

The Use of Translation Notes in Manga Scanlation

This article investigates the use of translation notes to deal with translation problems. In Translation Studies, the presence of translation notes in a translation is considered particularly significant because they clearly indicate what features of the source text the translator considered important for the comprehension of the text and therefore necessary to retain or explain. In the field of comics in translation, the use of T/N is rather uncommon, and can be considered the main translation strategy that distinguishes scanlation from other types of translations. In the first part of this article, the structure of the English-language manga scanlation communities is examined; following this, the way culture-specific items are dealt with by manga scanlators is analysed; and finally, an explanatory hypothesis linking the broader structure of participation to individual translation strategies is presented. The argument put forward in this article is that translation notes are used in scanlation both to solve translation problems and as a way for scanlators to communicate directly with their readers, thereby foregrounding their mediating presence directly on the pages of scanlated manga.