Session IX

MRC Analysis: Corpus-Based Interpreter Training-Needs Assessment

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Recent advances in technology make it possible to examine large amounts of both textual and spoken language. Using personal computers and readily available, inexpensive word-processing, spreadsheet, and digital audio software, corpus linguistics techniques may now applied to the spoken word, allowing researchers and instructors to more objectively examine paralinguistic and linguistic elements of interpreter performances. In the approach presented here, source texts, audio renderings, and their transcriptions are organized such that the corpus may be queried by computer-assisted means. Observations are compiled in a spreadsheet, using a binomial coding system describing the deviations from the source message in terms of their impact on the message and the mechanics by which those deviations occur.

The MRC approach was developed with two goals in mind: to identify interpreter-training needs through observation and analysis of student interpreter performances, and to construct a language-neutral model for applying corpus-based analytical techniques to the spoken word. A parallel corpus consisting of both audio recordings and text transcriptions of interpreter renderings was compiled. Forty randomly selected renderings of two speeches, one given in Spanish, the students' native language (L1) and the other in English, their acquired language (L2) comprise the 80,000 word corpus used in the development of this model.

In an effort to maximize objectivity and flexibility, the model does not seek to enumerate occurrences of pre-determined phenomena, instead comparing target renderings to the source message in terms of the conservation of *meaning* (M), *rhetorical value* (R), and *clarity* (C), or the extent to which the receiver must invest additional coding effort to comprehend the message. The mechanics by which target renderings deviate from the source-text message are also tracked: *lexical shifts* (L), *grammatical shifts* (G), *syntactical shifts*(S), *omissions* (O), *additions* (A), *pronunciation errors* (P), *unintelligible utterances* (U), and disfluencies such as false-starts, self-corrections, and awkward hesitations (C). For example, an interpreter rendering that alters the denotative meaning of a portion of the source-message through omission would be coded as MO; a word-choice resulting in an ambiguous rendering would be coded as CL. Source messages and target renderings, whether in audio or text formats, will be referred to herein as *source-text* (ST) and *target text* (TT).

For each ST and its TT renderings, audio recordings are transferred to a computer and placed on an adjacent track and time-aligned. The tracks appear on the computer screen as audio traces, permitting precise time measurements and semi-automated searches and permitting the researcher to switch among renderings efficiently, facilitating comparisons of paralinguistic features.

The STs and target TTs are transcribed. Each ST is divided into small word-groupings which are numbered for identification and automated location. ST and TT transcriptions are time-coded at fifteen second intervals. The target texts are then merged into a single document.

General findings:
In the original study, portions of text were selected for closer scrutiny if 75% of the target renderings for any given passage indicated some degree of error or difficulty. This resulted in the selection of forty-eight units for Text 1 and thirty-five for Text 2. On Text 1 (L2 to L1), 56% of renderings of selected passages affected meaning, 21% affected rhetorical value, and 8% diminished clarity or increased receiver decoding effort. By comparison, in Text 2 (L1 to L2), 40% of the responses altered meaning, 14% affected rhetorical value, and 31% affected clarity or receiver effort. For these student interpreters, when working into L2, meaning and rhetorical value were better conserved (16% and 7% difference respectively) and clarity or receiver effort were adversely affected (23% difference). Working into their non-native, presumably weaker language, this group of student interpreters produced target renderings that presumably require additional decoding effort of the receiver, but are more complete, accurate, and better reflect the speaker's intentions. A surprising number of lexical, grammatical, and syntactical shifts were noted when the students worked into L1. L1 lexical shifts were most commonly related to register and field-specific vocabulary and pragmatics. Interestingly, many of the L1 errors were similar to those made by non-native speakers of Spanish, including: calques, incorrect terminations and suffixes, problems of agreement in number and gender, and inappropriate use of subjunctive and imperative moods. Given the education level of these students, it is reasonable to assume that these errors were triggered by factors other than native-language skills, possibly: linguistic interference, poor cognitive-load management, and/or inadequate processing of the ST prior to rendering. Working in both directions, students exhibited difficulty with pragmatics and approximating the force of: expressions of solidarity, congratulations, and hedged requests and denials. Linguistic interference, often in the form of calques or phonetic "echoing," also affected performance in both directions. Lexical and structural calques were also noted.

