The Implications of Teaching Translation as a Linguistic Skill in the Light of News Headlines

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Abstract

Just like everyone can paint, whether it was bad or good, every bilingual can translate. However, not every translation (or painting) has the same quality. One of the reasons behind student translators having different levels of product quality is training/ teaching. Student translator training/teaching is not only about training/teaching them how to translate but how to produce high quality translation. It is based on the belief that untrained/untaught student translators generally produce lower quality translations compared to trained/taught student translators. Translation skills encompass not only linguistic skill (the linguistic expertise), including lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic skills, but also a professional skill (the expertise in other areas), including cultural, communicative, research, cross-cultural communication, project management, using various CAT programs, openness to others and flexibility, and familiarity with the subject domain skills, that reflect the multifaceted nature of the translation process and it its impact on producing a high quality translation. This study examines the implications of relying solely on training/teaching student translators only linguistically, suggesting that this issue may generally lead to lower quality translations, especially in terms of translating news headlines. However, translation departments around the world often make the significant mistake of focusing exclusively on linguistic skill, neglecting the broader professional skill that is equally essential.

This study is grounded in Van Doorslaer's assumption (2010) that student translators should prioritize not only linguistic skill, but also professional skill to produce high quality translation. It aims to assess whether current translation skills are sufficient to meet the demands of society and the translation market. The findings indicate that while communication methods and technologies advancements, and societal needs have changed, student translators' skills have not kept pace with these changes in translation studies departments around the world, including Iraq. Therefore, a re-evaluation of student translators' skills is necessary to respond to these changes effectively, especially in the light of the creative techniques used in translating news headlines.

Keywords: Student Translators' Skills (Linguistic Skill, Professional Skill), Translator Training/Teaching, Translation Quality

تداعيات تدريس الترجمة كمهارة لغوية في ضوء عناوين الأخبار

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المستخلص:

مثلما يمكن لأي شخص أن يرسم، سواء كان جيدًا أو سيئًا، يمكن لكل ثنائي اللغة أن يترجم. ومع ذلك، ليست كل ترجمة (أو لوحة) لها نفس الجودة. أحد الأسباب وراء حصول المترجمين الطلاب على مستويات مختلفة من جودة المنتج هو التدريب/التدريس. فلا يقتصر تدريب/تدريس الطلبة على الترجمة على تعليمهم كيفية الترجمة فحسب، بل كيفية إنتاج ترجمة عالية الجودة. ويعتمد هذا على الاعتقاد بأن المترجمين الطلاب غير المدربين ينتجون عمومًا ترجمات أقل جودة مقارنة بالمترجمين الطلبة المدربين. فلا تشمل مهارات الترجمة فقط المهارات اللغوية (الخبرة اللغوية)، بما في ذلك المهارات المعجمية والنحوية والدلالية والبراغماتية، ولكنها تشمل أيضًا المهارات المهنية (الخبرة متعددة التخصصات)، بما في ذلك الثقافة والتواصل والبحث والتواصل بين الثقافات وإدارة المشاريع والترجمة. استخدام برامج الترجمة بمساعدة الحاسوب المتنوعة، والانفتاح على الآخرين والمرونة، والإلمام بمهارات مجال الموضوع، مما يعكس الطبيعة المتعددة الأوجه لعملية الترجمة وتأثيرها على إنتاج ترجمة عالية الجودة. تتناول هذه الدراسة الآثار المترتبة على الاعتماد فقط على تدريب/تدريس المترجمين الطلبة لغويا فقط، مما يشير إلى أن هذه المشكلة قد تؤدي عمومًا إلى ترجمات أقل جودة، خاصة فيما يتعلق بترجمة عناوين الأخبار. ومع ذلك، غالبا ما ترتكب أقسام الترجمة في جميع أنحاء العالم، بما في ذلك العراق، خطأً فادحًا يتمثل في التركيز حصريا على المهارات اللغوية، وإهمال المهارات الاحترافية الأوسع التي لا تقل أهمية.

