

The impact of socio-cultural factors on translator education in Korea

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to analyze socio-cultural features of Korean society and their influence on Korean translation teaching style (student-centered vs. teacher-centered) in comparison with France. This study is primarily based on information collected through interviews, Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ) and class observation. Whilst the study does not cover translation education of the two countries in its entirety, findings suggest that socio-cultural factors in Korean society - including hierarchy, collectivism, and the tendency of learners to refrain from classroom discussion in favor of teacher-centered teaching methods - has in part induced students adopting a passive attitude toward learning. In addition, the Korean education system is based on rote memorization with MCQ test. Furthermore, the use of MCQ has weakened Korean students' creativity in translation. Comparatively, it seems that such situations are not as prevalent in France where classes are more often student-oriented, with two-way communication between teachers and students and that the teaching style is influenced by the socio-cultural background of France. It is also characterized by strong individualism, emphasis on flexible/creative thinking, and non-hierarchical interpersonal relations. To improve translator education in Korea and overcome some challenges associated with sociocultural factors in Korean society, three suggestions are offered: a combination of student-led class discussions with

constructive input by teachers, enlisting theory to enhance the students' creative capacity and problem-solving skills, motivating students to foster more proactive learning.

KEYWORDS

Socio-cultural factors, teacher-centered class, student-centered class, 'memorization', creativity assessment

1. Introduction: Hofstede's theory and socio-cultural factors in education

Teaching methods vary according to the environment, which depends on socio-cultural factors in each country (Adab 2000). The aim of this paper is to analyze socio-cultural features in Korean society and their influence on the education of translators. We start by examining Korean socio-cultural factors following Hofstede (2010), who surveyed employees working for local subsidiaries of IBM in over 50 countries asking questions about their values. A statistical analysis of their responses revealed a commonality - the same values could be interpreted differently by employees depending on their socio-cultural background. Hofstede measured such differences, which he called 'power distance' (from small to large), on axes ('dimensions') such as collectivism vs. individualism, femininity vs. masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance (from weak to strong). Each dimension represents an aspect of culture, which is measurable and relative to other cultures. When all are combined, they constitute a four-dimensional (4-D) model of cultural differences. Hofstede (2010) argues that Confucianism pervades strongly Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, China, and Japan. In fact, Confucianism has

always remained as a founding principle of spiritual philosophies and socio-cultural characters in South Korea. It is therefore impossible to understand Korean society without taking Confucianism on board (Junsik Choi 1997; Bong young Choi 1994, 1997). Jun sik Choi (1997) highlights that Confucianism has largely shaped two socio-cultural factors in Korea, namely a large power distance (i.e. a hierarchical and rigid society often characterized as authoritarian) and collectivism. These two factors also correspond to two cultural dimensions of the Hofstede's survey (2010). It seems likely that a large power distance and collectivism are also found in educational environments in South Korea.

According to Hofstede (2010), a teacher-centered class is often found in societies that have such features, and this is associated with passive learning attitudes in students and with difficulties in establishing two-way free discussions between them and their educators. Such socio-cultural features also prevail in the Korean education system in which teaching takes the form of one-sided delivery of information or rote memorization, and MCQ testing impedes the creativity of students (Kim 2005; Kim & Michael 1995; Michael & Dudek 1991; Wollam 1992). In fact, Asians influenced by collectivism are believed by some authors to have fewer creative ideas and less divergent thinking than the West (Dunn, Zhang & Ripple 1988; Runco & Johnson 2003; Rudowicz & Yue 2002). According to Hofstede (2010: 70), in an ideal egalitarian and horizontal society like France¹, teachers are expected to treat students as equals and vice versa. The teaching process is centered on the learners and their initiative; they seek their own intellectual path. In addition, learners are expected to ask questions freely when they need clarification. They do not hesitate to share with the teacher to express their disagreement and can criticize openly. They show no particular

respect for him outside of class either. This paper explores such phenomena using three methods: interviews, MCQ (multiple-choice questionnaire), and class observation. It starts by reviewing Hofstede's (2010) two types of classes, namely teacher-centered classes and student-centered classes, in the context of translator education.

