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Translation-Interpretation: A Quality Training Model

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Abstract

This research undertakes a qualitative quality training model for translators and interpreters by exploring through diachronic and synchronic approaches of translation studies in order to find factors which can be used as foundation theories and practices to qualify translators and interpreters. Then a model based on these factors were reviewed and interviewed by 10 international experts is proposed. The paper is divided into 3 sections: the first focusing on translation-interpretation quality studies through its historical background including quality issues, its dichotomy of word and sense, development of sign theory, equivalence, and text-nontext theory, its contexts-environment and functions. The second section describes translation innovations. As individual literary translation moves towards a translation industry for products and services in the creative digital economy, strength in translation-interpretation performance is highly demanded to serve a new movement. Localization as a translation innovation is key market for multilingual translators. As we enter a new era of quality where global competitiveness is high and new technology has changed the way we live, the concepts we believe in, and the methods by which we perform activities. Translation-interpretation with its different potentials play an increasingly important role in the search for a genuine key to globalization. Digital economy in multilingual and cultural diversity is needed more than ever to serve our global community where only 5% of translators and interpreters are available to work for. A training scheme for both quality and quantity has to be arranged in order to serve this paradigm shift. To be competitive translators-interpreters needs more than ever a systematic training scheme

which traditional quality could not scientifically nor sufficiently explain this new translation-interpretation phenomena. Then third collected data has been analyzed to integrate as a training quality model and reviewed and interviewed by 10 international experts in order to propose a quality model to serve the modern translation and interpretation context.

Translation-Interpretation Quality Studies

The evolution of translation quality may be observed via the history of translation studies. As stated by Gross (2000: 36), “the history of translation is interpretation”, communication that has been evolved from oral to written. The Tell Mardikh clay tablets inscribed 3,000 years ago, found in North of Syria now, is the first evidence of our human translation.

To ensure an effective communication, quality has emerged without our notice. The dichotomy of the ancient translation implying translation quality is an example: word for word and sense for sense discussed by Horace (20 BCE) Cicero (46 BE) forms the basis for later translation criticism. The early attempts at translation theories proposed by John Dryden (1631-1700), Étienne Dolet (1509-1546), and Alexander Fraser Tytler (1747-1813) expand the view of how to translate with the development of descriptive quality criteria. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768 -1834) has had a great influence not only on key contemporary translation theorists but also on factors leading to quality assurances by his concepts of text types and the alienating vs. naturalizing translation focus (Bassnett-McGurie, 1991: 39-75, Munday, 2001: 18-27). From a prescriptive-language focus in earlier periods, translation integrates other disciplines and theories to further clarify its nature. We may divide the chronological impacts on translation quality approximately into 3 periods as follows:

This first period marks the study of language as a collection of signs in context. Semiotics may be the most important theory for shedding light on translation quality from which various fruitful explanations have emerged. The study of language as a sign or the science of sign begins with Charles Sanders Peirce and his pragmatic maxim (1839-1914). Peirce as founder of semiotics and pragmatism defined semiosis as an irreducibly triadic process wherein something, as an object, logically determines or influences something as a sign to determine or influence something as an interpretation or interpretant, itself a sign. (Peirce, 1902: 286-302, 1931-1958: 4-10, 2003: 1)

We can observe that the notion of sign is comprised of source text, translation and localization and that these endogenous constructs are governed by exogenous constructs. In other words, the quality of source text, translation and localization is governed by its quality indicators - internal and external environments.

Bronisław K. Malinowski (1884-1942) with his contexts of situation and culture completes more pieces of the whole translation jigsaw. In interpreting Melanesian cultures (people living in an island of the Western Pacific) through emergence in texts (oral tradition, narration of fishing expedition), Malinowski had to use translation with commentary to provide a free translation which conveyed cultural insights (Halliday and Hasan 1985: 36-37).

As known language starts with verbal communication. Interpretation precedes translation: the written communication transfer. Interpretation has been observed to enrich translation data collection through Malinowski's studies.

To confirm the importance of the exogenous constructs – language's internal and external environments, John R. Firth (1890-1960) with his famous quotation, "You shall know a word by the company it keeps." clearly supports the environment-dependent nature of language (Firth 1957:11).

The Second Period is observed through a specific movement where Equivalence has been seen as a translation core and quality and still remains so even today. Eugene Nida (1914-2011) and J. C. Catford (1907-2009) led the notions of 'correspondence and equivalence' (Nida and Taber 1969: 23-24, 202-201)

Anton Popovič (1933-1984) was among the first to apply semiotic theory to the study of translation in his book "Teória umeleckého prekladu" (Theory of literary translation), 1975. He coined the terms "prototext" and "metatext", which are currently used to signify what was once known as "source text" and "target text" (Makaryk, 1993: 131). His interest is in line with Nida's and Catford's equivalence as a translation quality (Bassnett- McGuire, 1991: 25).

