

The Mediating Role of First Language during Reading Comprehension for Translation from Third Language into Second Language: A Practitioner Inquiry

Assoc. Prof. Machaal, B
Polydisciplinary Faculty of Taroudant
Ibn Zohr University

Abstract

While the use of learners' first language (L1) in foreign language education has generated a plethora of research studies, the role of L1 during the process of interlingual translation seems to have been neglected. As an attempt to probe this form of pedagogical translanguaging, the present practitioner research focused on studying translation students' use of their L1 (Moroccan Arabic/Darija) as part of the cognitive process enacted during translation tasks from English into Modern Classical Arabic (MSA). The research adopted the principles of the Interpretative Translation Method (i.e. comprehension, de-verbalization and re-expression) as a pedagogical framework, and made use of Think Aloud Protocol, as a research method, to vocalize the cognitive process that students engage in during translation tasks. In addition, observations and notes were taken during these translation activities. The collected data indicate that students use L1 mostly to mediate the cognitive process of source text comprehension. Then they create mental versions of the constructed meaning in L1 first, before re-expressing it in MSA as a translation. In cases where the source text meaning could not be reproduced in L1 due to incomprehension, students' translation quality is impacted or even hampered, which calls for interventions and assistance. The findings also suggest that this use of L1 does not only serve as a scaffold for reading comprehension but also represents a key tool for translation pedagogy. The conclusions drawn also show that students' schema and identity seemingly influence their translation competence.

Keywords: first language mediation of comprehension, translation cognitive process, translation competence, translation pedagogy

Introduction

While the role of learners' first language (L1) in foreign language education has been the focus of many research endeavors (Butzkam, 2003; Cook, 2010; De la Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Kerr, 2014; Ellis 2009; Machaal, 2012; Moore, 2013; Lee & Macaro, 2013; Pym, 2013 et al; Schweers, 2009; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003; Widdowson, 2014; etc.), the use of L1 in interlingual translation, as an independent course of study, seems to have been neglected, based on the findings of the literature survey undertaken for this paper. Inspired by classroom observations for over two semesters of students' use of L1 (Moroccan Arabic/Darija) during translation tasks from English into Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), this practitioner research sought to gauge the workings of students' minds during the reading comprehension phase of the translation activity. This phenomenon, also known as pedagogical translanguaging, refers to when students tap into their multilingual repertoire to solve a communication hurdle (Cenoz, 2017:194). Overall, findings suggest that part of this cognitive activity that takes place during translation tasks involves the use of L1 to create a mental image of the source text (ST) meaning.

Although the role of L1 in translation training doesn't seem to have drawn researchers attention, there are numerous reported studies focusing on the translation as a cognitive process (O'Brien, 2015; Alves, Pagano & Silva, 2010; Taavitsainen, 2001), etc.) Given the fact that the two cognitive phenomena involving the use of L1 are often confused, it's essential to draw a clear distinction between the use of L1 in foreign language education and its use during tasks of translation proper.

Translation as a means versus translation as an end

The dichotomy of translation as a means and translation as an end (Carreres, 2014) addresses a subtle pedagogical typology of translation. These two types of translation share more than what set them apart. According to Carreres, translation as an end 'can only be meaningful if started after trainees had attained mastery in the working languages to be used' (2014, p. 123). This implies that learning foreign languages and learning translation complement each other as two segments of a pedagogical continuum that combines both knowledge of, and about, a foreign language and its practical use. Cook (2010, p. x) suggested that there is no clear-cut distinction between translation as a means and translation as an end, since bilingual knowledge is always implicated in monolingual use, and that it makes little sense to think that one can exist without the other for the successful language learner.

In light of this tight relationship between translation as a means and translation as an end, student translators should be regarded as language learners engaged in a practical form of advanced language learning. According to (Bergen, 2009, p. 235) and (Göpferich, 2009, p. 21), translators are learners of both the source and the target language. This assertion makes translation students even more in need of improving their language skills, which explains why translator training often has a twofold goal of teaching translation and helping students

improve their language skills in all their working languages. This is in fact the case of the Applied Foreign Languages Studies Program at The Polydisciplinary Faculty of Taroudant in Morocco, where this research was undertaken.

