

Translating curatorial texts: Cultural translation practices in a Danish museum

Ushma Chauhan Jacobsen

Anne Schjoldager

Aarhus University

Museums are prime sites of cultural translations because they transform, juxtapose and assemble diverse artefacts, images and sound while narrating specific stories, people or ideas in a public space (Sturge 2007). Our inquiry focuses on the themed exhibition *Frihedens Værksted* that celebrates Troels Kløvedal, a well-known Danish sailor, at the Aarhus Natural History Museum. In interpreting, representing and constructing a complicated life, the exhibition provides a multimodal assemblage of artefacts (objects and models), images (photographs, paintings and videos), curatorial texts (labels, artistic posters and captions in videos) and linguistic translations from Danish to English. Using a conceptual lens informed by Maitland's recent work (2017), which intertwines cultural and interlingual translation, this paper provides preliminary analyses of the variety of ways where cultural translation occurs and how it elaborates, enhances and explains the narrative content of the exhibition. In addition to this, we also consider 1) the outcomes and implications of parallel language use - although unsurprising given the international status and unquestioned legitimacy of English; and 2) the ideological reasons and consequences of 'documentary' rather than 'instrumental' linguistic translations (Nord 2018).

References

- Maitland, S. (2017). *What is Cultural Translation?* London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
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Sturge, K. (2007). *Translation, Ethnography and the Museum*. London and New York: Routledge.