ترتكز هذه الدراسة على افتراض فان دورسلير (٢٠١٠) بأن المترجمين الطلاب يجب ألا يعطوا الأولوية للمهارات اللغوية فحسب، بل أيضًا للمهارات الاحترافية لإنتاج ترجمة عالية الجودة. وتهدف الدراسة إلى تقييم ما إذا كانت مهارات الترجمة الحالية كافية لتلبية متطلبات المجتمع وسوق الترجمة. وتشير النتائج إلى أنه في حين تغيرت أساليب الاتصال والتقدم التكنولوجي والاحتياجات المجتمعية، فإن مهارات المترجمين الطلبة لم تواكب هذه التغييرات في أقسام دراسات الترجمة حول العالم، بما في ذلك العراق. وعليه، فإن إعادة تقييم مهارات الطلبة المترجمين أمر ضروري للاستجابة لهذه التغييرات بشكل فعال، خاصة في ضوء التقنيات الإبداعية المستخدمة في ترجمة عناوين الأخبار.

الكلمات المفتاحية : مهارات المترجمين الطلبة (المهارة اللغوية، المهارة الاحترافية)، تدريب/تدريس المترجم، جودة الترجمة

1. Introduction

Translation researchers like Van Doorslaer (2010), Komissarov (2002), Archer (2002), Scarpa (2010), Guider (2008), Pym (2011), Popescu (2011), Tania Osburg (2006), and the PACTE group (2007, 2011) emphasize that translators should consider expertise in other areas in addition to linguistic expertise during translation. These researchers address the balance between these two types of expertise as a pedagogical approach (Van Doorslaer, 2010, pp. 3-22).Translation is a

complex activity requiring highly qualified translators who combine linguistic, communicative, and mediation skills. Translators not only learn to render text from one language to another but also acquire professional skill that is equally important. Market demands and professional qualifications indicate that translator competence evolves over time due to technological and social changes (Komissarov, 2002, pp. 7-20).

Translator competence is defined as the underlying knowledge system needed for translation, which is the main goal of translation training/teaching. Translator teaching involves developing skills necessary for achieving translator competence (Archer, 2002). Research in translation theory today shows significant changes in the role of translators. Modern professional translators are seen not just as technical intermediaries between languages but as creators of texts, meanings, and images influenced by advancements in linguistics and other areas. This is essential for producing high-quality translations and keeping up with new technologies. Understanding the translation process helps in producing translations that are not only linguistically accurate but also professionally relevant (Guider, 2008, pp. 3-20).

Analyzing the skills required in other areas various areas is particularly important for translation. Besides language expertise, translators must be familiar with expertise in other areas. Thus, they view themselves as experts not only in linguistics but also expertise in other areas, providing services to the expanding translation market (Pym, 2011, pp. 3-20).

This study investigates the following question: Do Translation Studies Departments around the world, including Iraq, take into account how the formation of expertise in other areas and linguistic expertise plays greater role in producing high quality translation, while separating them will lead to a lower standard of translation in their curricula and the training/ teaching of their students ?

2. Literature Review

Translation is a multifaceted activity that necessitates highly skilled translators. These professionals not only excel in rendering texts from one language to another but also develop various skills. Market demands and professional qualifications indicate that translator competence evolves over time due to technological, communicative advancements and societal needs. Translation is like walking on two legs: one foot represents linguistic skill, covering both source and target languages, while the other foot symbolizes professional skill. These skills are

inseparable, as their separation could result in translations that are subject to ridicule (Kiraly, 2000).

Translators utilize a variety of skills, such as linguistic and professional abilities, to convert words from one language to another. According to Tirkkonen-Condit (2005), language proficiency is crucial for understanding the source text and producing an accurate target text that maintains the style and tone of the original. Risku, (2013) states that:

- Cultural skills are also essential, as they help translators navigate idioms, references, and slang that vary by culture. Understanding and appreciating the values, beliefs, and customs of different cultures ensures accurate translations. Translators must also be aware of their cultural biases to avoid them during translation. For instance, translating a document for a Japanese company requires a good understanding of Japanese culture.