2. Teaching styles (student-centered vs. teacher-centered)

Kiraly (1995, 2000) indicates that the traditional translation classes are teacher-centered, with no discussions between teachers and students, the former being the sole transmitters of knowledge. In such classes, teachers are exposed to what is called the 'Atlas complex', as they bear the burden of knowledge transmission while students take on a passive role, and are content with regurgitating the teacher's knowledge and translation output (Colina 2003: 52). Delisle (2005: 56) also states that in a teacher-centered class, teachers rather than students are the ones who are more often solution providers, and students translate for the teacher who is their corrector and the evaluator of translation output.

However, there is never a single perfect translation for text. Translation takes on multiple, complex, different forms, and teachers cannot provide single, flawless translations (Lavault 1998: 91). Therefore, in teacher-centered classes, when the teacher fails to provide an answer, students become anxious and lose confidence in the translation work. In addition, given that a teacher-centered class is correction-oriented, students are likely to lose confidence in their translation ability (Kiraly 1995; Kussmaul 1995).

As an alternative to a teacher-centered class, Colina (2003: 52) proposes a student-centered class which invites students to take on a

proactive role. In such classes, students are no longer passive recipients of information, and teachers provide guidance through various methods that will enable effective learning. They not only share with students translation techniques and information search tips, but also know how to invite students to exchange their views in class. In so doing, they create an environment which enables students to communicate and brainstorm ideas in producing a translation work (Colina 2003: 54). Kiraly (2000) also stresses the advantages of student-centered classes, as they offer collaborative exchanges of ideas and a constructive and participatory learning environment. From a socio-constructive point of view, Kiraly emphasizes student-led group activities in which the teacher plays a role as a guide or an advisor helping students to overcome issues they face in the translation process. In so doing, students realize that they are not isolated individuals but members of a group, which enables them to exchange ideas, work out differences, and communicate with one another.

Group work can also have other benefits. According to Kelly (2005: 102), education science research shows the benefits of group work such as students acquiring personal and social experience and learning interpersonal skills that are essential to a professional translator while responding to the market demand. In addition, groups of reasonable size are recommended to develop higher levels of cognitive skills in solving problems and justifying proposals and decisions. Aula. Int. (2005: 139) stresses the importance of group work in professional translation classes through which students are given a real role in a professional setting. The teacher distributes roles such as translator, researcher, editor, terminologist and typographer to multiple groups, each consisting of five students. Then the teacher, playing the role of a client, hands out different translation assignments to each group, and checks on their efficiency.

This allows students to familiarize themselves with real-life professional translation work.

Translator education in Western countries seems to be moving away from teacher-centered class to a student-based class with group work (Kelly 2005: 11; Goff-Kfoury 2003: 1). In the next section, we will look at how translation classes are conducted in Korea.

2.1. Teacher-centered classes in translator education in Korea

According to Hyeyoung Kim (2008), translation classes in Korea can be characterized as a teacher handing out translation material to students, students submitting the translation material, and the teacher providing feedback on the material. According to Kim, such a one-way, teacher-centered class is inappropriate as it hinders communication among students which plays an essential role in translation. According to Migyoung Lee (2011), such propensity was also found in students' response to a survey on class feedback. Nearly 40% of the respondents, who were undergraduate students, still preferred correction or editing by the teacher, 23% stressed the importance of the teacher's comments, and only 14.1% preferred debates on translation processes in class. These numbers demonstrate the students' strong desire to receive single answers from their teachers and show they are accustomed to teacher-centered classes. Similarly, a survey by Sangbin Lee (2010: 189) on undergraduate students also shows that students want to be given 'clear answers' and are accustomed to a top-down or teacher-centered teaching style.

Sangwon Lee (2002: 139) describes translator education in Korea based on her survey of 39 translation teachers and instructors at the Graduate School of Interpretation and Translation (GSIT) at Hankuk

University of Foreign Studies as follows. Students submit translation work done in class or as homework. The teacher then reviews and corrects the translation. At the following class, the teacher returns the submitted translations and tries to find solutions to difficulties found during the translation through a debate. Lee says such classes focus on text conversion and are therefore in line with the objectivist epistemology strongly criticized by Kiraly (2000) in which the teacher's guidance and feedback overshadow student-to-student interaction. GSIT classes are similar to the teacher-centered class mentioned by Western scholars. In an objectivist epistemology setting, a teacher always has an answer, and the focus is on finding the most effective way to transmit the knowledge of the omnipotent teacher.