Nevertheless it is not always possible to translate sentences with equivalent structures, the translator should use several strategies to ensure the translation of a given text. Vinay and Dalbarnet's *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais* is widely cited for their translation strategies and procedures, i.e., Borrowing, Calque, Literal translation, Transposition, modulation, Equivalence and Adaptation (Munday, 2001: 55-56).

The third period began with the explanation of translation phenomena, more factors are explored in addition to equivalence. Translation features derived from Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar are applied for potential devices of quality indicators, i.e., text analysis, register, genre, coherence and text functions (Halliday and Hasan (1985: 5-11)

This notion of what is 'with the text', however, 'goes beyond what is said and written: it includes other non-verbal signs-on-the total environment in which a text unfolds'. This supports the idea of a text as a translation unit within a context.

Julian House is a leading researcher on translation quality. Her quality assessment model enhances both translation and quality studies. In her attempt to analyze and compare the original and translation texts, based on Hallidayan Functional Systemic Linguistics, House applies lexical, syntactic and textual means to analyze 'register' across the Field, Tenor and Mode, subsuming genre, language and text (House, 1977, 1997, Kudo, 2007: 165). Hence a picture of factors affecting translation-interpretation quality can be drawn from the above notions: features and functions of texts-nontexts including their verbal-non verbal intertextuality. In addition the impact on communication, business and industry resulted from multilingual translation and interpretation potential draw attention from global quality and standards units, e.g. ISO, ASTM International (USA) and GB/T (China) have proposed various translation-interpretation standards of which accuracy and appropriacy with its extended indicators are tested to cover source accuracy and target appropriacy.

Thailand

Thailand has a long history of translation and interpretation traced back to the year 747 A.D. But the first evidence of written translation is Maha Chart Kham Luang, a religious literature translated from Pali to Thai in 1448-1488 A.D. (Sawasdiwat Na Ayutthaya 2008, 2011: 47). In Thailand, research and studies have been undertaken to seek for a practical guideline to assess a somewhat quality ‘how to translate’, i.e., “The Factors Affecting the Translation of the Charge from Thai to English” (Udomsilpa, 2001), Translation Skill Development of Students Studying Translation Foundation at Thaksin University, Songkhla (Kiriratnikom, 2005), “Katrina Reiss Criteria for Literary Translation Quality Assessment: A Case Study of the *Pilgrim Kamanita*” (Suvannanonda, 2003), A Comparative Study of the Two Thai Versions of John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men* by Kantha Srivimol and Pracha Uttathon (Somchai, 2006), “Translations of *the Nightingale and the Rose* by Oscar Wilde, *The Storm* by Kate Chopin and *A Rose for Emily* by William Faulkner with Analysis.” (Thongthua, 2006). The results fell in uncountable methods and techniques, none of which reflected empirical outcomes.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development, a unit in the Ministry of Education (1989: 62-71) formerly responsible for translation quality identified Thai translation quality by the description: appropriateness, and content completeness and language accuracy, faithful to the source text, rhetorical and well-organized translation, etc.

In addition a criteria proposed by Sidha Pinitpouvadol (1984: 1041-1092), a key translation theorist on monitoring translation quality including her survey on good translation characteristics (1986: 65) focus on descriptive measures, for example clarity, conciseness, source-orientedness, accuracy, appropriateness and readership-responsiveness to the target text, etc.

The collected data drawn from research and studies above pointed out that even a somewhat ‘quality’ is still in question as the quality measured tend to be experience or practice oriented. None of which applied international quality and standards scheme measurement in the perspective of both theory and practice, innovation or business and industry parameter.

Translation Innovations

Until recently, it has been observed that individual literary translation is gradually moving towards a translation industry of products and services to serve global digital economy. The Third Code coined by William Frawley (1984: 168) opens an interlanguage dimension to translation: a product hovering above source text and target text paving a new way to translation innovation: localization, transcreation, etc. Translation innovations in business-industry setting known as localization, multilingualization, internationalization, business process outsourcing, crowd sourcing, cloud computing and virtualology, etc. are becoming not only keys to market for translators but also keys to the country’s new digital economy. It is discussed that without the intervention of language mediators, multilingual strategic economy, such as multidata governance and global content management could not be accomplished.

The studies pointed out that earlier translation-interpretation hardly come into the comprehensive empirical domain. Each attempt relies on different individual approaches to seek for standardized quality or best practices in a descriptive -less objective scheme and hardly serves the existing need of its world demand. Such as in the area of dub localization or advertisement or creative products, (Dub localization 2010: 1) where translation is lucrative, some issues are worth noting. A controversial issue surrounding how much (dub) localization is 'too much' falling in the transcreation category is often much-discussed. In addition in the interpreting area ranging from public service interpreting to conference interpreting, of which the cores are less sufficiently and autonomously incorporated to reflect the actual tasks that translators and interpreters should follow to maintain their quality and standards in face-to-face situations or virtual complex social media and to be-secured digital economy.