- Communicative skills are vital since translators communicate ideas from one language to another, overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers. Writing skills are equally important, as they enable translators to produce clear and accurate translations. Translators with strong writing skills are more likely to be hired and build a reputation in their field. The final stage of translation involves writing the target text, where the translator's writing ability is crucial.

- Research skills are important for finding accurate, up-to-date information on various topics. Translators need to organize and evaluate information from different languages and formats effectively. Time management skills, including goal setting, scheduling, and avoiding procrastination, help translators meet deadlines and deliver quality work.

- Cross-cultural communication involves understanding how people from different cultures communicate and adapting accordingly. This skill is crucial for translators and interpreters to meet the needs of their audience. Editing and proofreading ensure the final product is accurate and error-free, involving reviewing translations and checking for mistakes.

- Project management, which includes planning, executing, and monitoring projects, is essential for translators handling multiple steps and deadlines. Attention to detail ensures accurate translations by capturing the source text's meaning and avoiding mistakes.

- Translators use various CAT programs to refine their translations, such as language search engines, terminology management software, translation memory software, interactive machine translation software, and text alignment software. Active listening, organization skills, and strong reading comprehension in multiple languages also enhance translation accuracy and efficiency.

- Translators must continuously evolve and improve, being open to criticism and flexible with clients. Freelance translators benefit from marketing skills to find clients and build experience. Creativity helps translators navigate linguistic differences in idioms, slang, and dialects, while neutrality maintains professionalism in conveying ideas that may not align with personal views. Specializing in specific types of communication, such as business, medicine, law, or science, can further enhance a translator's expertise.

-Translating a text requires familiarity with the subject domain to interpret its subject, especially when the reader is not well-versed in the topic.

 House (2015) proposes a framework for evaluating translation quality that takes into account not only language expertise, but also the multidisciplinary one. It includes the following elements:

1. Adequacy and Acceptability: House proposed a distinction between "adequacy" (faithfulness to the source text) and "acceptability" (appropriateness for the target culture). Achieving both is crucial for a high-quality translation.

2. Function and Purpose: Translation quality should consider the intended function and purpose of the translation, tailoring the approach accordingly to meet these objectives effectively.

3. Situational Context: Assessing translation quality involves considering the communicative situation, understanding the specific context in which the translation will be used.

4. Text-External Factors: House stressed the importance of analyzing external factors such as the translator's role, intended readership, and cultural considerations in evaluating the quality of a translation.

5. Norms and Conventions: Recognizing and following appropriate linguistic and cultural norms is essential for assessing the quality of a translation.

3. Translator Training

PACTE group (2000, p.100) claim that the notion of translation skills has been borrowed from the idea of linguistic skill, but they define translation as including an array of skills which vary between individuals and which would never find their way into the notion of linguistic skill.

term translation competence to be a "shorthand fThis study is an attempt at the specification of translation competence which may plainly be described as the ability to translate. Its boundaries hard to drawn, translation competence is an elusive notion. Translation scholars have presented a

vast array of conceptions and models of translation competence, all in 317 an attempt to establish an efficient method of defining what the coPACTE (2000, p. 100) claim to have borrowed the notion of translation competence "from the idea of linguistic competence", but they define translation competence, afterwards professional competence, as including an array of knowledges, skills and abilities which vary between individuals and which would never find their way into the notion of linguistic competence.

Linguistic skill involves knowledge of the language itself, its device and functioning, language norms, including spelling and punctuation, as well as the ability to use this knowledge to understand other people's thoughts and express their own in oral and written form. Some researchers emphasize the ability of the translator to choose the necessary linguistic form and method of expression of thought depending on the conditions of communication (Schukin, 2004, p.416).