The data collected in the initial study performed on this corpus suggest training needs in field-specific and register-specific vocabulary and pragmatic conventions in both L1 and L2. Delayed errors and linguistic interference suggest a need for improved cognitive-resource management and achieving greater distance from the formal aspects of the ST. At this writing, errors related to linguistic interference and ST anticipation are being examined with respect to ear-to-voice span. Preliminary results indicate at least a weak correlation between shorter lag times and a tendency to use cognates and phonetically similar structures. This approach has been adapted and used with encouraging results in programs at two universities as both a measurement tool and as a framework for identifying and prioritizing the elements of a message to be conserved, according to the circumstances of each language-mediated event.

The MRC approach is a work in progress; the methodology continues to be refined and the corpora expanded. This approach has produced quantifiable evidence of specific interpreter behaviors, which in turn suggest remedial strategies. As technologies improve, the process will become more efficient and less labor intensive. It appears that the number of empirical studies in translation and interpreting are on the rise and it is hoped that the MRC approach can make some small contribution to that body of research.

A Study on the Reliability Issues of Simultaneous Interpreting Assessment

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Mr Wu joined Newcastle University in 1998 as a lecturer in translation and interpreting. He holds an MA in Translation and Interpretation from Monterey Institute of International Studies, California (1993). Between 1993 and 1998, Mr. Wu worked as a Lecturer at Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages in Taiwan. He was also Director of Wenzao's Szu-yuan Translation Service. Mr Wu is now working on a PhD study in reliability issues of interpreting assessment. He is also building a digital speech bank for interpreting training and learning.

The test design and assessment criteria for evaluating interpreters' performance are still being described as *intuitive* (Campbell and Hale 2003: 211). The design and administration of the in-training assessments for interpreters are still relied mainly on the experiences of individual trainers, and inconsistencies of the exam procedures exist among many interpreter education institutions. Although there have been the awareness of the need to include the process-oriented assessment for interpreter training such as using portfolios (Sawyer 2004), in most interpreter training institutions, the method to evaluate an interpreter trainee's interpreting skills is still often a *direct* measurement under simulated real-life situations. The test takers are asked to perform their interpreting skills in front of a panel of examiners. Drawing their professional experiences in the field as standards and using a check list of criteria, the examiners holistically judge the test takers' performances and decide whether to pass or fail them, or to assign a mark. In other words, it's very much a subjective professional judgement in nature, and subjective performance assessment has long been criticised as unreliable and "in need of systematic study" (Mackintosh in Campbell and Hale 2003: 212). In his case study of interpreting exam jury members, Sawyer also observed that "despite the vast experience and impressive qualifications of faculty and external jury, this [interpreting] expertise does not necessarily lead to a high degree of similarity in the exercise of professional judgment" (Sawyer 2004: 188).

Well-thought exam criteria, marking schemes, procedures and test instruments may all help improve the reliability of interpreting exams. However, they will be of little value in test reliability if the examiners don't use them in a consistent manner, or if the design of the instrument itself makes it difficult to be used consistently. Just as Gile found his raters to be unreliable in his experiment of fidelity assessment in consecutive interpreting (Gile 1995), many reliability studies on language testing also identified the marker as a source of measurement error in direct assessment. For example, in composition exams, which in nature is also a subjective judgment on the test takers' writing ability, the test reliability is found to be "affected by variations in the perceptions and attitudes" of the markers (Hamp-Lyons, 1991 in Milanovic, Saville et al. 1996: 93) .

The similarities between the language oral test and the interpreting test are strong in terms of the element of subjective judgement and the requirement of spoken language authenticity in the test input and response. The emphasis on empirical evidence in developing and improving language tests, including identifying examiners' perceptions during exams, may give a crucial pointer in the enhancement of the interpreting test design, or provide examiner trainings, so a higher reliability and validity can be achieved. This aspect of "jury conduct", as Sawyer (2004) put it, is critical to the quality of the interpreting test, and is in urgent need of study because there is "a lack of conformity" and "extreme fluctuation in professional judgement is evident" (Sawyer 2004: 187-188).

As tests cannot be valid unless they are reliable, this study sets out to explore how the examiners perceive and use the criteria and how reliable they are during simultaneous interpreting exams. It is hoped that by understanding how the interpreting exam jurors use the criteria, more practical and reliable assessment instruments and jury procedures may be developed.