Based on the aforementioned findings, translation classes in Korea are still teacher-centered, which is also in line with Hofstede's characterization of teacher-oriented classes under the socio-cultural influence in Korea (authoritarian, rigid, and collectivist).

3. Method

The following sections report on a small-scale empirical study which sought to identify the presence and effects of cultural features in French-Korean translation classes in Korea. The sampling was constrained by the author's working languages and by the possibilities she had to attend classes. It should be noted that what has been directly observed in the course of translation, both in France and Korea, as well as information that has been collected, represent only a case study based on small samples. However, this observation has allowed us to explore responses obtained through questionnaires and interviews in more detail.

In this study, data were collected through interviews and classroom observation. Interviews targeted Korean teachers and students in translation classes, and the teachers were given MCQ (multiple choice questions) questionnaires after being divided into two groups (undergraduate vs. graduate-and-above). For the undergraduate level, professors teaching Korean-French translation in Seoul were selected. For the graduate level, two of the most renowned schools of interpretation/translation were selected, one at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies and the other at Ewha Women's University. In addition, two translation classes were observed on site. One was a French-Korean translation class at Korea University at undergraduate level and the other was a French-Korean translation class at graduate level. For the graduate level class, GSIT (Graduate School of Interpretation and Translation) at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies was selected.

Table 1. Chronology of the survey and the number of respondents to MCQ questionnaires and interviews

Method	Period	Number of respondents, undergrad teachers	Number of respondents, graduate school teachers of GSIT (Graduate school of interpretation and translation at Hankuk University of foreign studies) and GSTI (Ewha women's university Graduate school of interpretation and translation)
Interviews (preliminary stage)	Sept. 2009	2	2
Interviews (1st series)	Sept.-Oct. 2009	5	4
M.C.Q (preliminary stage)	Oct. 2009	2	2
M.C.Q	Oct.-Nov. 2009	36	31
Interviews (2nd series)	Oct.-Nov. 2009	9	7

The results of the survey were compared with an observation-based analysis of five translation classes at ESIT in France ((i) Spanish-French economic translation in the second year of graduate school; (ii) Korean-French immersion class at graduate school level; (iii) Technical and scientific English-French translation in the first year of graduate school; (iv) General translation from English to French in the preparatory year of the master's course; (v) Spanish-French scientific and technical translation in the first year of the master's course), and two classes (Legal translation from English to French and technical translation from English to French in the first year of the master's course) at Université Paris 3 for a semester in 2009.

In the preliminary stage, the primary goal was to test the questions. This resulted in changes and additions. Following the first series of interviews, the following five topics were selected and served as a basis for further exploration through MCQ questionnaires and a second series of interviews:

- 1) Teaching translation and socio-cultural factors
- 2) Assessment system I: homework and translation correction,
- 3) Assessment system II: evaluation methods,
- 4) Assessment system III: examinations (intermediate and final),
- 5) Students' translation method and challenges.

This paper focuses on topic 1 "Teaching translation and socio-cultural factors".

Teachers and students were asked the following questions:

- What main in-class activities are performed in general in your classes? (Q1.09²)

- How are classes being conducted? (Q1.10)
- How do discussion and communication take place in your classes? (Q1.11)
- What role does the teacher play in class? (Q1.12)
- Do socio-cultural factors have an influence on the running of the class? (Q5.04)

4. Findings

4.1. Teacher-centered classes associated with authority-based relations

The question “How are classes being conducted?” (Q1.10 - see Figure 1) was put to 36 teachers at the undergraduate level (“University” in the figures below) and 31 teachers at the graduate level (“Graduate School”). The prevalent answer from teachers at both undergraduate level (31 of 36 - 86.1%) and graduate level (26 of 31 - 83.8%) points to a combination of classic transmission of knowledge, discussions, and interactions with students.