It is important to pay attention to the fact that the translator must have linguistic skill in two languages at once - native and foreign. A translator to understand the original text and create a translation text needs knowledge of all aspects of the two languages. In addition, if a regular communicator uses a set of language tools that he owns and If he considers it necessary to use in a certain communication situation, then for the translator the choice of language tools, goals and scope of communication are set by the text of the translation. Therefore, the level of language skill as in native and foreign languages should be high. This explains the requirement for the activities of the translator, according to which he must constantly hone his skills, expand and replenish the vocabulary, knowledge of the language. Another feature of the translator's linguistic skill is the ability to quickly adapt from one language to another, respond to a change in speech style, such as vocabulary, and switch from speech perception to speech reproduction. (Komissarov,2002, p. 330)

The translation skills of the translator necessarily include some personality characteristics, without which he will not be able to successfully perform his translation functions. Translation is a complex type of mental activity, the implementation of which requires a special mental organization, its great plasticity and flexibility, the ability to quickly switch attention, move from one language to another, from one culture to another, from one communicative situation to another. The translator is required to be able to focus, mobilize the resources of his memory and all his intellectual and emotional potentials. He has to deal with a wide variety of topics and translate the texts from various fields of knowledge, often of a very special nature. He requires a breadth of interests, comprehensive reading, high erudition. He should be a person of great culture and encyclopedic knowledge. It is even more important that he is able to constantly enrich his

knowledge, to seek out and perceive new information, to efficiently use various reference books and other sources of information (ibid.,2002, p. 332).

According to PACTE group , there are six skills of translation competence, which are listed briefly here with just a smattering of what PACTE includes under each (PACTE, 2000, 101-102):

- Communicative skill in two languages, including linguistic, discourse and sociolinguistic skills.

- Extra-Linguistic skill composed of general world knowledge and specialist knowledge.

- Instrumental skill composed of knowledge and skills related to the tools of the profession.

- Psycho-Physiological skill, "defined as the ability to use all kinds of psychomotor, cognitive and attitudinal resources" including "psychomotor skills for reading and writing; cognitive skills (e.g., memory, attention span, creativity and logical reasoning); psychological attitudes (e.g., intellectual curiosity, perseverance, rigour, a critical spirit, and self-confidence)".

- Transfer skill, which is "the ability to complete the transfer process from the ST (source text) to the TT (target text), i.e., to understand the ST and re-express it in the TL (target language), taking into account the translation's function and the characteristics of the receptor".

- Strategic skill, which includes "all the individual procedures, conscious and unconscious, verbal and non-verbal, used to solve the problems found during the translation process".

4.Translation Quality Assessment

In both research and practice, translation quality assessment is a complex task involving a range of linguistic and extra linguistic factors. Since the early stages of translation, evaluating output has been an integral concern, as it enables systems to be assessed, refined, and enhanced (Dorr et al.,2011). In translation studies, quality has been an essential issue in the research field.

Yet it needs more research on the best criteria to maintain an objective assessment. In the field of translation, ranking is one of the first methods for assessing quality. Criteria of the ranking model are fluency, adequacy, and comprehensibility where translations are ranked by evaluators (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2014, p.102).

Translation quality assessment is the process of assessing a translated text in terms of its quality (Munday, 2001). To ensure a valid and reliable assessment, it has to follow particular rules and standards. However the process of determining particular criteria for evaluating translation quality

is a difficult task, which is believed to be probably one of the most controversial intensely debated topics in translation scholarship and practice (Colina, 2009, 236). That is because the assessment criteria are negotiable in the field of translation studies, as the relative nature of quality itself is believed to be too complex and too context-dependent to be formulated under definition (Nord, 1991).

However. many researchers agree that assessing translation quality should measure particular issues, such as adequacy and fluency; these two metrics are most commonly used in evaluation (White & O'Connell, 1993). For example, Gupta et al. (2011) assert evaluation is based on adequacy and fluency.

Adequacy is defined as the extent to which the translation conveys the meaning of the source language unit (Koehn. 2009). Fluency is defined as the extent to which the translation follows the rules and the norms of the language; thus, it focuses only on the language unit (Casilho et al, 2018).