To measure and analyse what are essentially private or subjective experiences of the examiners, which obviously relate to how people's mind work, research tools used by psychologists may be a good starting point to consider. George Kelly's Repertory Grid technique (Fransella and Bannister 1977) and Thurstone's Method of Paired Comparisons (Thurstone 1959) have been chosen as the data collection method and the analytical techniques in this study. Kelly's Repertory Grid technique can look into examiner's perceptions of each assessment construct, while Thurston's Method of Paired Comparisons can be used to monitor the inter- and intra-rater reliability. Statistical factor analysis has also been employed in investigating the collected data on examiners' use of the criteria. Think aloud protocols were also used to gather subject examiners' retrospective views on how they evaluate the students.

Thirty examiners were recruited to participate in the study. Examiners listened and watched video recordings of five student interpreters' exam performances of simultaneous interpreting and evaluate their performances. The examiners are mainly from three different backgrounds:

1. Professional interpreters with substantial teaching experiences
2. Professional interpreters with little or no teaching duties
3. Professional translators with some or no interpreting background

The preliminary results are summarized as follows:

- **Assessment criteria:** through factor analysis, the judgement factors were reduced into two primary components: the Faithfulness component and the Voice component. The Faithfulness component accounts for 71.3% of the variance while the Voice component accounts for 11.1%. Out of the eleven analysed criteria, the two components alone cumulate 82.4% of the judgement value.
  This result may indicate the need to incorporate alternative assessment methods, such as the portfolio assessment, during the interpreter training because many other criteria can not be evaluated effectively in this kind of holistic judgement.
- **Reliability issues:** statistical analysis in this study indicates that the examiner reliability level is high in a bigger group of eight or thirty. However, both inter- and intra-rater consistency is more problematic. This may indicate potential problems in most interpreting exam panels because in those panels the number of examiners is usually only two or three.
  Professional interpreter examiners also show a tendency to mark lower than the non-professional interpreter examiners. Moreover, just as Sawyer (2004) also observed in his case study, professional interpreter examiners show a higher fluctuation in their judgements among all five student interpreters, while in the case of assessing high performers, it seems that non-professional interpreter examiners have a higher reliability level.

Today's Translation Challenges

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Dr. Kathleen Egan is the Technical Director at the National Virtual Translation Center. She is a part of the senior leadership at the Center designing and overseeing the development of technology to enable a virtual enterprise of linguists supporting translation requirements. . She has served in the government since 1988 in various managerial and leadership positions, from managing linguists in educational settings to working closely with engineers in research and development. Throughout, she has focused on bringing into the work environment innovative tools and solutions to improve language capabilities across agencies. Dr. Egan has taught at various universities overseas and in the US. She earned an undergraduate degree from the Universite of Louvain in Belgium, and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. An accomplished linguist in several languages, she has a strong knowledge not only of the language but also the culture and countries where the languages are spoken.

This paper will discuss both the challenges and opportunities that we are facing in the translation field. Time pressures, types of data to be translated, and available tools are transforming requirements. Skills and quality issues must be addressed to arrive at solutions that are both technical and practical. Testing prospective linguists must take into account changes in examinee population.

Traditionally, U.S. government translators have been learners of the foreign language with native competence in English. For these individuals, a reading comprehension test in the foreign language has been used as a predictor of translation ability into English. But, how useful are reading tests in today's FBI, where most translators are learners of English?

Since 9/11, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has hired about 1,000 translators. Of these, roughly 85 percent list the foreign language as their native language. Rarely is translation training part of their educational background.

FBI research projects have found that if the foreign language is the individual's native language, using a reading comprehension test with multiple choice questions in English is not a good predictor of translation ability into English (as measured by a translation test).

One of these projects involved a statistical analysis of 1483 applicants in the Arabic language. These applicants were tested after 9/11 over a four-month period and represent a random sample. Of those who listed Arabic as their primary language (1077), nearly 80% (834) passed the reading test, but 60% (634) went on to fail the translation test. As shown in another study, English Writing Tests are better predictors of translation test performance for this type of population.