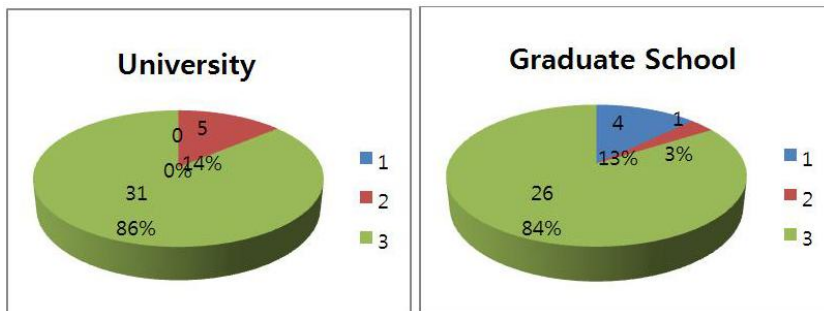


Figure 1. Number of responses and percentages to the question “How are classes being conducted?”(Q1.10)

- (1) Discussions, interactions with students (student-centered class);
- (2) Transmission of knowledge by the teacher (teacher-centered class);
- (3) Discussions, interactions with students + transmission of knowledge by the teacher.

With regard to the teacher's role (Q1.12 - see Figure 2 below), most responses from the teachers at both undergraduate level (30 of 66-45%) and graduate level (29 of 75-39%) emphasized the importance of advising and communicating with students.

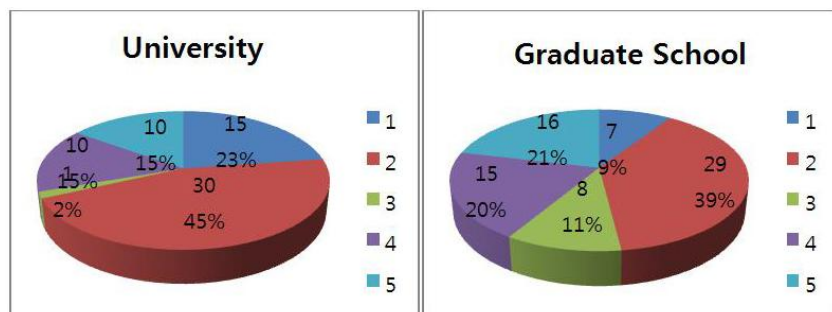


Figure 2. "What role does the teacher play in class?" (Q1.12)

- (1) A person who provides a good solution;
- (2) A guide or advisor;
- (3) A customer;
- (4) A reader;
- (5) An examiner.

All the students interviewed at both undergraduate and graduate levels said that they prefer teachers who provide guidance rather than direct solutions.

However, when asked "In general, what are your main classroom activities?" (Q1.09 - see Figure 3 below), the majority of the teachers in undergraduate programs (38 replies) and the majority of teachers in graduate schools (46 replies) showed that they still perform the role

of 'advising and correcting homework'. Therefore, one can say that despite cooperation between students and teachers, the teacher-centered teaching system prevails in Korea, at least in the institutions in which the data were collected.

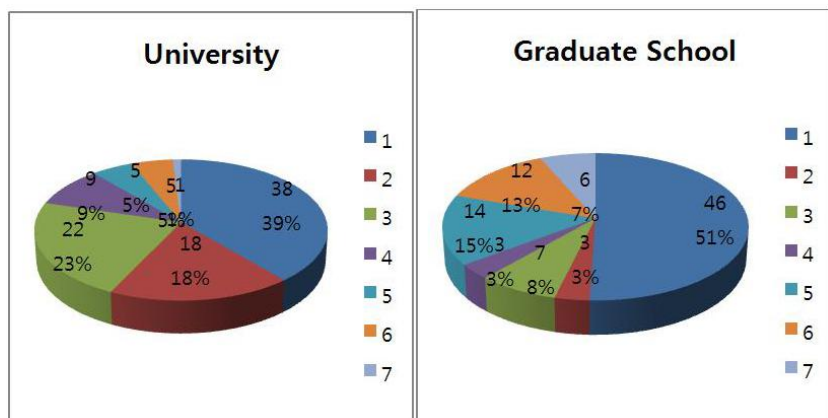


Figure 3. "In general, what are your main classroom activities?" (Q1.09)

- (1) Translation correction and advice;
- (2) Theory and conceptual reminders;
- (3) Translation exercises;
- (4) Grammar and vocabulary exercises;
- (5) Suggestions related to extra-linguistic knowledge;
- (6) Terminology related suggestions;
- (7) Suggestions regarding information sources.

When asked about classroom discussions, "How do discussions and communication unfold during classes?" (Q1.11 - see Figure 4 below), the majority of undergraduate teachers (20 replies) and most graduate teachers (24 replies) said they are not satisfied with the level of students' in-class participation and teachers are in search of ways to induce students' voluntary in-class participation.

