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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND SPECIALIZED TRANSLATION QUALITY IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Abstract. While the boundaries of professional communication extend across language and culture frontiers, the challenge of intercultural competence in specialized translation has become more urgent and more complex. This article critically examines how intercultural awareness shapes the quality and integrity of translations in high-stakes domains like law, medicine, marketing, and diplomacy. Drawing on a rich range of interdisciplinary sources, the study examines the theoretical foundations, pedagogical strategies, and practical uses of integrating intercultural competence into translator training and professional practice. Particular attention is given to the limitations of artificial intelligence (AI) in dealing with intercultural nuances, which underscores the necessity of human translators as culture mediators. With a descriptive-analytical approach, the review identifies two interrelated challenges: the long-standing marginalization of cultural aspects within translation theory and the emergence of AI, and the problem of translating intercultural competence into practice. The article argues in favor of a paradigmatic shift in translation studies- a move that re-centers cultural sensitivity as an essential element in human and machine-based communication. Thus, it offers a theoretical perspective that places on center stage the moral, intellectual, and communicative dimensions of translation in times of technologically mediated communication. In a time of historically unprecedented globalization and ever greater reliance upon digital technologies, the activity of translation- particularly in professional contexts- calls upon more than linguistic talent. It calls for an innate sense of cultural difference, contextual awareness, and moral accountability. Such is the requirement nowhere better illustrated than in high-profession arenas such as law, medicine, marketing, and diplomacy, where failure to consider cultural variables can lead not only to miscommunication but to legal, social, and ethical fallout.

Keywords: Intercultural Competence, Specialized Translation, Artificial Intelligence, Translator Education, Cultural Mediation

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МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТЬ И КАЧЕСТВО СПЕЦИАЛИЗИРОВАННОГО ПЕРЕВОДА В ЭПОХУ ИСКУССТВЕННОГО ИНТЕЛЛЕКТА

Ханан Рабахи*

Абстракт. По мере того как границы профессиональной коммуникации все чаще пересекают языковые и культурные рубежи, проблема межкультурной компетентности в специализированном переводе становится более острой и сложной. В данной статье проводится критический анализ того, каким образом межкультурная осознанность влияет на качество и целостность перевода в высокорисковых сферах, таких как право, медицина, маркетинг и дипломатия. На основе широкого круга междисциплинарных источников исследуются теоретические основы, педагогические стратегии и практические аспекты интеграции межкультурной компетентности в подготовку переводчиков и профессиональную деятельность. Особое внимание уделяется ограничениям искусственного интеллекта (ИИ) в передаче межкультурных нюансов, что подчеркивает незаменимую роль человека-переводчика как посредника между культурами. Используя описательно-аналитический подход, исследование выявляет две взаимосвязанные проблемы: длительное маргинализирование культурного компонента в теории перевода и вызовы, связанные с внедрением ИИ, а также трудности практической реализации межкультурной компетентности. В статье аргументируется необходимость парадигмального сдвига в переводоведении - возврата культурной чувствительности в центр как человеческой, так и машинной коммуникации. В условиях беспрецедентной глобализации и возрастающей зависимости от цифровых технологий перевод, особенно в профессиональной сфере, требует большего, чем просто лингвистические навыки. Он предполагает глубокое понимание культурных различий, контекстуальную осознанность и моральную ответственность. Это особенно очевидно в таких сферах, как право, медицина, маркетинг и дипломатия, где игнорирование культурных факторов может привести не только к коммуникативным сбоям, но и к серьезным юридическим, социальным и этическим последствиям.

Ключевые слова: Межкультурная компетентность; специализированный перевод; искусственный интеллект; подготовка переводчиков; культурная медиация

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SÜNİ İNTELLEKT DÖVRÜNDƏ MƏDƏNİYYƏTLƏRARASI SƏRİŞTƏ VƏ İXTİSASLAŞMIŞ TƏRCÜMƏNİN KEYFİYYƏTİ

