

An action research-based case study on the application of the situational translator education model to the postgraduate translation classroom

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Drawing on Vienne (2000, p. 92), the present study defines translation competence as the ability to analyze various translation situations and determine strategies for subject-matter research relevant to each translation situation. This research applies a situational translator education model to the postgraduate translation classroom, which assumes that the translation task given in class is a translation actually commissioned in the field, thus, motivating student translators to consider any factors relevant to the translation situation in question as if they were working as professionals.

By applying the situational translator education model, the present dissertation aims to evaluate the levels of student translators' translation competence and investigate the progress and improvements they make in their translation competence in the duration of a semester. For this purpose, translation is understood not as a tool for learning a foreign language but as a tool for actual interpersonal communication; translation competence is interpreted as a professional translator's competence; and the act of translation is assumed to have multiple parties involved.

Translation and interpreting (T&I) education in Korea began with the foundation of the Graduate School of Interpretation & Translation (GSIT) at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS) and has continuously extended its territories to find itself being taught even at the undergraduate level. With ever more students learning translation, having an accurate and firm understanding of the characteristics and talents students possess, it has become an essential element in any attempt for success in translator education.

To achieve the above research objectives, I designed a situational translator education model and applied it to my translation class at the GSIT, HUFS. Each session (12 in total) conducted under this model comprises a translation task, a lecture (in-class discussion), and an online examination. In detail, I gave out a translation task with predetermined task objectives; and student translators i) identified what they assumed was the most likely translation situation for the task at hand, ii) conducted research for subject-matter information, iii) produced their target texts, iv) summarized any translation problems they encountered as well as solutions they used to overcome them, and v) finally submitted the above altogether. In the classroom, student translators and I engaged in an in-depth discussion on the most likely and typical translation situation in

which the translation task would have been assigned in a professional field as well as other relevant translation situations. And an online examination via electronic mail was given at the end of each session.

Through the above series of tasks carried out under the situational translator education model, I analyzed the translation briefs, translation problems, solutions, and target texts student translators submitted so as to identify their levels of translation competence and examine the progress and improvements they make as each session proceeded.

Against this backdrop, the present action research first identifies problems in current practices in translator education drawing on my personal experience, and then describes how I designed, carried out, and analyzed the results of the study. Overall, this dissertation begins with a description of problems identified in current translator education practices, offers a literature review, and then elaborates on action research design, data analyses, and finally ends with its concluding remarks.

Each chapter proceeds as follows:

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background of this research. It first describes the translation process from a functional translation theoretical standpoint and points out the need to define translation competence differently depending on the recipients and the objectives of education. And lastly, the chapter illustrates the translation conventions used for text selection and target-text evaluation with examples.

Chapter 3 provides the details of the participants, timeline, translation tasks and other elements of this action research.

Chapter 4 describes how I applied the situational translator education model to the postgraduate classroom, what the translation competence levels of student translators were before its application,

and how much progress they made in their translation competence with each session conducted under the model. To examine how student translators improved, I performed a series of analyses, both intra-textual (*e.g.* target-text analyses) and extra-textual (*e.g.* translation briefs, translation problems).

Chapter 5, the final chapter, offers a comprehensive summary of this study, describes its significance, and lays out a blueprint for future research.