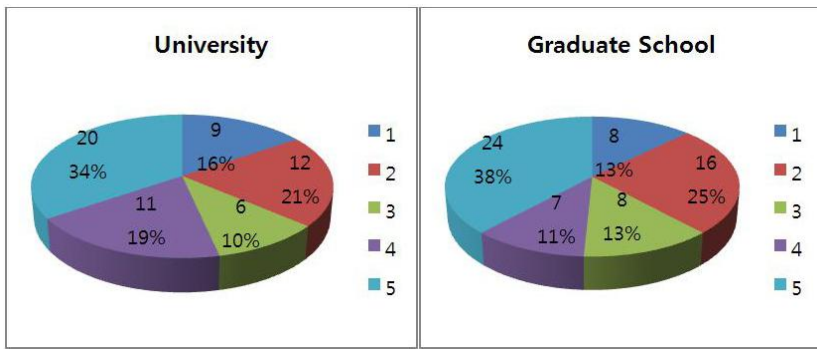


Figure 4. “How do discussions and communication unfold during classes?” (Q.1.11)

- (1) Only a few students are involved;
- (2) Most students are actively involved;
- (3) Generally, students find good solutions themselves through class participation;
- (4) In general, the teacher provides solutions;
- (5) The teacher asks questions that will encourage student discussions.

At the graduate level, ‘(3) Generally, students seek good solutions themselves through class participation’ received almost the same number of responses’ (8 replies) as ‘(4) In general, the teacher has a good solution’ (7 replies). At the undergraduate level, the difference between the two responses was more pronounced with 6 responses for ‘(3)’ and 11 responses for ‘(4)’. This suggests that instructors propose direct solutions to students more often at undergraduate level than at graduate level, and is in line with their views of the instructors’ role (see Figure 2). As such, undergraduate teachers consider themselves as someone who provides answers to students (Q1.12 - see Figure 2) (15 replies - 23%) more than the graduate school teachers (7 replies - 9%). Given these student-teacher dynamics, undergraduate teachers are concerned that any solution they offer might be regarded as the ‘one-and-only’ solution by students.

A teacher at an undergraduate school confessed:

The course proceeds almost without exception with me 'reporting' my knowledge to students. I usually wait for some reaction from students after asking a question but students normally sit quietly. In the end I answer the question myself and then go on. I do not like this type of in-class atmosphere because it makes me feel authoritarian. I would actually appreciate some students participating in my class.

Another teacher at a graduate school said:

I do not enjoy correcting students' translations. Students tend to view my corrections as the only correct answers. Students in my class do not realize that there is more than one right answer in a translation. It is not surprising since they are all conditioned to the MCQ system since their childhood. They do not seem to be happy when I do not correct their answer although I could find other good solutions during the in-class discussion. I tried to encourage them to be more active in class but they remain quiet and I end up being an answer provider. What a shame.

Whilst it is normal for students to feel less confident when there are more than one answer to a question, students seem to have trouble coping with multiple answers since they are all conditioned to the MCQ system since their childhood. In fact, all the students interviewed, at both undergraduate and graduate levels, lacked self-confidence. They often feel anxious or lost when the answer is not provided in class.

When asked "Do socio-cultural factors have an influence on the running of the class?" (Q5.04), all of them except for three graduate students who have lived more than 10 years abroad said that they experienced difficulties due to socio-cultural factors and mentioned a

passive attitude, a tendency to listen and memorize the teachers' words, constant awareness of the teachers' authority, inhibition associated with the fear of the judgment of others in class.

One graduate school student who has lived more than 10 years in a French-speaking country explained:

I feel that Korean students are very insecure and conscious of how others view them in class. It seems that they are afraid of showing their mistakes and weaknesses. They avoid talking about their difficulties in translation and they never challenge the teachers' responses. It seems that even when teachers want them to be at the center of the class, students do not dare correct or challenge the teacher's answer. They consider the translation of the teacher as the only correct answer. For example, when we were discussing the meaning of a sentence, I thought the teacher's suggestion was not correct. Since my intuition as a bilingual told me otherwise, I challenged the teacher and wanted to explain where I was coming from. However, other students, instead of expressing their view, observed the conversation passively, simply agreeing with the teacher. After class, I had a separate discussion with the French teacher through which she was able to understand my intention and supported my answer. I often feel that teachers try to play the role of a counselor, but eventually they offer their solution as students remain silent. In the end, the course is focused on the teacher. It is a pity.