FBI Verbatim Translation Exams (VTEs) consider reading comprehension of the source language and writing ability in the target language as pre-requisites for translation, but are predicated on the notion that translation ability is a separate skill, termed "congruity judgment", or the ability to choose the best equivalent. Accordingly, VTEs are designed to test translation difficulty instead of source language comprehension or English writing ability.

But the challenges that face the linguists go beyond having to translate from the native into a foreign language (English). The documents to be translated are not always well composed products from newswire, handbooks or journals; they are often blurred, damaged, handwritten, and in languages for which relevant reference materials do not exist. Similarly, translations of audio materials that contain colloquial language in a mixture of dialects require skills not normally acquired in a classroom. Academic training may not necessarily prepare the future translator for these challenges. Those professionals may find themselves under the "pressure" of providing quick gist "for information/assimilation only" rather than a full verbatim translation that is well edited and finished for dissemination.

Additional challenges come when customer, source data, linguist skills, tools, and environment combine to create unique situations. The multiplicity of customers makes tasks hard to predict, the languages requested vary greatly, the time of completion is hard to estimate. Customers are not always good at defining their priorities, or balancing cost with responsiveness to critical needs. When dealing with customers, it is necessary to manage expectations.

The human linguist is also a challenge because test results, no matter how valid or reliable, are not sufficient to ensure successful job performance. Once in the workplace, success may depend on motivation, willingness to face unexpected circumstances, ingenuity, and previous experience. Linguists cannot be expected to be subject matter experts in every field, or be familiar with a number of cultures other than their own. Still, linguists must be ready to handle a myriad of topics and socio-cultural issues. Where the request is to provide a gist or summary, sifting through large volumes of data represents a risk.

Our challenge, at the National Virtual Translation Center, is to ensure that we match the right translator with the right task at the right time.

The NVTC has been established to provide timely and accurate translations using state of the art technologies. A new agile enterprise was created to enable interagency sharing of resources and brokering translation requirements. The web environment and connectivity make it easy to reach out to translators everywhere and anytime, however, the tools do not always adapt and accommodate to the vast range of document types, and they are not ready to be inserted in an operational environment. Experience shows that creating communities of linguists that can share knowledge in a virtual environment is an essential way to increase the skills of the linguists and to provide them with a support system that enhances job satisfaction in spite of the challenges. Our linguists are not centrally located. They can not simply come to the manager's desk and ask a question. Training materials and performance support systems must be created in electronic format and provided over a secure website. Q&A comes in the form of email. NVTC is working on a chat/message board application to increase responsiveness and avoid unnecessary chatter over email.

Using state of the art available technologies to speed the translation process is attractive but not always as easily implemented as one would wish. It is paramount to make sure that we are maximizing the use of automated solutions to have humans focus on the essential and critical data and not get enamored with the technology and forget to weigh the true value to the business process. Automated tools to support the translators (gazetteers, dictionaries, references, converters, etc….) are not readily available in the "surprise" languages.

Our approach has been to take a new look at the business process by using a mix of native and non-native linguists depending on the task, by integrating translation aides whenever possible, adding more refined metadata for easier tracking of the full workflow and building metrics to offer feedback to the linguists, customers, translation and task managers. The opportunity is open to creating new ways of doing business where at times, commercial, academic, and government type work coincide and leverage from each other, at other times true differences make it difficult to adopt each others processes and products.

New mindsets, approaches, and collaborative efforts are needed to respond to the current needs in translation. These offer new opportunities to explore and expand the translation field.

Comparative Email Analysis of a Translator Training Course

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Always eager to expand her knowledge, Jill is completing the first year of a doctoral program on translation and intercultural studies at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, Spain.

Introduction

In this paper, I will describe and discuss email analysis as a viable method for identifying group dynamics or the presence of community. The method will be presented in some detail as it was applied to our translation courses, followed by results and a discussion on its relative applicability to online and face-to-face translator training courses. The conclusion shall summarize the results and further considerations.

Background

In the year 2000, the first postgraduate course in translator training was offered at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili, about the same time when the implementation of translation computer aids reached a certain plateau. The course has been designed in modules that address the needs of today’s competitive translation market. Within two years, the translation program was expanded to include two online courses that paralleled the electronic tools (e-tools) and editing modules. The course content and the instructors were the same for both the face-to-face postgraduate course (F2F) and the online e-tools and editing courses (ODL, online distance learning).