Hananə Rabahi*

Abstrakt. Peşəkar ünsiyyətin sərhədləri getdikcə dil və mədəniyyət hüduqlarını aşdıqca, ixtisaslaşmış tərcümədə mədəniyyətlərarası səriştə problemi daha aktual və mürəkkəb xarakter alır. Bu məqalədə mədəniyyətlərarası fərqiindəliyin hüquq, tibb, marketinq və diplomatiya kimi yüksək məsuliyyət tələb edən sahələrdə tərcümənin keyfiyyətinə və etibarlılığına necə təsir göstərdiyi tənqidi şəkildə təhlil edilir. Geniş multidissiplinar mənbələrə əsaslanaraq, mədəniyyətlərarası səriştənin tərcüməçi hazırlığına və peşəkar fəaliyyətə inteqrasiyasının nəzəri əsasları, pedaqoji strategiyaları və praktik tətbiqləri araşdırılır. Məqalədə süni intellektin (Sİ) mədəniyyətlərarası incəlikləri dərk etməkdəki məhdudiyyətlərinə xüsusi diqqət yetirilir ki, bu da insan tərcüməçilərin mədəniyyətlərarası vasitəçi kimi əvəzolunmaz rolunu bir daha təsdiqləyir. Təsviri-analitik yanaşma əsasında iki əsas və bir-biri ilə əlaqəli problem müəyyən edilir: tərcümə nəzəriyyəsində mədəni komponentin uzun müddət kənarında qalması və süni intellektin meydana çıxması fonunda mədəniyyətlərarası səriştənin praktikaya tətbiqi çətinlikləri. Məqalə tərcüməşünaslıqda paradigmatik dəyişiklik zərurətini əsaslandırır və mədəni həssaslığın həm insan, həm də maşın əsaslı kommunikasiya proseslərinin mərkəzinə qaytarılmasını təklif edir. Qlobal miqyasda görünməmiş inteqrasiya və rəqəmsal texnologiyalara artan asılılıq şəraitində tərcümə fəaliyyəti - xüsusilə peşəkar kontekstlərdə - yalnız dil bilikləri ilə məhdudlaşmır. Bu fəaliyyət mədəni fərqlərin dərkini, kontekstual şüuru və mənəvi məsuliyyəti tələb edir. Bu tələb ən bariz şəkildə hüquq, tibb, marketinq və diplomatiya kimi sahələrdə özünü göstərir; çünki mədəni amillərin nəzərə alınmaması kommunikativ uğursuzluqlarla yanaşı, ciddi hüquqi, sosial və etik nəticələrə səbəb ola bilər.

Açar sözlər: Mədəniyyətlərarası səriştə; ixtisaslaşmış tərcümə; süni intellekt; tərcüməçi hazırlığı; mədəni vasitəçilik

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1. Introduction

This article begins with the growing recognition that intercultural competence, rather than being a subsidiary competence, is a constitutive element of translation quality. While terminological accuracy remains a foundation, it is the translator's ability to navigate cultural spaces- tacit, controversial, or unequal- that determines whether communication truly works at linguistic borders. Competence, is a constitutive element of translation quality. This is not only to be wished for but also required, to tie up intercultural competence with theory and practice of translation.

Meanwhile, the translation business is witnessing the very rapidly expanding development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, which provide velocity and volume but are immensely limited in their capacity to deal with meaning about culture. Current AI systems are heavily shaped by monolingual data and culturally homogeneous assumptions, and their suitability for application in cultural situations where sensitivity is needed cannot be assumed. This struggle- between the mounting automation of translation and the ongoing necessity for human cultural brokerage- forms a central concern of this research.

Guided by five interlocking research questions, the article explores: the theoretical foundations of intercultural competence in specialized translation; the role of cultural variables in shaping meaning; the risks of cultural neglect in professional domains; the challenges of integrating cultural training in translation education; and the ways in which human expertise may compensate for AI's cultural deficiencies. Drawing on disciplines such as translation studies, intercultural communication, linguistics, and AI ethics, the study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to offer a thematically structured synthesis of significant debates and scholarly research.

The significance of this question is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the development of translation theory through the provision of intercultural competence as one of the major pillars of meaning-production. Practically, it makes the basis of pedagogical models and testing methods which face up to the cultural dimensions of specialized translation in a serious and sensitive manner. Most importantly, it questions the ethical and epistemological consequences of outsourcing tasks to AI where cultural awareness is not a case of choice, but necessity [Ahmadov, 2026].