In fact, the survey revealed that teachers themselves are aware of these cultural factors. To the question; "Do socio-cultural factors have an influence on the running of the class?" (Q5.04), they answered that socio-cultural factors do impact it and identified two cultural factors that lead to teacher-centered classes:

- Factor 1: a habit of waiting for the teacher's response and a passive

attitude generated by the Korean education system which centers on repetition (memorization); students are accustomed to listening and memorizing the words of the teacher: Factor 1 was ticked by 28 undergraduate program teachers and 19 graduate program teachers.

- Factor 2: Anxiety and difficulties in the presence of more than one possible correct answer, as the generalization of the assessments by MCQ did not prepare students for a different style of assessments: 21 undergraduate program teachers and 17 graduate teachers ticked this answer.

This suggests that teacher-centered classes still exist in South Korea at both undergraduate and graduate levels, with passive students as a corollary.

4.2. 'Rote memorization' teaching style and the emphasis on MCQ testing in translator education in Korea

Two bilingual Korean students who lived in France for 10 years expressed difficulties at having to memorize a long list of specialized terms (up to 1,000 words) and to be tested on them. They said such training that relies heavily on rote memorization is not effective at all, since what they learned was easily forgotten once the exams were over. The Korean-French undergraduate teacher had a similar experience when she was teaching Korean students. She found that Korean students do not find their answers independently and they are conditioned to exam-taking based on an ineffective memorizing method.

She stated:

Looking at their homework or exams, Korean students are not accustomed to writing long answers. They settle for a word or two. However, the purpose of the test is not only to find an answer, but to

hone sentence-making ability. Korean students do not understand the necessity of this effort. They are too conditioned by the MCQ system where you simply check an answer. French students are more trained for essay-type questions which require longer answers. The French students certainly go through some memorization in the beginning but they are also capable of going beyond this approach. They build on their efforts to express an original thought of their own. Contrasting with them, Korean students are too obsessed with the right answer and always try to 'copy' the solution.

We believe that the Korean education system, based on memorization and restitution in multiple-choice tests, does not allow students to develop their ideas to solve translation problems. In other words, it is not helping students to be creative. A student at the graduate school stated:

I think it is difficult to express my original ideas in class under the current teaching style. Once students learn an idea from the teachers, they internalize it as their own, without looking further for other possible answers. This system is self-replicating because almost all teachers have been given this type of education, and consequently such teaching style is passed on to their students.

According to students at the graduate school, socio-cultural factors mentioned in 2.1, i.e. 'rote memorization' and the emphasis on MCQ tests in translator education are obstacles to open discussions in class. A graduate student stated:

The teacher invites us to discuss, but it is very difficult to put our views on the table because we are accustomed to an educational system which is based on 'memorization and indoctrination' and MCQ tests. I think students see the teacher as an evaluator and thus do not dare discuss their mistakes openly. In Korean society, insecurity

and self-consciousness among students is a big part of the problem, which is why I often hesitate to express my own ideas. It is a shame.

We need to focus on encouraging students to participate in class discussions and let them know the benefits of student-centered classes despite the existence of sociocultural factors as described above. Note the comment from a graduate school teacher who teaches Japanese-Korean translation:

I always try my best to communicate with my students but I find it hard to read their mind since they do not express their ideas during class. I once tried to put questions to a specific group of students but it was hard to raise their enthusiasm during the discussion. I believe asking many different questions is the key to learning translation. This also helps them come up with a variety of great solutions.

4.3. ‘Horizontal’, individual relationships between students and teachers and teacher-centered classes in translator education in France

In graduate and undergraduate translation classes in France, I observed that the relationship between French teachers and students is usually open and the two sides easily share their opinions and exchange ideas. Students are not afraid to challenge their teachers when they believe there is an error in their explanations, and students are keen to express their ideas in class. As to students who have not expressed themselves, teachers constantly encourage them to speak up by asking “What do you think? Are there any other proposals? Do you agree with those words and expressions?”

