PAPER – OPEN ACCESS

The Use of Newmark's Translation Theory in Online Advertising

The Use of Newmark's Translation Theory in Online Advertising

Mei Nanda Sari

Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Postal 20155, Indonesia

meinanhrp@gmail.com

Abstract

This research aims to examine the challenges faced in translating digital texts on social media, particularly in the context of the variety of languages and styles used by users on platforms such as Twitter and Instagram. The main focus of the research is to analyze how Newmark's Theory, with its semantic and communicative translation approaches, can be applied to overcome the differences in cultural and linguistic expressions in social media. The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive method, by analyzing examples of translation of abbreviations and acronyms frequently used in social media, such as "ASAP", "ATM", and "Wdyt", and how they can be adapted to the local cultural context and audience. The results show that the semantic translation approach is suitable for terms that have universal meanings, while the communicative approach is needed for terms that are heavily influenced by specific social and cultural contexts. The conclusion of this study is that translators need to adjust translation strategies based on the type of text and cultural context to ensure that the translated message remains relevant and easily understood by the target audience.

Keywords: digital translation; social media; Newmark Theory; semantic translation; communicative translation; digital culture; acronyms

1. Introduction

Newmark's theory is one of the approaches in translation studies that offers two main methods: semantic and communicative. The semantic method focuses on the word-by-word meaning and structure of the source language, while the communicative method emphasizes more on effectively conveying the message to the target language audience (Newmark, 1988). In the context of translating digital texts, especially on social media, translators are often faced with the dilemma between maintaining accuracy of meaning and ensuring the message can be well understood by the audience.

The difference between these two methods becomes important when considering the purpose and audience of the translated text. For example, in the context of social media, where messages need to be delivered quickly and clearly, the communicative method is often preferred as it allows the translator to customize the message to make it more relevant and understandable to the target audience (Munday, 2012). However, in some cases, such as the translation of official documents or academic texts, semantic methods may be more appropriate to ensure accuracy and fidelity to the original text.

For example, a tweet that uses slang and abbreviations requires a communicative approach to ensure the message can be understood by the target language audience. In this case, the translator must consider the cultural context and trends prevailing on the platform to convey the message effectively (Munday, 2012). On the other hand, translating informative posts on Facebook may be more suitable using semantic methods to maintain accuracy and fidelity to the original text (Newmark, 1988).

One of the main challenges is the variety of languages and styles used by social media users. For example, the language used on Twitter tends to be more concise and direct, while cultural diversity and local expressions often make translation more complex and detailed. The question is, how can Newmark's Theory be applied in this context to overcome these challenges?

This research aims to examine the translation of digital texts on social media, particularly in relation to the challenges posed by the variety of languages and styles used by social media users. The main focus of this research is how Newmark's Theory, with its semantic and communicative translation approaches, can be applied to address such complexities. Taking into account the different languages used on platforms such as Twitter, which tend to be more concise and direct, as well as the diversity of local expressions, this research hopes to provide a deeper understanding of effective translation strategies in a digital context. The benefits of this research are to provide practical guidance for translators in facing the challenges of translating texts that are highly dependent on the cultural and linguistic context of social media users, and to help improve the accuracy and effectiveness of cross-cultural communication in cyberspace. In addition, this study can contribute to the development of translation theory, especially in the growing digital context.

2. Literature Review & Research Methods

2.1. Previous Research

Research on the translation of digital texts, especially on social media, has grown rapidly, focusing on the application of translation theory in the context of culture, informal expressions and dynamic language styles. Wardle and Derakhshan (2017) discuss disinformation that appears on social media and the translation challenges faced, as well as its impact on the quality of information received by the audience. Baker (2011) examines translation in a digital context, including strategies used to handle texts with local language and cultural variations. Miller (2012) examines the translation of memes and popular culture references on the internet, while Shih (2019) highlights the challenges of translating slang and abbreviated texts on social media using Newmark Theory. Zhang and Liu (2020) analyzed translation strategies for texts on social media, especially in relation to slang, acronyms and informal expressions, and the application of relevant translation theories in such contexts.\

2.2. Concepts, Definitions and Terms

Translation theory studies how the translation process is carried out between the source language and the target language, taking into account linguistic, social and cultural aspects. Nida and Taber (2003) suggest that translation involves adjusting contextually and socially relevant meanings in the target culture, and distinguish two approaches: dynamic equivalence which focuses on understanding meaning in the target context, and formal equivalence which focuses on equivalence of word structures. Newmark (1988) further discusses semantic translation which preserves the meaning of the source text and communicative translation which emphasizes message clarity for the target audience.