Saldanha and O'Brien (2014) state that ranking models do not fit as a 'diagnostic tool' in light of their scale and do not give a full insight into the errors nature (p.104). Today, professional translators are required to have professional and linguistic skills in connection with the increasing use of new technologies' (Archer 2002, p. 87).

In recent years, many universities have started to offer courses in the use of translation tools to trainee translators. It is essential to measure the quality of these tools to improve how perform. So, it is worth mentioning, though, that there are other ways to evaluate quality focused on the revision process rather than on the translation output, for example by measuring the post-editing effort in temporal , technical, and cognitive terms.

5. Analysis

Currently, translation studies are focusing on not only linguistic expertise in the translation of the news headlines' text, but also on extending beyond this to explore expertise in other areas more seriously. Since researchers proposed that student translators should pay attention to these two types of expertise during their translation, it is required to adopt this issue as a pedagogical approach to provide high quality translation. In other words, these different expertise are complementary. Their analysis is particularly important for multy study, such as translation, which has an impact on producing high quality translation.

The Implications of Teaching Translation as a Linguistic Skill in the Light of News Headlines

The language of news headlines' text presents unique features on the lexical, grammatical, rhetorical and cultural levels. The difficulty of translating news headline text is interpreting the main point of the entire article in just a few words that fit the limited space of the page. The media translator, then, has to make the reader wonder about the information to reveal in the target language if possible.

The explanation below show selected (11) news headlines' texts from several newspapers. All of these news headlines' texts contained gimmicks with their English and Arabic meanings. A word's denotation is the collection of things it refers to; its connotation is what it implies about the things it is used to refer to. It seems that behind the direct denotations/linguistic expertise of the words, an implied force. If the student translators have no expertise in other areas, they will not probably be able to interpret these types of gimmicks easily and as follows:

1."Bangladesh Arrests 900 Crackdown On Islamic Militants"

If this news headline converted into a proper sentence, then the sentence would read:
Bangladesh police say they have arrested 900 people as part of a crackdown on militants following a series of deadly attacks. This newspaper uses an ellipses feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

2. "Police Found Drunk In The Street"

This headline plays with the word "drunk". It can have two different meanings: One is that, the police were found drunk in the street. The other is that, the police found a drunk man in the street. This newspaper uses a play on word feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

3. "Mom Watches As Cruise Sail Away With Kids On Board"

When reading it, one would have the impression that:

The ship takes the children away on purpose.

But when the reader reads the rest of the article, he will know that:

It was the mother's fault because she didn't get on board before the deadline the cruise ship has made clear for every passenger on board. This newspaper uses a play on words feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

4."U.S. Energy Consumption"

A noun string is a term for a series of nouns or other words, all of which modify the final noun. For example, in the noun string "U.S. energy consumption" the nouns "U.S." and "energy" modify the final noun "consumption". This newspaper uses a noun strings feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

5. "Country Leader Question Time"

Another common headline form is a string of three, four or more nouns together (i.e. *Country Leader Question Time*). These can be difficult because the words don't appear related by verbs or adjectives. In the case of noun strings, it's helpful to try to connect the ideas by reading backward. This newspaper uses a noun strings feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

6*.* "Mustang Referral Customer Complaint"

By reading backward, one can guess that: There is a complaint made by a customer about a referral program for Mustang cars. Of course, you need to use your imagination for this! This newspaper uses a noun strings feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

7. "… In Hot Water"

 Using phrases such as being *in hot water* adds more color and depth to the literal meaning of being in trouble. This newspaper uses an idiom feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

8. "Ex- Minister Slams Govt. Priorities"

Another common news headline form causes vagueness/ lexical ambiguity (i.e. Ex- minister *slams* govt. priorities). In this headline, *slams* has two closely related meanings: One means *to criticize* and the second means *to shut something forcefully*. In this case, the first meaning implies that the government priorities were criticized by the ex- minister. This newspaper uses a polysemous   feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

9. "Genius Rev Butchered At Church"

In the headline, "Genius rev *butchered* at church", *butchered* means *to slaughter and cut up an animal*. When it is applied to a human being, it carries both the meaning of cruel violence and also implies that the killer must have seen the victim as having the same status as an animal. This newspaper uses a loaded words feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

10. مواقف ورموز متشابهه ...بالصور.. بغداد وطهران في يوم القدس

Any reader would wonder what those المواقف are.