As a reminder, the classes in which I conducted my observations are very limited in number and no claim is made as to their

representativeness of all translator training programs and students in France. What they do show is how classroom dynamics and attitudes different from those I found in Korea can have certain effects.

I found the following features in all classes observed at ESIT:

- Students learn to think and search for multiple solutions themselves through class participation and discussion.
- When the teachers' and students' ideas are in contradiction, teachers are not afraid to say they are unsure about the answer. In such cases, students, rather than being content with it, continue to act as responsible translators by checking the sources.

A bi-national French-Korean undergraduate teacher emphasized that horizontal and individual relationships between students and teacher is associated with student-oriented classes:

French students or the French in general are used to debating and discussing from their childhood. It is a cultural thing. Given that all French people cannot have exactly the same ideas, the point of the discussion is to state their opinion and stick with it with a view to persuade others. Different opinions make a debate or a discussion very interesting and help them grow and think outside of the box.

However, passivity was also found in French students in two graduate applied foreign language classes at Université Paris 3. A handful of French students proposed their translations and the rest wrote down solutions provided by the teacher. This may be due to the fact that the students did not have full mastery of their foreign language, especially as regards specialized terminology. When teachers were asked about it, they attributed the students' passive attitude to insufficient knowledge or laziness. On the whole, in

France, passive attitudes seem to be largely due to the students' insufficient linguistic or extra-linguistic knowledge.

Interestingly, some ESIT classes are group-based with a division of roles which enables each student to take on a role that is required in the professional translation market. For instance, a 1st year graduate Spanish-French “scientific and IT translation” class at ESIT is conducted as follows:

- 1) Students are divided into groups of 4 or 5 students with distinct roles: Translation (2 students), documentary research (1 or 2 students), project leader (1 student).
- 2) A cost estimate is prepared and submitted to the customer (the teacher), a revised estimate done by the teacher is disseminated to each group, the project leader analyses the conditions and the status of the text.
- 3) A translation is prepared by one student and presented by another student, those who did the documentary research report about the sources they consulted and the terms they found. Sentences and words are then added or deleted taking into account the entire translation. To solve a translation problem involving ambiguity or other difficulties, the whole group seeks synonyms for words translated on websites that provide dictionaries and terms. Students then reach an agreement on the most appropriate terms among those that were found.
- 4) Several solutions are proposed. Discussions to find the best solution continue both in-class and after class.
- 5) The teacher invites students to explain the context, justify their choices and explain why certain translated words or phrases are more relevant than others. The teacher and the students try to reach an agreement after a discussion.

- 6) The teacher refers the students to documents where they will find the technical terms found in the text. She also gives more general advice as to the more widely used terms.

Our observations in France suggest that such group activity enables students to find relevant professional documents that provide them with information necessary to their translation task, to negotiate with their client (their teacher in the classroom) using a cost estimate, and that it teaches them to work constructively and collaboratively with colleagues. In sum, students develop their own strategies which lead to successful completion of their translation work (Kiraly 2000: 74).

At ESIT, many classroom discussions and debates among students or between students and their teachers as well as ‘brainstorming’ sessions were observed. The process seemed to foster “creative translation” which helped students generate some creative lexical and syntactic solutions the teachers had not thought of. The importance of creativity in the translation classroom is also emphasized by Delisle (1988) and Kussmaul (1995):

The most distinctive trait of human translation is its creativity, for translation involves choices that are not determined by pre-set rules (Delisle 1988: 37).

Creativity is not a gift of the select few but a basic feature of the human mind and that can all be creative when we translate (Kussmaul 1995: 52).

5. Summary and recommendations

The following features were identified in translator education in

Korea. Classes were teacher-centered, with students complying with the teachers' words. Group activities were limited due to socio-cultural factors (an authoritarian, rigid and collectivist atmosphere in which great respect is paid to the teacher's authority while students as a group try to save face and a positive self-image). Such a tendency, coupled with the absence of a 'culture of discussion', prevents students from freely exchanging their ideas. 'Memorization and indoctrination' and the emphasis on MCQ testing prevent students from finding solutions on their own or exploring issues in greater depth. Students thus have fewer opportunities to be creative. Teachers tend to propose solutions to translation problems to motivate students, and the students are also content with such an approach.

