

“Netflix Culture and Domain Loss” - is English becoming a cultural lingua franca for Translation students?

The current hegemony of Anglophone culture in the lives of our students means that, to a certain extent, English is no longer a truly foreign language for them, and instead has often replaced terms in their own language, or simply negated their coinage. This paper will specifically examine how this issue affects both the translational and cultural competence of Spanish-speaking students taking a Translation and Interpreting degree in Madrid. These students completed a survey which presented them with a wide range of English terms in fields such as business, tourism, gastronomy, and personal relationships, for which they were asked to provide a Spanish translation, and if they even believed that there was one. The aim was to explore the increasing domain loss experienced by future translators who vainly seek a dynamic equivalence in modern Spanish for the rampant use of Anglicisms. Perhaps we should start to rethink the old, monolithic presentation of Anglo-American culture to Translation students, who are much more familiar with a very different, modern reality in terms of their almost constant exposure to contemporary Anglophone audiovisual, musical, and social media culture? As these students will be expected to translate cultural contents into Spanish, it is to ignore the fact that their access to Anglophone culture is radically different to that of previous students even from as recently as ten years ago in a world in which smart phones and streaming services were not the all-pervading cultural gatekeepers that they are today. Therefore, we must rethink the role of Cultural Studies in Translation Studies, and this has to be reflected through the material that present to them and analyze in class.