Against all the held views opposing the use of translation in foreign language education, the European Union has recently started to count translation as the fifth skill in foreign language education. In fact, translation is set as one of the criteria of determining foreign language proficiency levels according to the Common European Framework of References (CEFR) for language learning and teaching (Pym et al, 2013). However, foreign language learners will still require formal training in translation techniques and strategies to become proper translators, and they will need practice to transfer knowledge into skills in order to develop translation competence.

Translation competence

The mutual inclusiveness of the two types of translation mentioned above, leading to the achievement of translation competence (TC), undoubtedly implies that the two learning processes seem to form a continuum both in learning strategies and learning competencies, and use L1 as a shared cognitive mediating tool in both learning experiences. TC is therefore the combination of linguistic proficiency and translation training and practice.

To this end, TC is a very important learning objective for both foreign language education and translation training programs. Pym (2003) considered TC to be the ability to produce many versions of the target text (TT) from the original source (ST) and then skillfully select one acceptable TT from these versions. According to Göpferich, we should also consider “translation routine activation competence” (2009, p.20), which involves the translator’s ability to remember and transfer techniques leading to an adequate TT. These techniques and strategies are recalled through the activation of L1-related knowledge and repertoire; the kind of world knowledge and repertoire that form learner schemata (Butzkam, 2003).

As observed in the classroom, translation students make use of their schemata in the form of relevant real-world knowledge, including their L1, to comprehend the ST and the intended meanings of certain words and expressions within their specific contexts. They also make adequate use of tools such as dictionaries and reference sources and draw from their reading comprehension strategies and competencies to decode the ST then encode an adequate version of the TT.

Ellis (2009) reported that it seemed impossible to interfere with the minds of learners and prevent them from translating (using their L1) in their heads. This could be attributed to the fact that when we learn something new, we use what we already know as a basis for building new blocks of knowledge. To clarify this point, Ellis added, “the language calculator has no ‘clear’ button” (2009, p. 153). Besides, learners bring into the classroom a large repertoire or schemata through their L1, and as they have already built knowledge in that language, they

are likely to benefit from a mode of learning built on their previous learning (Kerr, 2014, p. 5). In addition, evidence from both cognitive linguistics and neuroscience points strongly toward a role for the students' own language in the foreign language classroom, and this should apply to translation students as well (Carreres, 2014), given the similarities shared by the two learning experiences.

Considering its pedagogical applicability, this research adopted the Interpretative Approach to Translation as the pedagogical framework that guides and informs translation training. In fact, this theory allows for the breaking of translation tasks into stages, and affords students opportunities for methodical translation practice grounded in a learning-by-doing approach.

The Interpretative Theory of Translation

Translation developed from word-for-word translation or 'semantic translation' to communicative translation (Newmark, 1981, p. 39). The latter trend is represented in this paper by the Interpretive Translation Approach, also called the Interpretive Theory of Translation or the Theory of Sense. It was developed by Seleskovitch and Lederer at the École Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs (ESIT) at the University of Paris III. This method prioritizes the comprehension of the ST and emphasizes the translation of the message in an appropriate and coherent fashion (Seleskovitch, 1984). According to Hurtado Albir and Alves (2009), the theory stipulates that the processes of translation and interpretation are made up of three main phases: understanding, de-verbalization and re-expression.

The comprehension phase of the translation process is of great importance to this paper, as it is the phase where students use their prior knowledge, including their L1, to make sense of the ST. Hence, the total comprehension of the meaning of the ST allows student translators to extract the message from its linguistic form in the ST (de-verbalization), and adequately reproduce the generated meaning in the form of a TT (re-expression).

Reading comprehension as a cognitive process

Out of the three known forms of translation (intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic), specified by Jakobson (2012), reading comprehension in itself is construed as an act of translation. In fact, intralingual translation, or the paraphrase of the ST, is based on the comprehension of the reader, which makes this form of translation an important part of the interlingual translation or translation proper. According to Malmkjær, it is "obvious that success in translation is predicated upon an ability to operate literately in more than one language" (2004, p. 4). Reading comprehension has been identified as the first and (perhaps) the most important phase of the translation process. In fact, it has long been emphasized that one cannot translate without first understanding the ST (Lörscher 1991; Delisle 1993; Mitchell 1996; Bonyadi 2003).