This presented an opportunity to develop a research project to answer the question of whether or not mode of delivery – F2F or ODL – was a factor in training translators. Six courses were observed during two years of the study, 2 postgraduate and 4 ODL courses (2 e-tools and 2 editing). The objective was to describe or observe community formation in the translator training courses. The students would reach a comfortable participation level, and form alliances or friendships among classmates. If they were comfortable in the environment and the content, then there would be some measure of success in the group dynamics as well. This behavior can be observed, and would thus reflect any fundamental differences between the two modes of delivery.

Literature review and Method

This paper focuses on a small slice of the translation e-learning project, that of analyzing the exchange of emails posted to the discussion list. The analysis process is straightforward; it requires time and attention to detail. Discussion lists generate a large corpus of data in relatively little time, which can be reviewed from various perspectives. The server produces a date index and a thread index with the subject header and the sender's address. However, to extract comparative or descriptive statistical data, someone has to scroll through them and sort them according to the selected category or categories. Keep in mind that emails cannot be sorted by subject header alone, which may not necessarily reflect the message's content. This renders it impossible to rely on the subject header. Two criteria were selected: email topic and exchange pattern. By analysing the email topics (pedagogy, management, technology and social) and exchange patterns (initial, reply and follow-up), we could show differences in group dynamics and interaction and pinpoint which type of relationship was present for each course.

Prior sociological studies published by Tönnies, a late 19th century sociologist who studied the behavioral differences manifest in personal (family-oriented) and professional (business-oriented) relationships, taken from the German publication *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1887). In our estimation, the F2F groups would display a relationship-focused community while the ODL groups would display a task-focused community. Getting back to Descriptive Translation Studies, this should be the type of behavior manifested by norms that can be observed in emails as a by-product of the action (Toury; 1995).

What's the problem?

Early on in the email analysis phase of the research project, we realized that replicability was a potential pitfall, despite having set clear definitions to act as guidelines. This was due to the technical nature of the electronic tools course being taught, and individual expectation of the notion of a translation community and translator training.

The electronic tools module teaches the use of software programs ranging from zipped files and advanced use of Microsoft Word to computer-aided translation and localization tools. We had to be specific about what constitutes a *pedagogy* email relevant to the lessons, and a *technology* email requesting technical support. A teacher posts an announcement for a translation conference that he has organized, instructing the students to attend in order to earn credits, which could be a *management* email. Likewise, a conference announcement could be posted for general interest, in which case it is not directly related to the course content, and could be a *social* email.

Problem-solving: the Validation Test

A validation test was carried out in order to ensure that the results could be replicated and to test the definitions of each category. The validation test consists of running a small-scale email analysis. A corpus of emails is selected from the discussion list and tallied by three research members. In this case, we selected the first 50 emails from the 2003 F2F group. The tallied results are compared to highlight potential problems, and then discussed in order to refine the definitions and anticipate variances. In this way, some additional decisions were made to clarify the categories and their definitions have been confirmed.

The statistical data gleaned from this process can be as straightforward or as involved as necessary for the designated project. The full article includes some comparative results of the data from our research groups for the purpose of demonstrating the utility of email analysis.

Conclusions

The advent of internet ended the preconceived notion of translators as solitary individuals who work with words. Email is used as a key tool for building group dynamics and interaction in both educational and professional translation circles. It can be utilized to draw people together; it provides a sense of community and of belonging. Interaction plays a significant part in today's educational curriculum. Email analysis can be used as a method for monitoring and supporting advances in online educational programs for translator training worldwide.

A Review of Quality Assessment in Conference Interpreting

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Introduction

The issue of quality is one of the main themes of conference Interpreting and "is the ultimate concern in all interpreting research" (Garzone 2002: 4). One of the main aims of conference interpretation research is quality assessment: the research for a reliable metric of quality (Robin Seton 2002: 29). This paper will review research on quality assessment in conference interpreting both in the West and in China and discuss factors influencing interpreting quality and their implications for interpreter training with analysis of authentic textual corpora from Cantonese to English simultaneous interpreting.

Methodological approaches

Methodological approaches to interpreting research ranges from survey research using questionnaires and interviews to empirical research, corpus-based observations and to case-study with experiments. The first survey on interpreting quality was carried out by Buhler (1986). Following research was conducted by Kurz (1993a, 1993b), Moser (1995), Shlesinger (1997), Garzone (2002). An early experimental study was that of Barik (1971). He compared transcriptions of the source text and the target text, counting omissions, additions, substitutions and errors.