In positioning itself at the nexus of culture, language, and technology, this article does not only hope to delineate the problematics of culturally competent translation within the age of AI, but also hope to propose suggestions towards reimagining translation as a technologically meshed, ethically grounded, interculturally attuned human process.

2.Theoretical Underpinnings of Intercultural Competence in Specialized Translation

According to a range of scholarly literature, this theoretical section aims to describe how intercultural competence has been theorized, taught, and practiced in translator training. The review supports the research study into how intercultural competence can be cultivated in effective specialized translation training by providing a thematically organized overview of the literature.

2.1.Conceptual Models and Theoretical Dimensions

The conceptual underpinning of intercultural competence in specialized translation tends to be based on a multidimensional understanding of communicative competence. Grucza [2020] puts in the foreground communication competence as a core element, merging specialized language, discursive, cultural, and intercultural elements. Specialized communication is characterized by its aim of conveying domain-specific knowledge, mostly through texts, and consequently demanding elevated intercultural awareness from translators. This conceptualization underscores the translator as an active mediator of cross-cultural knowledge transfer [Adiyaman, 2026].

Cozma (2020) follows this trajectory of thought by identifying four dimensions that are crucial for translators: theory, sociolinguistics, textual analysis, and interpersonal competence. The author criticizes translation students' dependence on linguistic intuition instead of theoretical information, which indicates a pedagogical lack in understanding the whole of intercultural competence. Specific training is thus crucial to help students become intercultural mediators. Cozma's findings identify the need for curricula that go beyond language competence to encompass intercultural theory.

Gregorio Cano (2012) provides a meta-review of theoretical construction of cultural and intercultural competence in translation, arguing that most frameworks available are theoretical and untested empirically. She advocates for more evidence-driven, data-based models guiding translator education. Through examination of multiple definitions of culture, the paper offers preliminary input for designing viable training frameworks for different cultural environments.

Tomozeiu and Kumpulainen (2016) add to the literature with the proposal of an operational model on intercultural competence adapted to pedagogy in translation. Based on their empirical work, they expose a gap between students' and instructors' definitions of intercultural competence and propose more pedagogically transparent alignment. Their study sketches out systematic dimensions and training contexts to bridge the gap and enhance the training of translation teachers.

Yarosh (2013) builds further on theoretical work by formulating an eight-factor model of translator intercultural competence and developing measures for its assessment. Model validation through a Self-Report Questionnaire and a Performance Test adds methodological rigor to the discussion. The study lends empirical weight to the growing demand for evaluation tools in translator education and supports institutionalizing intercultural competence as a measurable learning outcome [Nazarov, Aliyev, Agayeva, 2026]. The essence and challenges of artificial intelligence in the context of contemporary scientific and philosophical concepts.

In summary, this subsection covered the main theoretical contributions framing intercultural competence in translation. The authorities are agreed on its complexity and centrality to specialist communication. However, they also recognize the need for further operational definitions and empirical testing, leading to pedagogical approaches covered in the next subsection.

2.2. Pedagogical Strategies and Applied Models

Emerging out of theoretical debates, recent research moved toward more practical strategies for fostering intercultural competence among translation students. Hinc (2019) cites didactic strategies in favor of promoting intercultural awareness via macrostructural and microstructural text analysis. He advocates for a reflexive teaching style whereby students apply critical thinking to cultural materials and are equipped with the ability to recognize implied cultural norms in texts.

Petrischeva and Starostina (2019) highlight the importance of combining language training with cultural background knowledge. They demonstrate in their research into translation training in economics that cross-cultural competence requires more than linguistic competence; it involves knowledge of domain-specific cultural contexts. They bring to prominence the need for integrative curricula that address cultural phenomena explicitly through translation training.

Gregorio Cano (2012), re-read herein in this pedagogical context, argues for the necessity of bridging the gap between theory and praxis. Her call for empirical research resonates well with the necessity of developing culture-based training models. It is only through experimentation, she suggests, that students are able to gain the granularity of knowledge required for effective cultural mediation.