Newmark (1988) also identifies eight translation methods that can be used, including literal translation, modification, transposition, expansion, replacement, adaptation, paraphrasing and linguistic modification. According to House (2009), functional equivalence is also an important element in translation, as translators need to ensure that the text in the target language functions in the same way as the source text in the respective social and cultural contexts. In addition, Baker (2011) underlines the importance of understanding the cultural and social context in translation to avoid misinterpretation. Digital texts on social media have unique characteristics, such as the use of abbreviations, acronyms, and visual elements such as images or emojis, which enrich the messages conveyed. Zhang and Liu (2020) highlighted the importance of translation in social media platforms that use efficient language such as "LOL" or "BRB". Shih (2019) emphasizes communicative translation that matches the communication style of the platform. Gillespie (2018) and Cameron (2001) also highlight that social media involves multimedial communication which requires translators to understand the visual and dynamic context, as well as keep up with the language development on a particular platform.

2.3. Theory and Analysis Approach

The translation of digital texts on social media faces challenges related to acronyms, abbreviations and cultural expressions that often cannot be translated literally. To address this problem, Newmark Theory proposes two main approaches: semantic and communicative translation. The semantic approach, as described by Newmark (1988), focuses on close equivalence of meaning to the source text, although the resulting translation may sometimes feel stilted. An example of this is the translation of "ASAP" into "as soon as possible," which retains the literal meaning despite being more familiar in the source culture. Communicative translation, on the other hand, emphasizes conveying a clear message that is easily understood by the target audience, allowing for adjustments in wording or sentence structure. For example, "BRB" can be translated into "I'll come back later" or "in a minute," which is more relevant to the communication habits in the target language.

2.4. Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to describe the translation of digital texts on social media through Newmark's translation theory. This approach was chosen to explore complex phenomena in digital text translation, such as the use of abbreviations and memes, which often reflect dynamic cultural and social aspects. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is suitable for understanding the meaning behind social phenomena, while this study aims to provide insights into translation in cross-cultural communication on social media.

The data source of this research is digital text from social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp. The data collected are tweets, statuses and conversations containing abbreviations, acronyms and cultural expressions. The selection of this data is based on the tendency to use slang and memes that are difficult to translate literally. Research by Putri and Wibowo (2024) also examines the phenomenon of slang that develops among the younger generation, especially in the context of social media.

Data collection was conducted through document study and participatory observation. Document study was conducted by accessing and collecting texts containing acronyms and abbreviations such as ASAP, ATM, CMIIW, OOT, and WDYT from social media using purposive sampling. Mayring (2000) explains that purposive sampling is useful for selecting relevant samples, while Baker (2011) emphasizes the importance of abbreviations and acronyms in efficient digital communication. Participatory observation was also conducted to understand how acronyms are used in the context of everyday conversation.

Asap	As soon as possible yang memiliki arti secepatnya. Seperti artinya, singkatan ini biasanya digunakan untuk saat kita meminta sesuatu terhadap orang lain dan berharap hal itu dapat dikerjakan segera

Gambar 1. Akronim ASAP

Atm	Merupakan singkatan dari "at the moment" yang memiliki arti untuk memberi tahu orang lain tentang apa yang sedang mereka lakukan atau rasakan, atau untuk memberi tahu orang lain tentang ketersediaan mereka saat ini untuk suatu percakapan.

Gambar 2. Akronim ATM

CMIIW	CMIIW merupakan singkatan dari Correct Me If I Wrong. Makna dari kata tersebut adalah untuk mengoreksi ketika kita membuat sebuah penyataan pada cuitan twitter.

Gambar 3. Akronim CMIIW

OOT	Out of topic. Istilah ini bermakna pembahasan jika berganti topik. Baiasanya digunakan ketika bertanya diluar konteks.

Gambar 4. Akronim OOT

Wdyt	What Do You Think WDYT adalah kependekan dari what do you think, yang memiliki arti 'bagaimana pendapat anda?' Kamu dapat menggunakan singkatan ini saat ingin meminta pendapat dari orang lain terhadap suatu hal.

Gambar 5. Akronim Wdyt

For data analysis, the researcher used content analysis combined with Newmark's translation theory. The analysis consisted of several stages: identification of analyzable elements such as abbreviations and acronyms, semantic and communicative analysis based on Newmark's (1988) theory, and comparison between the source text and its translation to assess meaning equivalence and communication functionality.

3. Result and Discussion

The data used in this analysis are abbreviations and acronyms that are often used in social media conversations, such as ASAP (as soon as possible), ATM (at the moment), CMIIW (correct me if I'm wrong), OOT (out of topic), and WDYT (what do you think). The data is analyzed using Newmark's translation theory, focusing on semantic and communicative translation and the application of appropriate translation methods.