All of the above studies reflect a need and a call to propose a new explicable or empirical scheme for quality assessment as well as to determine the extent to which standard and quality will allow the harmonious-balanced rendering of the original source to the translation, of which their core components will be used to develop a training model under which each area will be incorporated as a proposed curriculum for new-breed translators-interpreters.

The analysis from the collected reviewed document it has been clearly observed that in order to develop or design a comprehensive training model, at least three areas have to be taken into consideration. Firstly is a combination of theory and practice including quality and standards. Secondly is an innovative translation and technology criteria integrated into translation work. Thirdly business or industry project and process management should be part of the translation work. The results are delineated in the table below:

Summary Table of Curriculum for a Translation-Interpretation Training Model undertaken by means of interview, discussion and analysis by 10 international experts (5 from Asia, 3 Europe, 1 US and 1 Oceania) on translation training curriculum.

Factors	Content in Curriculum Training
1. Base: Theory and Practice and Quality and Standards	1. International Theory of Translation studies: source oriented translation, target oriented translation. 2. Best practices based on local and international framework. 3. Certification through Standards and quality scheme: ASTM, ISO, GBT, etc.
2. Extension: Innovation and Technology	1. Localization as translation-interpretation innovation to cover multimedia source text and target orientedness.

	2. CAT tools: translation memory (Trados), Translation workspace, Online collaborative translation-interpretation community, etc.
3. Platform: Project and Process Management	1. A system of project and process management for translation-interpretation industry to be introduced 2. Branding and Marketing

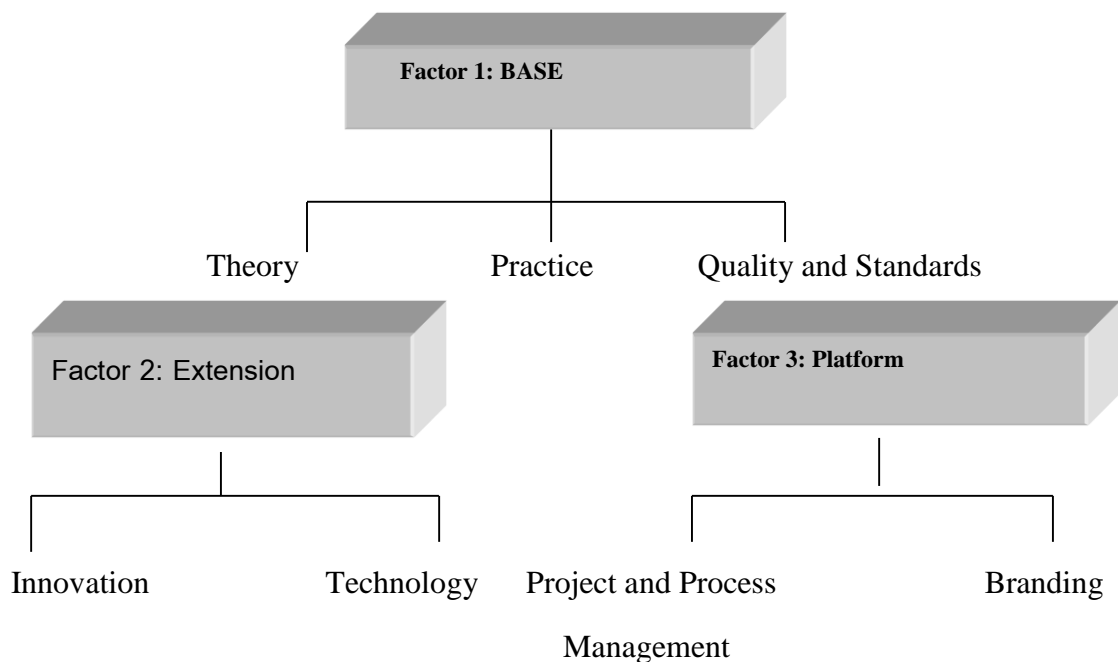
The three factors are brought into a set of interview scheme to ask, discuss and analyze for 3 rounds by 10 selected international experts. On a final round the collected data has been integrated as a training model and reviewed by 10 international experts through IOC (Index of Item-Objective Congruence) of which the value of each item is 1.00. The reviewed model is shown in Figure 1.

A Quality Training Model

Drawn from the exploration we can see factors affecting and involving around translation-interpretation core components. Theory and Practice and Quality and Standards, Innovation and Technology, and Project and Process Management are among main factors embedded and interrelated in the training curriculum. The proposed model is as follows:

FIGURE 1

A QUALITY TRANSLATION – INTERPRETATION TRAINING MODEL



Further Studies and Conclusion

The proposed model needs more details for redesigned curriculum and evaluation development in the real environment. To conclude, digital economy in multilingual and cultural diversity requires a new breed of translators and interpreters to serve the global community. Translation and Interpretation with their innovations are key components to the economic development and global communication. They serve as essential building blocks in the construction of a new economic digital code. The success of this code is determined by commitment to quality and standards by both educated and trained human resources and their quality translation and interpretation product.

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