Tomozeiu and Kumpulainen (2016) contribute to pedagogy's practical learning as well. Through their models, they enable scenario training that connects educational activities with real intercultural problems. These frameworks not only submerge theory in context but also prepare students to address unclear cultural contexts.

Yarosh's (2013) validated instruments offer a feedback loop to be applied in instruction programs. Measurement of students' performance and self-assessment in intercultural settings enables professors to tailor instruction to address specific developmental needs. The instruments promote an instruction, evaluation, and improvement process in the construction of intercultural competence.

Finally, this sub-section has put into perspective practical approaches to operationalizing intercultural competence in training translators. It has shown reflexivity, background knowledge, applied situations, and assessment tools as critical for bridging theory into practice. These pedagogic practices form the backbone of contemporary training courses in specialized translation.

2.3.Cultural Conceptualizations and the Translation of Specialized Language

Specialized discourse translation is typically constrained by rooted cultural conceptualizations within source and target languages. Bordet (2016) also underscores the epistemic effects of metaphor translation, particularly that global languages such as English have the propensity to impose dominating cultural schemes over local systems of knowledge. For example, English borrowed metaphorical patterns into French tend to limit the interpretive flexibility of the target language, leading to less capability to express culturally specific notions.

Scientific and technical metaphors are not for display but also capture culturally marked ways of construing reality. Gotti (2009) theorizes that globalization fosters a climate of homogenized communication in which local cultural nuances give way to homogenized expressions geared to international consumption, with the effect being the loss of culture-specific semantic richness, particularly where metaphors fail to be appropriately reconceptualized at translation. The outcome of such flattening is pivotal in domains where metaphor builds theory.

The challenge of metaphorical translation reflects more general issues in cross-linguistic lexicalization. Tian (2024) analyzes how cultural differences between Chinese and English render lexical decision more challenging, presenting levels of challenge in lexicalizing specific ideas. Success or the inability to lexicalize a culturally unique idea demarcates the asymmetry of linguistic resources and cultural structures, showing that translation is inextricable from its culture context.

The availability of untranslatable or culture-loaded words, like those defined by Bondarchuk, Lysetska, and Pasyk (2021), creates linguistic emptiness preventing complete cultural transmission. In scientific and technological translation, the unavailability of culturally equivalent words demands explanation or borrowing, which both affect the semantic and style coherence

of the text. Such a context brings the translator into the role not only as a linguistic middleman but also as a cultural mediator.

Piotrowski and Sadowska-Dobrowolska (2023) also argue that cultural elements incorporated into specialist texts are not peripheral but an integral part of meaning creation. Their study highlights genre awareness, metaphor reconceptualization, and deictic point of view change as means of resisting cultural specificity in translation. These means are crucial to preserving the discursive function of specialist language in the target culture.

Finally, cultural constructiveness leaves an indelible mark on the interpretation and transfer of specialized language across languages. Translating metaphors, idioms, and technical terminology requires more than linguistic equivalence- it requires understanding cultures. These findings show that ignoring cultural sensitivities in translation might lead to semantic mismatch, conceptual loss, and even epistemicide, and hence the focus of the current research on culturally sensitive translation.

2.4.Cultural Identity and Linguistic Frameworks in Specialized Discourse

Other than metaphorical and lexical concerns, cultural identity plays a fundamental role in mediating academic and professional writing across languages. Gotti (2012) argues that variations in academic discourse have sociocultural identity origins such as linguistic background, discipline culture, and national affiliation. These sources mediate writers' rhetorical choices and influence the form and tone of expert texts, particularly in English academic texts. The result is neither one Anglophone standard but rather a variety of culturally sensitive discursive practices.

The ELF application in technological areas introduces another element of complexity. Guido (2008) comments on how native speakers of English from non-English language backgrounds are positioning English with mother language grammar and cultural schemata, creating variable ELF varieties. While the variability promotes appropriation and inclusivity, it also promotes misunderstanding and communicative breakdown, particularly if the speaker's sociocultural background is not well understood.

These communication asymmetries are more than words- reflections of power relations behind them. Guido (2008) argues that the hegemony of Western specialists in cross-cultural working lives often results in epistemological imposition, where non-Western contributions are overpowered. These asymmetries reflect the tension between linguistic globalization and cultural pluralism and reveal the risks of universalizing specialist language without interculturalization.

