Newmark, 1988).

High quality translation requires more than linguistic fluency; it necessitates adherence to established best practices that ensure accuracy, consistency, and cultural appropriateness (Yakasai, 2019a). One foundational best practice is pre-translation preparation, which involves understanding the source material's purpose, audience, and context. This allows the translator to make informed decisions on tone, register, and terminology (Munday, 2016). Clarity about the target audience,

whether governmental, academic, or the public, it guides the translator in maintaining the communicative intent of the original text.

Contextual and cultural sensitivity is another best practice critical to intercultural translation. This includes recognizing and appropriately rendering idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and culturally loaded terms that may not have direct equivalents in the target language (House, 2015). Translators working in One-Health programs must therefore cultivate bicultural literacy and consult cultural mediators or advisors when needed. Equally important is the use of quality control mechanisms such as peer reviews, back translation, and proofreading.

These measures help ensure fidelity and clarity, especially in official or technical documents. Adopting terminology management systems, maintain style guides, and using translation memory tools can also enhance consistency across multiple translations (Gouadec, 2007). Ultimately, there should be ethical considerations (including fidelity to the source text and transparency in adaptation), which must underpin all practices. By adhering to these principles, translation becomes a bridge that not only conveys information, but also respects and preserves cultural identities.

On the other hand, the key aspects of the best practices include the following:

- (a) Clear communication: Using plain and lucid language helps avoid misunderstandings across disciplines.
- (b) Cultural sensitivity: Considering local contexts and nuances enhances translation relevance and effectiveness.
- (c) Standardized terminology: Establishing common vocab ensures consistency and accuracy in translation.
- (d) Collaboration: Working with experts from various fields ensures translation meet diverse needs.
- (e) Adaptability: Translations should be flexible to accommodate different formats, like technical reports or community outreach materials.

5.0 Conclusion

There is no doubt that translation is the most powerful tool for improving One-Health programs. By bridging cultural and linguistic divides, we can foster greater understanding, cooperation, and cultural benefit. Therefore, translation here serves as a critical component of One-Health, because it enables effective communication, build trust, and foster cooperation. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities, translation can play a vital role in advancing the goals of One-Health program. In short, effective translation is pivotal in One-Health programs, bridging gaps between human, animal, and environmental health sectors. Despite challenges like linguistic and cultural barriers, limited resources, and varying stakeholder needs, opportunities abound for innovation and collaboration.

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