When we read the article, it refers to:

الرموز التي رفعت أو احترقت أو أهينت من قبل المحتفلين

This newspaper uses a loaded words feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

11."الرمادي.. مدينه مفخخة بالموت وتحذيرات من عودة النازحين"

In this headline, the original headline appears to be a very strong warning sign giving the impression that (AL Ramadi is a death trap for anyone who wants to enter it).This newspaper uses a loaded words feature as a type of gimmicks to draw reader's attention and make it more outstanding.

It appears from the above explanation that the wrong gimmick in the wrong context will distort the meaning of the term in the news headlines. Therefore, media translators should be careful in using these gimmicks to make the readers wonder about the information to reveal in the target language if possible.

6.Conclusions

This study concludes that :

- Translation training/teaching has been changed from a concern with only linguistic skill (linguistic expertise) to professional skill (expertise in other areas) to achieve highly qualified translation, i.e. linguistic skill alone cannot achieve a quality translation. Specialization within one discipline no longer seems to meet the demands of our present translation market, communicative and technology advancements, and social needs. So, having the ability in one expertise only is a bad matter; therefore the translators must bear the responsibility of knowing

and being familiar with the two types of expertise to cope with the notions imported from other areas that may contribute to enrich student translators' understanding of the translation process and result in quality translation. In other words, every expertise should complement the other, having the expertise in one type only is a bad matter; therefore it is preferable to have expertise in other areas .

-The problems resulting from the difference of the expertise in other areas, then, are more complicated than the linguistic one. Because it deals with the essential and passionate meanings. These problems are usually submerged, and only professional translators can reveal them. So, the student translators should be familiar not only with the language expertise of the texts but also with expertise in other areas. They must be accustomed to the later so that they can subdue the texts, which they render, to be suitable and comprehended without being affected by the culture they belong to. They do so to avoid misconception or any other passive creations that may be caused as a result of this or that kind of translation.

- The student translators should not only receive and transmit information, but they also process it and operate on it. They interpret texts, create texts, and act as mediators in the communication process. Such mediation is complicated by the fact that participants in communication speak different languages and belong to different cultures. The modern student translators must be cultural mediators who carry out an intermediary mission in cultural contacts and ensure mutual understanding of carriers of different cultures and languages. Their work must combines not only language expertise, but also expertise in other areas.

- Hence, translation studies departments in translation studies departments around the world, including Iraq, must take into account in their curricula and the training/ teaching of their students how the formation of expertise in other areas, in addition to linguistic expertise, will play greater role in producing high quality translation, while separating them will lead to a lower standard of translation.

7. Recommendations

The study has come up with the following recommendations:

-The attention to the expertise in other areas is necessary for translation studies departments in translation studies departments around the world, including Iraq. One of the most important qualities of successful student translators is to have a lot of the expertise in other areas, especially those that are far from his specialty, so that their awareness expands, and their horizons open to know new things. So, we recommend they are to set themselves an hour in their agenda for daily

reading so that they develop their information wealth, as we are in the era of huge information wealth, in which many new words and terms appear every day.

-It is true that there is weakness in the expertise in other areas that strikes the roots of society and the market in our current age, due to the proliferation of luxury and entertainment and the waste of time and distraction of people from useful and beneficial things, due to the poor use of new technology and the internet, but successful student translators can use all of these modern means to expand their horizons and increase their expertise through reading, viewing, watching documents and seeking according to an organized scientific method to obtain more science and expertise.

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