Moirand and Tréguer-Felten (2007) empirically study this phenomenon in a comparative study of French and English professional discourse. Their findings show that even if documents are intended to be identical, there are

slight cultural differences that reflect different institutional and professional cultures. These findings disprove the hypothesis of equivalence and highlight the cultural embeddedness of specialist language.

Bondarchuk et al. (2021) also agree with this view by arguing that translators need to labor within a system of cultural epistemologies, norms, and expectations. Specialist text translation thus requires not only terminological accuracy but cultural sensitivity. Translators must find and broker values, assumptions, and identities underlying source and target texts.

Summing up this subsection, the literature shows how linguistic frameworks and cultural identity are responsible for building, passing on, and getting specialized discourse. Far from innocent, specialist language bears the sociocultural contexts in which it is rooted. This renders culturally informed practice a top priority, particularly in academic and professional communication.

2.5. Cultural Risks in Legal and Medical Translation

Not embracing intercultural sensibility in legal and medical translation can have tangible and far-reaching impacts on end-users. Vieira, O'Hagan, and O'Sullivan (2020) point out that MT errors in life-critical situations such as hospitals and courts can reinforce social inequality and continue to undermine access to services. The authors suggest that neglecting cultural and linguistic nuances in such contexts could compromise communication, particularly among minority and disadvantaged groups. This has been an essential observation in proving the social impact of culturally insensitive translation policies.

Exacerbating these issues, Ruiz Rosendo (2019) discusses how culturally insensitive medical translations account for quality, equity, and safety gaps. Her analysis of health communication highlights the multilateral and dynamic nature of culture, which need not be viewed as a variable but indeed as a constitutive element of medical translation. Medical doctors and translators who fail to take this element into consideration risk alienating non-local patients and aggravating health disparities.

Legal translation is also beset by cultural matches, often resulting in ethical and legal dilemmas. Panezi and O'Shea (2024) describe the tendencies of machine translation and generative AI in legal environments, where responsibility and copyright are at stake when cultural and legal courtesy are ignored. Their article calls for the maintenance of human expertise to ensure the integrity of law and the rule of law in jurisdictions with different cultural norms.

Pommer (2008) provides further insight when he situates legal translation as intercultural transfer. He implies that legal systems are rooted in cultural logic, and the translator must act as a cultural mediator. Legal meaning is not

universally fixed but mediated through local legal culture. If these subtleties are not attended to, then the risk is one of deformed interpretation and legal miscommunication, potentially leading to miscarriages of justice.

Similarly, Bednarek (2010) examines the translation of the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) and demonstrates how legal-cultural divergence affects Common Law and Civil Law systems and consequently intercultural communication. Her examination illustrates how sworn translators who have an understanding of divergent legal cultures are needed in intercultural legal translation to bridge the gaps successfully. The findings provide evidence for the claim that ignorance of legal-cultural divergence is counterproductive to legal cooperation and mutual understanding across borders.

This subsection has highlighted the extent to which both medical and legal translation depend on knowledge of culture. With such translations, failure to communicate or omission can have social, legal, and ethical implications. The following subsection discusses strategies and models that involve intercultural awareness to minimize such risks.

2.6. Intercultural Awareness and Its Role in Minimizing Risk in Specialized Contexts

A growing body of work stresses the importance of integrating intercultural sensitivity into translation practice to minimize the risks mentioned above. Haffner (1992) exemplifies how the employment of professional interpreters goes a long way in bridging communication between medical practitioners and English language limited patients. Cultural misunderstandings and linguistic variations can become an obstacle to the provision of healthcare, and language and culture-trained interpreters play a critical role in avert largeland communication.

Taylor-Stilgoe, Orăsan, and do Carmo (2023) contribute to the contemporary view by evaluating the risks of machine translation in healthcare, more specifically medical abbreviations. They conclude that MT programs are often incapable of translating context-dependent abbreviations accurately, and this may endanger patient safety. Their findings emphasize the need for increased sensitization among medical professionals and the liability of MT in the absence of cultural and contextual information.