Such features were not found in translation classes observed in France, which tended to be student-centered with group activities promoting two-way discussion. This atmosphere reflects cultural features found in French society such as strong individualism, an emphasis on flexible/creative thinking, and non-hierarchical interpersonal relations (Hofstede 2010; Gelfand, M. J. and al. 2011). As a way to improve the education of Korean translators and overcome the limitations associated with socio-cultural factors prevailing in Korea, three recommendations merit further consideration:

One recommendation would be to introduce a combination of student-led discussion and constructive interventions by teachers. Teachers need to find the most pertinent way to teach the various skills required for translation while encouraging generally passive groups of students to express their opinions. Constructive interventions by teachers can help students discover different approaches and points of view that are used by teachers in their

professional translator's activity.

For this type of constructive approach, in-class methods such as found in ESIT classes should be more effective. To do so, it is important to choose authentic source texts. Balacescu and Stefanink (2003) cite Guilford (1950), who says that creativity is “a problem-solving activity”, which satisfies two criteria, namely “innovation and appropriateness”³ in translation. According to them, creativity does not come from nothingness. Students can develop their creativity, their problem-solving skills in translation through theory-based training.

Several approaches can be leveraged to increase the students' motivation and to make them more proactive in the learning process. For example, student evaluation that introduces bonus points rewarding students for good translations, class participation, effective peer review, and sharing of experience including professional translation experience based on IPDC (Integrated Problem and Decision Reporting) (Gile 2004; 2009). Such incentives will help students develop good judgment and problem-solving skills by applying tried-and-proven methods.

It must be recognized that implementing such recommendations as an educational objective cannot be achieved easily or quickly. What is hoped is that this paper will raise awareness of some challenges associated with socio-cultural features of Korean society in translator education, and that this awareness will be put to positive use in optimizing translator training.

NOTES

1. An international team involving researchers from 33 countries (including the team of Michele. J. Gelfand, Department of Psychology, University of Maryland) proposed to

- express the tightness scale and the relationship between behavior, thought and sociocultural factors. According to survey results published in the journal *Science* on 27 May 2011, South Korea ranked fifth (with a score of 10), far ahead of France in the nineteenth place (score of 6.3). According to the survey, the stronger individualism, the more flexible the mind, and the stronger the sense of family attachment, the more rigid the mind etc. Indeed, in a horizontal and egalitarian society that is "little distanced from power," each individual has his own opinion, which will be discussed later (see Hofstede 2010:70; Jun-sik Choi 1997: 95).
2. Codes used in the survey and interview questions. For instance, Q1.09 refers to Question 1.09
 3. "(1) The product of creative activity must be "nouveau", "No matter what other positive qualities it might possess, we generally insist as a first step that a product be novel before we are willing to call it creative" (Jackson and Messick 1967: 4). (2) The product of creative activity must be "appropriate", "Appropriateness is a crucial conjoint criterion to unusualness. A product must fit the demands of the situation and needs of the creator, and with complex products, the individual parts must form a cohesive whole" (Fox 1963: 124) (cited in Balacescu and Stefanink 2003: 512).

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Appendix 1

Size of the sample of respondents - teachers

Table 1. Main languages of translation classes (MCQ + interviews)

University teachers (undergraduate level)		Teachers at graduate school	
Main language of their translation class	Number of teachers	Main language of their translation class	Number of teachers
English	36 (66,7 %)	English	18 (39,1 %)
French	7 (13 %)	French	9 (19,6 %)
University teachers (undergraduate level)		Teachers at graduate school	
Chinese	3 (5,5 %)	Chinese	4 (8,7 %)
Japanese	2 (3,7 %)	Japanese	6 (13 %)
Spanish	3 (5,5 %)	Spanish	4 (8,7 %)
German	3 (5,5 %)	German	2 (4,3 %)
Russian	0 (0 %)	Russian	3 (6,5 %)

Table 2. Years of experience teaching translation among respondents

Years of experience teaching translation	Total number of teachers at undergraduate level (interviews + questionnaires)	Number of teachers at graduate school (interviews + questionnaires)
Less than 5 years	17 (31,4 %)	16 (34,7 %)
5 to 10 years	19 (35,1 %)	16 (34,7 %)
10 to 15 years	7 (12,9 %)	12 (26,1 %)
More than 15 years	11 (20,3 %)	2 (4,3 %)