It is a given that a complex cognitive operation takes place behind every translation activity (Tymoczko, 2007). Accepting that reading is a form of translating the meaning into a mental

image of the ST makes comprehension a fundamental cognitive process that is essential to every translation activity (Draper 2010; Keene & Zimmerman 2007). Accepting that reading in itself is a form of translation makes translation the realization of the reader's experience (Scott, 2012). In addition, the responsibility and the heavy ethical weight that comes with translation make reading for it more demanding than and any other form of reading (Macizo & Bajo, 2009).

In order to decode the meaning of the ST, the translator must interpret and analyze all its features, as this involves a process that requires in-depth knowledge of the grammar, semantics, syntax, idioms, etc., of the source language, as well as the culture of its speakers. In addition, the translator is by default required to possess vast and varied world knowledge, because translation requires not only the mastery of the 'word' but also 'knowledge of the world' (Ferreira, 1970). As previously stated, most of this knowledge has already been acquired through L1 (Butzkam, 2003, p.29).

Reading comprehension for translation purposes has received its fair share of researchers' attention. As mentioned earlier, while adequate knowledge of vocabulary of a particular language contributes to reading ability, word knowledge alone does not result in adequate comprehension; knowing the context as well plays an important role (Kintsch & Mangalath, 2011, p. 347). In addition, the purpose of reading should be comprehension, and reading without comprehension is no reading (Gough, Hoover & Peterson, 1996). Research studies on the topic of reading comprehension are concerned with a cognitive process, and would naturally be inspired by cognitive psychology and its developed theories to account for how human knowledge is structured in the brain.

Reading comprehension research

In order to get some insight into the black box of translation, mainly the translator's brain, various studies on the cognitive aspect of translation were carried out (Alves et al, 2010; Halverson, 2014; Jakobson, 2014; O'Brien, 2015). Scholars' consensus seems to be that one of the "known unknowns of translation" is how translators carry out their task from the point of view of the invisible brain activities that take place inside their heads (Tymoczko, 2007).

Reading for comprehension requires the combination of readers' identity and schemata and factors relating to the material to be comprehended and translated (Hatzidaki, 2007, p.18). Hence, reading comprehension provokes the manifestation of knowledge stored in the minds of individuals, according to Taavitsainen (2001, p. 140). This knowledge or schemata informs the cognitive process of reading comprehension. The notion of world knowledge, or schema, is believed to play a major role in translation process research, more specifically when TC is concerned (PACTE, 1998; Göpferich, 2009; Pym, 2003). While TC refers to the basic skills required by translators to be able to perform their tasks, schema stands for previously acquired knowledge stored over time in the brain as memory and used to understand new concepts. According to Pearson:

In our memory, schemata are the whole amount of stored experiences as well as "ideas". New

concepts are linked to related old ones to create knowledge blocks and stored in long-term memory and that in turn constitutes knowledge. (2014, p. 13)

Research methods

The present study falls within the sphere of translation cognitive process research and reports the findings of a practitioner inquiry carried out to investigate the students' use of their L1 (Moroccan Arabic/Darija) during interlingual translation tasks. Informed by observed students' practices during translation practice, this research was set to verify the hypothesis that students use their L1 to mediate and verbalize the cognitive process of English ST reading comprehension as a predictor that they have understood it.

As cognitive processes are by nature complex and not visible, it would have been difficult to guess what happens in the students' mind without their cooperation. For this reason, the researcher made use of Think Aloud Protocol (TAP), observations and notes as tools to collect data. All three methods are qualitative instruments and have been proved to complement each other and be used concurrently (Cresswell, 2009).

TAP, a methodology derived from research in psychology (Ericsson & Simon, 1993), has also been used in translation process research as the first lens through which internal mental processes of research participants were investigated. In retrospect, Ericsson and Simon explained that the motivation for the introduction of verbal reporting as a method of data elicitation in psychological research was to gain insight into the mechanisms and internal structures of the relations between stimuli and their responses. One of these stimuli for translation students could be ST reading comprehension difficulty.

Translation difficulties or problems could be parts of the text that require cognitive attention and the application of conscious strategies during translation (Kiraly, 1995, p.86). According to Angelone (2010, 17), verbal protocols have the potential to reveal a variety of stimuli and their responses during translation. It was anticipated that students' verbalizations of the cognitive process of reading comprehension- while it is happening or after it had happened- would reveal what mental versions of the ST meaning are produced in preparation for translation.