Canfora and Ottmann (2020) also mention shared concerns from a broader translation technology perspective. While their contribution directly speaks to specific risks within neural machine translation (NMT), they also mention that omitting human behavioral elements as well as compliancy can heighten risks within safety-oriented contexts. This is spoken of in terms of a broader systemic problem: greater technological reliance of the translation business without properly integrating intercultural and context sensitivity into its system.

Interdisciplinary approaches are necessary to address these challenges. Vieira et al. (2020) promote more interdisciplinary cooperation to better comprehend MT limitations. They emphasize that legal professionals must be trained in technical and cultural communication skills to avoid translation harm. Their practice extends beyond technical accuracy, promoting ethical accountability and human-oriented translation.

Finally, Ruiz Rosendo (2019) calls for a general cultural strategy in medical translation. She recommends the integration of cultural competence into the training of translators to maximize health literacy and communication outcomes. Her contribution puts culture not as an afterthought but as a key factor in ensuring equal access to healthcare across populations.

This subsection reveals that pre-emptive intercultural awareness integration in translation processes significantly reduces risks within specialized domains. Practices range from human interpreter training to context MT system improvement, all with the aim of facilitating more accurate and culture-aware communication.

2.7.Theoretical Models and Pedagogical Approaches

This subtheme examines the early theoretical approaches and pedagogical models put forward for the integration of intercultural competence into translation theory and curriculum design. Scholars have built conceptual models to theorize intercultural competence and argue the case for its systematic incorporation into translator training. These models offer illuminating information on the epistemological underpinnings of cultural training in translation studies.

Certain studies emphasize the necessity of operationalizing intercultural competence with the help of formal models and education frameworks. Tomozeiu and Kumpulainen (2016) advocate the employment of implicit models in translation teaching on the grounds that conceptual precision has the capacity to bridge the referred disjunction between learners' and trainers' conceptualization. The authors introduce two teacher models designed in order to make the abstractive components of intercultural competence pedagogically tangible. These models lay out skills like adaptability, cultural sensitivity, and empathy that form the basis of developing a reflexive translator identity.

Conceptual progress in developing an interculturally capable translator is further made by Tomozeiu, Koskinen, and D'Arcangelo (2016), who argue that intercultural competence must be taught explicitly on curricula. They mention empathy and diversity of society as two main concerns in getting translators ready to function as cultural mediators. Their article offers a normative definition of intercultural competence involving affective, cognitive, and behavioral elements. This conceptualization emphasizes incorporating intercultural competence into theoretical courses and practice-based training.

Mejri (2024) also contributes to the theoretical discourse by emphasizing the importance of systematically incorporating intercultural knowledge, abilities, and adaptability into training programs. Mejri's work reveals that many educators lack sufficient preparation to address students' intercultural communication needs. The study calls for renewed attention to teacher training and curricular development, presenting an urgent need for structural change in translator education.

The challenge of bridging theory-pedagogy is also met by Hinc (2019), who writes about intercultural competence integration through reflective text analysis. His article points to the importance of developing students' capacity for analyzing and interpreting culturally marked texts and, in the process, heightening their awareness of cultural variability and sensitivity in the course of translation work. Through a combination of theoretical knowledge with practical teaching alternatives, Hinc introduces a model that moves from abstract conceptualization through to application.

Combined, these papers show the theoretical importance of intercultural competence in translator training and invoke pedagogical approaches consonant with the complexity of cultural mediation. Yet the literature also shows repeated difficulties in bringing theory and practical implementation into consonance, thus paving the way for the next subsection.

2.8. Empirical Approaches and Practical Implementation

This body of studies comprises literature systematic reviews, case studies, and process-focused strategies that investigate the effectiveness and influence of cultural training. The study provides evidence-based data regarding the application and assessment of intercultural competence in learning spaces.

Cao, Husin, and Hassan (2025) carried out a literature systematic review to introduce the development and importance of intercultural competence in translation pedagogy. Their research shows that, although interest in the topic is increasing, the area is plagued by methodological issues and theoretical disparities. The review points toward more in-depth empirical studies that will be able to contribute to curriculum design and pedagogical intervention.