Research on Quality Criteria

The terminology of quality criteria and standards vary from one author or text to the other (Pöchhacker 2002: 96), but it is generally a consensus that core criteria are accuracy or fidelity and clarity. Accuracy is faithful reproduction of the original discourse. It focuses on the speaker or the source speech. Fidelity is to represent fully the speaker's messages and his/her intentions. Clarity represents linguistic acceptability, stylistic correctness, etc. It refers to target-speech comprehensibility that focuses on the listeners.

Quality in interpreting has been investigated at various levels, from error analysis to client and user expectations, and to quality assessment in training. Different schools and theories investigated the issue of quality from different perspectives.

In the West there are Seleskovitch's (1976) interpretive theory, Gile's (1988) capacity management model, Déjean le Feal's (1990) criterion of "equivalent effect', Kopczynski's (1994) pragmatic approach to quality, Viezzi's (1996) didactic approach, Moser-Mercer (1996) takes into account extra-linguistic information subject to situational constraints, Kalina (1998) lists ‘product analysis’ and to name only a few.

In China, Yan Fu elaborated the principle of “accuracy(信)、smoothness(达)、elegance(雅)”for translation in his Chinese version of Evolutions and Ethics by T.H.Huxley was in 1898. Many criteria for interpreting in China evolve from this principle. Most people take the first two as principles of interpreting. Li yueran (1980) first described the criteria of interpreting as “accuracy(准)、smoothness(顺)、quickness(快)”. Some people set the goal of ‘the unity of accuracy(准) and smoothness (顺)” as Zhong Shukong(1999), Qi Zonghua(1983). Some people emphasize on “accuracy(准) and quickness (快,及时) like Chen Jie et al （1998）and Zhong Weihe(1998). Still others advocate “accuracy(准确), quickness (迅速) and vividness(传神)” as Qi Xiyu (1984). Many people use the term “accuracy(准确) and fluency(流利)”.

Further research work has concentrated on error analysis and quality assessment in training (Altman 1994; Schjoldager 1996; Russo and Rucci 1997; Falbo 1998; Riccardi 1999a; Viezzi 1999), and on a global approach to quality (Gile 1991, 1995a; Kalina 1995; Moser-Mercer 1996; Viezzi 1996; Callados Ais 1998). “ Comparatively fewer researchers have focused on the analysis of authentic textual corpora and of individual cases.” (Pöchhacker 2002: 98)

Factors in interpreting quality

There are many factors in interpreting quality such as factors of interpreters, factors of source speech, and factors of the context of situation. Factors of interpreters involve linguistic and encyclopaedic competence, technical skills, ability to work in a team, conference preparation. ”Quality assurance rests exclusively on interpreters. On the one hand, they are the only guarantors of the intrinsic quality and fidelity of the TT and ST; on the other, they also have to take care that the ‘finished product’ is sufficiently fluent, plausible and coherent not to raise the user’s suspicions concerning its reliability. Users’ confidence can be gained only if formal criteria are also complied with, although they should not become substitutes for real fidelity to the ST (as may be the case when the interpreter’s is inadequate, but s/he is crafty enough as to ‘market’ her/his ‘product’ well) (Garzone 2002: 118)”. Therefore Interpreters should enhance strategies influencing the overall performance, such as monitoring and workload management strategies. Factors of source texts/speeches involve textual/linguistic features, speakers’ pronunciation and prosody, degree of technicality etc. Factors of the context of situation refers to that quality is dependent on the context of situation and context of culture and, as such, subject to change in time.” (Garzone 2002: 115)

Implications for interpreter training

The research on quality assurance could provide a useful basis for future interpreters’ training. “After all, interpreter training is not only about processing skills. All aspects of mediated communication that may determine its success should be taught.” (Kalina 2002:130)

Reflections on Standardization of Chinese as Translated Text

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He Yaqin was born in Lingshi, Shanxi. In 1988, she received a B.A. with a major in English. In 2000, she received her master's degree in English from Tianjin Normal University. She has co-authored two books on English reading skills and grammar learning skills and has published papers on English teaching and learning. She is currently a teacher（an associate professor）in Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology.