In fact, TAP may be referred to as either 'simultaneous' (concurrent) or 'retrospective'. A concurrent TAP represents verbalization at the time of performing the task (online) while a retrospective (offline) TAP has to do with prompting the subject (after the experiment) to remember and say what he/she was thinking while performing the task (Yoshida, 2008, p. 200). To avoid overloading the cognitive processes of the students, and in order not to disrupt their translation activity, a retrospective TAP was used to allow them to reflect on their translation activities and verbalize the mental processes that took place in their heads. This method allowed students to exteriorize their mental images of the ST through the use of L1.

In addition to TAP, research notes were taken during the translation tasks based on observations of the students' interactions with each other to check the accuracy of word

choices or to get their peers' feedback on produced translations. These observations also revealed that students' cooperation is mostly done through L1. From anecdotal experience, it has been noted that when mental pictures are exteriorized and written on paper, they become visible and clearer. Such evidence supports the use of class notes and observations to complement data generated through TAP. In order to gain greater insight into the students' cognitive processes in translation, findings from all the three research instruments have been triangulated and their content was analyzed.

The participants

This study was undertaken over two academic semesters at the polydisciplinary Faculty of Taroudant in Morocco. It involved third year students from the Applied Foreign Languages program, enrolled in the translation course where they are expected to translate from English into MSA. The students were not translation students as such; they have to take courses in translation in the second and third years of their Professional Bachelor program. They were of mixed gender and displayed varying proficiency levels in both MSA and English. For the sake of the present research, and because their attendance or absence were not predictable, the participants were treated as a class not as individuals. Nevertheless, all participants were informed that the contributions made during the translation tasks, where the TAP was used, may be used for research purposes. Their verbal consent has therefore been secured.

The findings

The findings suggest that students often resort to using students' L1 to make sense of the English text. This strategy can be at times helpful in constructing ST meaning, as it could at other times cause students to completely miss the point. Either way, students make use of their L1 as it facilitated their ST comprehension, and because it is part and parcel of their prior knowledge and schemata.

From a cognitive perspective, the mediating role of L1 in translation is comparable to interlingual machine translation, which uses the language corpora or translation databases to find the meaning of the ST translation unit (a word, a phrase or a sentence), and then produces its translation version of the text as a whole (Dodd, 2012, pp.73-74). Likewise, translation students in this study look for the meaning of the ST and its equivalent in their L1 to make sure they grasped the intended meaning, and then choose its most suitable equivalent in the target language MSA.

During the assigned translation tasks, it has been observed that students use their L1 for various purposes. On one hand, they use L1 to mediate and verbalize the cognitive process of reading comprehension and, on the other hand, to express their identity and make use of their schemata as part of their translation competence. When the meaning is understood, even though there may be no corresponding or equivalent expressions or words to use in translating the ST, students resort to other strategies, such as compensation or paraphrasing to express the meaning. However, when the meaning is not correctly understood, then meaningless or wrong translations are produced. Finally, the findings also suggest that

students express their identity and make use of their schemata through their unconscious choice of L1 and the world knowledge it embodies to make sense of the ST.

Table.1 below shows some of the instances where English idioms were understood and translated to their equivalents in L1, and then L1 idioms were translated using MSA equivalents. The use of L1 is meant to show that when the meaning of ST was grasped, adequate equivalent would be produced in TT. The MSA equivalent is therefore based on the comprehension constructed through L1.

This seems to indicate that the more the information in the ST is familiar to the students, the more they are able to construct an adequate meaning from it. Since most of the basic and general knowledge has been acquired through L1, it is naturally triggered by the encounter of similar information in ST. It ensues from this deduction that the use L1 to verbalize the cognitive processes seems to be a natural phenomenon particularly for translation students.

The examples of students translations illustrated by Table.1 were recorded during a practice task to translate idioms where students have been instructed to look for equivalent idioms in MSA and to make that their first choice of translation. They were allowed to use dictionaries as well as translation mobile applications. After they finished, the task was corrected, and then the students were asked to explain the process that was involved in the translation. Most answers revealed that they first made sure to understand the meaning of the English idiom, and then started looking for an idiom in Darija that expressed the same idea. After that they tried to find the equivalent of Darija idioms in MSA. The students argued that once they could express the meaning of the ST in L1, it became easy for them to produce its equivalent in MSA as they feel they have owned the meaning of the ST idiom. Data in the Table.1 follows the same order followed by the translation activity; first the English ST, then the equivalent of the original idiom in Darija, and finally its equivalent in MSA as mediated by the use of L1.