Angelone (2016) proposes process-based testing of intercultural competence via screen capture and think-aloud protocols. This double-methodology allows cognitive strategies and behavioral responses to culturally contexted texts to be recorded in students. Based on Byram's model in authentic translation activities, the research shows how intercultural competence manifests itself in authentic translation activities. It also provides practical tools for trainers to assess learner growth and identify areas requiring pedagogical intervention.

Empirical research conducted by Mirzoyeva and Syurmen (2016) in Kazakhstan also emphasizes the need for the improvement of the curriculum. Their research indicates cultural instruction deficits at phonetic, intonation, and

grammar levels. They favor connecting theoretical content with practice exercises for meaningful development of intercultural competence. Their proposal involves a comprehensive set of special tasks and reconceptualization of curricula in accordance with intercultural goals.

Gutiérrez Bregón (2017) contributes to the practical side with information from professional translators regarding how they perceive intercultural competence. The study identifies discrepancies between higher education training and professional requirements, implying that objectives for training need to be aligned to real translation practice. Gutiérrez Bregón suggests incorporating experiences from the field in order to render translator training more practical and useful.

Finally, Tomozeiu et al. (2016) point to empathy and social diversity in the development of effective cultural training. From what they learned, they highlight the development of cognitive, emotional, as well as social skills. For them, intercultural competence should not just be regarded as a language or cognitive task but as socially located and affective one as well.

2.9. The Impossibility of AI to Capture Intercultural Complexity

Cultural biases of AI systems typically result from similarity in the datasets used for their training. Prabhakaran et al. (2022) observe that current AI technologies are culturally diverse and tend to perpetuate Western norms and values. The AI systems consistently deviate from the heterogeneity of practice and belief systems of non-Western societies to cause unintended cultural harms such as stereotyping, erasure, and value violations. This mismatch arises because diversity is not reflected in data collection and evaluation processes, resulting in findings that are culturally alien to underrepresented groups.

Conversational AI is one of the best examples of these failures, precisely through the inability to traverse culturally situated pragmatic norms. Brandt and Hazel (2024) explain that nuances of intercultural communication (ICC) are easily oversimplified or dismissed by language models. The authors have proposed the term "interculturally adaptive AI" for this purpose, and they further added that successful progress toward it demands interdisciplinarity. However, the absence of linguistic and intercultural awareness in existing AI engineering groups severely limits progress along this line, still reinforcing faulty systems that cannot cope with context-sensitive communication.

Shin (2024) also explores the technical roots of cultural flattening in AI based on the concepts of lossy compression and model collapse. Such operations pack dense cultural richness into poor tokens at the cost of cultural truth. As AI gets optimized for prediction and efficiency, there is a loss of rich cultural expressions and substitution with monolithic and stereotypical representations. Shin warns of the epistemological danger of such compression since it can

petrify hegemonic narratives and silence minority voices in algorithmic systems.

Empirical findings support these theoretical complaints. Villanueva et al. (2025) observe that AI chatbots that are designed to foster intercultural empathy work with American users but fail with Latin American users. This discrepancy is attributed to the lack of cultural knowledge in large language models, which produce culturally imprecise or estranging replies. Failure to genuinely interact with diverse users resonates with the ongoing underrepresentation of non-Western knowledge traditions in AI development and indicates a need for culture-grounded system design.

The problem extends to explainable AI (XAI), whose suppositions on user interpretability depend largely on Western expectations. Peters and Carman (2024) conducted a systematic review that suggested most XAI research neglects cultural variation, opting instead to rely on explanatory norms from Western populations. The cultural bias leaves a considerable knowledge gap on users from other cultural contexts interpreting and interacting with AI explanations. The result is a one-fits-all mechanism that sabotages the inclusive potential of AI technologies.

Overall, AI processes are susceptible to ignoring intercultural complexity due to cumulative interactions of skewed information, technical limitations, and epistemological limitations. These inadequacies not only reduce the efficiency of AI in pluralistic contexts but also pose ethical risks through corroborating cultural exclusion. Against these limitations, there must be collective action to incorporate human knowledge of intercultural understanding into AI processes.