A recent investigation reveals that about eighty percent of class hours are spent on teaching and learning of strategies or skills for translation. However, the problem arising from translated texts – by the students in some colleges of science and engineering, has become a current preoccupation of teachers in teaching and learning English-Chinese translation. The paper is written in an attempt to seek an effective cure for standardizing Chinese as translated text in teaching and learning English-Chinese translation, with the help of the concept of linguistic foregrounding.

The concept was elaborated in 2001 as an effective means in course of translation. It was suggested that the translator has to differentiate between two kinds of linguistic foregrounding: one is originated from the difference between Chinese and English linguistic systems; the other is achieved by the author himself deliberately arraying linguistic materials. So it is necessary for translators to deal with separately English sentences easy to cause Chinese linguistic foregrounding. That is, a translator is supposed to make his or her version standard unless the author in the source language arranges for displaying his or her personal style.

In a recent test of translation from English to Chinese, some students translate many English sentences into less standard Chinese, giving rise to linguistic foregrounding. A raw statistics on the test reveals that the translated texts of 28 out of 40 students aren't idiomatic Chinese, covering a spectrum of linguistic foregrounding. Of the group four of them reproduce incorrect translated texts, resulting from limited understanding of the source-language message. Their chief difficulties in translating are grammatical. The others remain at the other end of the spectrum. They have difficulty in translating lexis. Some of them don't understand the key words of a sentence, because all the possible meanings are unknown to them or because they just know the general meanings of the words, but in the textual context, meanings are determined by the unusual collocation or a reference elsewhere in the text. Others fully understand the key words but find them hard to express in idiomatic Chinese, because they are not so familiar with the difference between English and Chinese or because their Chinese is very poor, especially in vocabulary collocation. At the other extreme end of the spectrum are those who grasp the meanings of key words in the text and whose Chinese is not so bad. They want to reproduce freely or creatively the essential meanings in the target language Chinese, so they clarify the sentence as far as possible, running the risk of not paying enough attention to the special features of the text or the characteristic of the author, which they should translate with a corresponding deviation from the target language norms in their versions. Most of the students lack textual awareness, and internal coherence are often ignored. Therefore, the new focus of the teacher has to shift from the old plan of strategies teaching and learning to the new one including the essential knowledge of Chinese, the concept of linguistic foregrounding and the unit of translation, etc in teaching and learning English-Chinese translation.

However, in colleges of science and engineering, class hours are limited for teaching and learning of translation. The teachers of translation have been pursuing their inquiries into the possibility to achieve good results in a limited period of time. In the author's opinion, much importance should be attached to the following aspects, which take at least fifty percent of the class hours. First of all, the knowledge of the students' own language has to be improved further. It is said that a translator has to know his own language, his subject and the target language --- in that order. Excellence in the first requirement often saves him from hideous mistakes in the second. Of course, the difference between English and Chinese has to be highlighted, both from macroscopic and microscopic viewpoints to encourage the students to experience and realize people's different ways of thinking and the systematic difference between two languages. Secondly, the unit of translation is a key factor. If discourse or text is regarded as the unit of translation, the quality of translated text will be enhanced, with more 'local flavor' added to it. As for the students, with textual awareness, regard discourse as their background of thinking, aiming to ensure wholeness and unity of the translated text. In addition, the students should be acquainted with the concept of linguistic foregrounding. If short sentences or special structures are an essential part of the text, and are the personal style of the author rather than of the norms of the source language, a corresponding deviation from the target language norms should be reproduced in the translated text. Otherwise, the phenomenon of linguistic foregrounding should not occur in the target language. Last but not least, refining upon the translated text should be emphasized. It's suggested that the class be divided into several groups of three or four students, who add a further refinement to the translated text one by one. The satisfactory translated text lies in its idiomatic Chinese expression and natural coherence within sentences or paragraphs.

These suggestions are accepted as a remedy to the problem about translated texts of the students. Of course, there are some students who suffer from deficiency in expressing themselves in their native language because of their limited knowledge of it. However, the suggestions made above by the author come from her personal experiences. It is believed that the suggestions, at least, can help improve students' ability to translate from English to Chinese. On how to standardize Chinese as translated text, a further research needs to be undertaken by more colleagues and experts.