English (ST)	Moroccan Arabic/ Darija (L1)	Modern Classical Arabic (TT)
A killer offer	همزة	فرصة
like a house on fire	مفاهمين	سمن على عسل
Downward spiral	حدورة	في هبوط متسارع
Insult one's intelligence	تضحك عليه	ضحك على الذقون
Take a French leave	سلت \ مشى حسي مسي	ذهب خلسة
Stay put	بت نبت	لا يتزحزح قيد أنملة
Instantly and quickly	بيه فيه \ شن طن	في لمح البصر \ بسرعة \ في رمشة عين
To burn one's bridges	ثقب الورقة	حرق أوراق
Cause a storm in a teacup	دير من الحبة قبة	المبالغة في الأمر
Jump down his throat	تفرقع فوجهو	صب عليه جام غضبه
To nip it in the bud	النهار الأول إموت المش	من شب على شيء شاب عليه

Table.1 English Idioms translation to MSA mediated by students L1 (Darija)

While the examples in Table.1 above are translations of idioms for which students could find equivalents in their L1, the examples in Table. 2 below are of translation instances where the comprehension of the ST was not successful and therefore equivalents in L1 were not found. This lack of L1 equivalents had negative influence on students' translations, which indicates that when the meaning of the ST was missed or misunderstood the use of L1 use was not useful.

The text assigned for translation in this activity didn't seem to be familiar to most students as they struggled to translate it correctly. They used dictionaries and smart phone applications, and obviously each other's help, to complete the task but they showed they couldn't grasp the meaning of the ST. the ST is about working remotely during the Covid-19 pandemic. The original text used for this task is appended at the end of this paper as appendix 1.

The examples below show where the students' use of their prior knowledge and meaning generation in their L1 failed to help them to grasp the intended meaning of ST. Following the same order of the translation activity, Table.2 below starts with the English ST, followed by students' translations in MSA and then the correction suggested at the end of the task, also in MSA.

English ST	Students' translation in MSA	Corrected translation in MSA
The remote hybrid work models	نظام التحكم عن بعد جهاز التحكم عن بعد	نموذجي العمل عن بعد و الهجين
The new normal	مستجدا طبيعيا	الواقع الجديد \ الحالة الطبيعية الجديدة
Better work-life balance	توازن الحياة العملية	توازن أفضل بين الحياة العملية و الحياة الخاصة
To report for daily meetings	كتابة التقرير عن الاجتماع اليومي	حضور الاجتماعات اليومية
Individual tasks	المهام الشخصية	فرادى المهام
The most critical projects	المشاريع المنتقدة أكثر	المشاريع الأكثر أهمية
When they can be most productive	عندما يستطيعون الزيادة في الإنتاج	و هم في قمة قدرتهم الإنتاجية
Cutting out the daily commute	حذف السفر اليومي إلى الدوام	الإستغناء عن الذهاب إلى العمل بشكل يومي
Outsourced children care	العناية الخارجية بالأطفال	الإستعانة بالآخرين لحضانة الأطفال

Table. 2 Examples of inadequate translations where L1 could not be used

Discussion

The findings seem to support the hypothesis that the students use their L1 during translation tasks to mediate and verbalize the cognitive process of ST comprehension. An analysis of the collected data suggest that when students are able to express ST meaning in their L1, it is a predictor that they have grasped its intended meaning and that they would usually produce an adequate translation as illustrated by Table 1. However, when the text is about a domain that is unfamiliar to the students, they are therefore not able to express the ST meaning in their L1, and that is a predictor that their translations will not be of good quality as shown by Table 2. In this case, intervention and assistance is called for, otherwise students will produced either literal or incomplete translations as they did not grasp the meaning of the ST.

Drawing from the principled steps of the Interpretative Translation Method, it would seem that translation students prefer to de-verbalize the ST not in English (the source language), as the method suggests, but they deconstruct it in their L1. This form of translanguaging seems to be in line with the view that success in interlingual translation depends on the translator's ability to use more than one language (Malmkjær, 2004).