2.10. Human Expertise in Culturally Adaptive AI

Human expertise plays a crucial balancing act to cultural blind spots of AI systems, especially in the development and evaluation of culturally adaptive technology. Brandt and Hazel (2024) identify the positive contribution of researchers into language and intercultural communication as arguing that their collaboration with engineers lies at the heart of the building of AI that is able to deal with different social and communicative environments. This interdisciplinarity is required in order to construct systems that do not only mimic empathy or comprehension but express true intercultural sensitivity.

Okolo (2023) extends this perception by offering an intercultural ethics approach for explainable AI. His approach goes beyond technical precision to respond to the manner in which cultural values intervene to determine user expectations and interpretive requirements. The fusion of this ethical stance ensures that AI explanations are context-sensitive and involve users from diverse cultures. This practice fosters inclusivity and allows users from underrepresented cultures to engage significantly in AI technologies.

Besides ethical foundations, design interventions with practical application are also needed for making AI systems operationally inclusive. According to Zarei et al. (2023), human factors analysis should incorporate AI-specific considerations, particularly in complex socio-technical settings. Their article indicates that existing methodologies for design commonly miss the impact of AI on user interaction, with the result being cultural mismatches. Human factors specialists, particularly those who have received training in cultural ergonomics, are thus essential in bridging the gap between diversity of users and system capability.

Yang et al. (2020) contribute to the human-AI interface by highlighting users' cognitive and perceptual challenges in coping with AI. Even though their study does not explicitly tackle intercultural dynamics, it justifies the human-centered design imperative for countering uncertainty and ambiguity. Interculturally aware designers can use these findings to create systems that foretell and adjust according to culturally determined interactional inclinations and expectations.

Finally, human intelligence is necessary in framing standards for dataset curation and evaluation protocols. Prabhakaran et al. (2022) propose synthesizing diverse perspectives throughout the AI pipeline, ranging from data choice to system deployment. Human involvement during these stages is critical in detecting and addressing cultural imbalances prior to encoding them into algorithms. This expectation can preclude reenactment of cultural hierarchies and can assist in ensuring that AI systems embody a more pluralistic and egalitarian vision.

Overall, human know-how is key to avoiding AI deficiency in intercultural contexts. From cultural context and interaction design to data stewardship, human contribution sensitive to culture is key to creating inclusive and responsive AI systems. It requires not only technical inventiveness but also dedication to cross-cultural understanding and interdisciplinary collaboration to create such systems.

3. Conclusion

The current article has critically and theoretically engaged with a vast amount of empirical and theoretical work that emphasizes the central function of intercultural competence in expert translation and the development of culturally aware AI models. Throughout the reviewed literature, two interrelated problems have emerged: the global undervaluation of cultural variables in areas of technology and language, and the ongoing failure to translate theoretical models into practical, contextually aware implementations.

Underlying those are more fundamental questions- how do we ensure that the systems and practices we create reflect not only linguistic correctness but

cultural validity and ethical soundness? For the discipline of translation, the answer is as elusive as the challenge. While theory has shed light on the role of culture in the making of meaning, the journey to pedagogical and professional transformation is uneven. Translators today are not only responsible for moving knowledge from one language to another but also negotiating cultural presumptions, power dynamics, and shifting global discourse. Their expertise is as intercultural as it is linguistic.

In the rapidly evolving era of AI, nothing changes here either. Literature bears witness to a bitter reality: AI systems, however advanced, are deeply rooted in the cultural boundaries of their creators. If they are created on niche data and designed without interdisciplinary sensitivity, they can validate exclusionary narratives and betray the very individuals they aim to benefit. Instead, emerging scholarship invites a primary countercurrent-one calling attention to human know-how, intercultural ethics, and co-designed systems as paramount to more inclusive technological horizons.

What we find is that to bridge these gaps- between theory and practice, intention and outcome- requires more than innovation. It requires a shift in how we conceptualize competence, design, and responsibility. Intercultural sensitivity must move from the periphery to the center, defining not merely the content of translation courses or the smarts of machine learning algorithms, but the values they animate.

This study fulfills that mandate, positioning itself at the intersection of language, culture, and technology. By way of an analysis of the ways in which intercultural competence may be more richly expressed in human and machine-mediated communication, it aspires to contribute to a corpus of scholarship that aims not just to record complexity, but to take it on-with clarity, humility, and empathy.

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