3.1. Data Identification and Categorization

The identification and categorization process is carried out by classifying the texts based on the types of abbreviations used and the type of message conveyed. For example, texts containing ASAP and ATM are more often used in contexts that are informative and require a quick response. Meanwhile, abbreviations such as CMIIW and WDYT tend to be used in social conversations to ask for clarification or express an opinion. According to Baker (2011), it is important to identify the cultural context in digital texts in order to understand the true meaning of the abbreviations used. Abbreviations such as ASAP or ATM can have different nuances in different cultural contexts, and accurate translation requires a deep understanding of the context.

3.2. Semantic and Communicative Analysis

At this stage, the analysis distinguishes whether the translation used is semantic or communicative. Semantic translation is more likely to retain the literal meaning of the abbreviation or acronym, while communicative translation focuses on conveying a meaning that suits the target audience.

- ASAP (as soon as possible) translates to as soon as possible or as soon as possible. The semantic approach will favor direct translation, but in some cases, communicative translation that prioritizes speed of communication may be more acceptable to the target audience.
- ATM (at the moment) is often translated as for now. This translation takes a more communicative approach as it is more in line with the way Indonesians speak in casual situations.
- CMIIW (correct me if I'm wrong) translates as tell me if I'm wrong or correct me if I'm wrong. This approach is more flexible and focuses on fluent and understandable communication in the target language.
- OOT (out of topic) translates to out of topic. This translation is more of a semantic translation as the literal meaning is still retained.
- WDYT (what do you think) translates to what do you think or what do you think. This translation is more communicative, adapting to daily conversational language.

According to Newmark (1988), semantic translation tends to retain elements of the source text more closely, while communicative translation focuses on conveying the message clearly and in accordance with the culture and preferences of the target audience.

4. Conclusion

This study analyzes the translation of abbreviations and acronyms used in social media through the application of Newmark's translation theory. The analysis shows that translating digital texts on social media requires different approaches, depending on the type and context of the text. Abbreviations such as ASAP and ATM are more likely to be translated using a semantic approach, which retains the literal meaning, while abbreviations such as CMIIW and WDYT are more in need of communicative translation, which adapts to the culture and language of the target audience. These semantic and communicative approaches can help translators to maintain the meaning of the source text while ensuring the message can be easily understood by a wider audience.

Overall, this study shows that effective translation on social media considers not only the accuracy of meaning, but also the social and cultural context of the target audience. Communicative translation proves to be more effective in ensuring the message is conveyed clearly and easily understood, especially in daily conversations on social media. This research provides deeper insights into the challenges of translating digital texts, particularly in the context of acronyms and abbreviations circulating on social media platforms, and emphasizes the importance of translation that can balance accuracy and fluency of communication.

References

[1] Baker, M. (2011). *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. Routledge.

[2] Cameron, D. (2001). *Working with Spoken Discourse*. Sage.

[3] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

[4] Gillespie, M. (2018). *Theories of translation and interpretation*. Cambridge University Press.

[5] House, J. (2009). *The Translation of Specialized Texts*. Routledge.

[6] Mayring, P. (2000). *Qualitative Content Analysis*. Forum: Qualitative Social Research.

[7] Miller, D. (2012). *Memes and the Internet: A Sociolinguistic Study of the Evolution of Online Culture*. Journal of Sociolinguistics, 16(3), 338-357.

[8] Munday, J. (2012). *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. Routledge.

[9] Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall.

[10] Nida, E. A., & Taber, C. R. (2003). *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Brill.

[11] Putri, S. I., & Wibowo, Y. N. A. (2024). Bentuk abreviasi pada bahasa gaul Gen Z dalam akun X @TANYARLFES (kajian morfologi). *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, 11*(3). Universitas Negeri Surabaya.

[12] Shih, R. (2019). *Translation Strategies in the Digital Age*. Translation Studies, 10(2), 125-140.

[13] Snell-Hornby, M. (2006). *The Turns of Translation Studies: New Paradigms or Shifting Viewpoints?* John Benjamins.

[14] Toury, G. (1995). *Descriptive translation studies and beyond*. John Benjamins Publishing.

[15] Venuti, L. (1995). *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. Routledge.

[16] Wardle, C., & Derakhshan, H. (2017). *Information Disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policymaking*. Council of Europe.

[17] Zhang, L., & Liu, S. (2020). *A Study of Translation Strategies for Social Media Texts*. International Journal of Translation Studies, 12(1), 88-104.

[18] Zhao, S. (2018). *Digital Communication and Translation in the Age of Social Media*. Springer.