Through TAP, students indicated that they found the need to express the ideas or concepts expressed in the original text in their L1, to own its meaning, before re-expressing it in the target language with confidence. The cognitive process of internalized comprehension is undertaken using L1, which indicates that first language mediates the interlingual translation process. Translation students seem to think in their L1 during translation activities as they find it both natural and empowering.

Students' unavoidable use of their L1 at the comprehension stage of the translation process transitions their shift to using the target language (MSA) for the re-expression stage combining various translation strategies. These could have been strategies of paraphrasing, substitution, expansion, reduction, and reordering, as described by Malone (1988); or Vinay and Darbelnet's procedural techniques of literal translation, calque, transposition, adaptation, equivalence, or Catford shifts; or Venuti's foreignization and domestication techniques. Students may as well use what Newmark (1988) termed classified translation strategies such as: transference, naturalization, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, and descriptive equivalent, or Delisle's (1993) divided translation strategies of communicative, semantic, literal, free and adaptation. However, all these strategies become irrelevant if ST comprehension has not been achieved.

Summary of the findings

As a summary of the findings, it has been observed during the application of the three phases of the Interpretative Translation Theory (comprehension, de-verbalization and reformulation) from English into MSA that students resort to using their L1 as a mediating tool during interactions and collaborations to perform translation tasks. In addition, students revealed through TAP that their L1 frequently becomes the interlingua or the language of the cognitive process of the ST comprehension, which enables them to create a mental version of its content prior to translating it into MSA. In other words, students use L1 to mediate, verify and verbalize their comprehension of the source text. This naturally occurring pedagogical translanguaging reflects a form of students' use of their schema as identity assertion during translation tasks performance.

Implications of the findings

The implications of the findings of this practitioner's research are twofold: pedagogical and sociocultural. At the pedagogical level, the use of students L1 is a form of their empowerment as it gives credence to the knowledge they bring into the classroom embodied in their mother tongue. It increases their confidence levels and lowers their affective filters. Apropos, when the affective filter of the students is lowered, their self-confidence rises and their learning improves and progresses (Krashen, 1986).

This implication highlights the need to explicitly instruct students to learn and use translation strategies such as creating a version of the ST in their L1 to make sure they understood it, and then proceed with producing the TT as a translation. Support from this view can be found in (Bonyadi, 2003; Gile, 2005; Mendoza & Ponce, 2009; Alves, Pagano & da Silva, 2011; Washbourne, 2012) who considered that the students of translation need to be explicitly trained in reading comprehension before engaging in translation.

At the sociocultural level, the presence of students L1 in the classroom suggests an acceptance of their identity, cultural heritage and who they are. Their prior knowledge, whether formally learned or naturally acquired, makes up their schemata or knowledge of the world. Hence, the acceptance and inclusion of their L1 empowers students and boosts their confidence as they feel that their linguistic heritage, and by default their identity, has been recognized and appreciated.

Conclusion

The research behind this paper was set to probe the students' use of their L1 to show whether or not they have grasped the meaning of the source text. This cognitive process was revealed through the use of TAP, observations and notes. Results indicate that during the cognitive process of ST comprehension, students use their L1 to express the mental image of the meaning generated as they understood it. However when the text is not accessible to them, or the domain and its terminology prevent them from comprehending ST meaning, they simply resort to literal translation using dictionaries and mobile translation applications. The use of

L1 in interlingual translation could be a reliable predictor that students have understood the ST meaning. Its absence gives an indication that the ST has not been fully understood, and that intervention and assistance are required to familiarize students with the domain, content and/or context of the ST.

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Appendices

Appendix: The source text for data represented by Table .2

The remote and hybrid work models have become the new normal through the pandemic, and they will likely continue to play a role in the evolution of the office through 2022. For many, this new work model has introduced an appreciation for a better work-life balance. It is certain that they may still have to report for daily meetings, but this has still introduced a new level of freedom and control of their time.

Employees can now choose the time to perform individual tasks, and instead of focusing on intensive projects during regular business hours, they have the flexibility to decide when they work. They can now focus on the most critical projects when they can be most productive. This model of working is beneficial to parents, as well, as it ensures they're home when the children get off the bus and provides the flexibility for parents to attend school events with their children.

Remote and hybrid work is even saving employees money. In fact, cutting out the daily commute leaves more money in their pockets. In addition, working from home means outsourced childcare may no longer be necessary or may not be needed to the same extent.