

A Paradigm Shift in Academic Translation Teaching and Its Reflections on the Localization Industry in the Digital Age*

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Abstract—This paper aims at showing the advantages of a new translator training based on Kiraly’s social constructivism approach compared to a traditional transmission approach. It is already believed that the modern translator training must be conducted according to a social constructivist approach suggesting a paradigm shift in the academic translation teaching. So far historical translation theories (mostly literary) have generally overlooked needs and technology driven localization market and could not go beyond a theoretical point. Functional theories have succeeded in the practical field of translation but they must be revised with the immense rise of communication and information technologies, which means an increasing amount of (real time) translation tasks in the field of ICT. In the light of this, the study tries to discover the underlying reasons for the acceptance of a new paradigm in the translation teaching as well as questioning the so called new paradigm in the academic translation teaching to legitimate the localization paradigm in general and evaluating this new field of translation in terms of its theoretization and its position under the Translation Studies.

Index Terms—social constructivism, localization, localization paradigm, transmission approach, localization theory

I. INTRODUCTION

There has been so far a little research connecting the localization industry as an applied branch of Translation Studies to the theoretical basis probably due to the fact that localization is an industrial discourse and it has allegedly no theoretical value compared to the historical translation theories. Many years ago, James Holmes drew a map of translation studies in his famous seminal paper entitled “The Name and Nature of Translation Studies” in 1972 and divided the discipline into two branches: Pure Translation Studies and Applied Translation Studies. In Pure Translation Studies, translation scholars dealt with issues on theoretical (studies on general or partial translation theories) and descriptive fields (studies on translational product, function and process). However, Applied Translation Studies category was designed with four sub-branches: translation criticism, translation policy, translation aids and translation teaching (see Holmes, 1972/2000). The focus of our study, localization as an umbrella term can be discussed under the subheading of translation aids which, however, was not originally designed to include this industry at the beginning but instead included lexicographic, terminology aids and grammar (see Zhang and Cai, 2015). It is however a well known fact that what is dominant today in the translation practice belongs to the translations of non-canonical texts which are done with the help of technological tools brought by the digital technologies. Therefore, Holmes’s map of translation studies must be re-designed in a way to include technological tools (this topic is discussed later in the study). In addition, the number of theoretical studies must be increased to see the effects of technology on the translation practice within Translation Studies. We therefore refer back to Kiraly’s social constructivism approach to show the paradigm shift in the translation teaching in the context of localization. Then, we try to explain the contribution of this paradigm shift¹ to the localization industry mostly in terms of its theoretization.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Especially Kiraly’s *A Social Constructivist Approach to Translator Education* (2000) suggests a new approach or in other words a new paradigm from transmissionism to social constructivism in the academic translation teaching because of the latest developments possibly triggered by the digital age. Such writers as Kosaka and Itagaki link this new paradigm to the localization teaching. Therefore we think that localization teaching allows this paradigm to

* Our study presents a reflective writing foregrounding the relationship between the social constructivist approach and localization, thus trying to question the legitimacy of the localization paradigm.

legitimate the localization paradigm. If it is so, the localization industry can in parallel present a theoretical value and a new paradigm. To show our claim further, we therefore benefit in the study from exactly twenty five sources all of which serve as primary sources to explain the relationship between technology and translation. While Kiraly's book is our starting point, Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) lays a foundation for the theoretical part of the study. So far, many books might have been written on the social constructivist and transmission approach. What we do here is however to link the new paradigm of social constructivist approach to the legitimacy of the localization paradigm.

Research Questions

- Can the current academic translation teaching legitimate the localization paradigm?
- What can be the effect of the social constructivism on the localization teaching?
- What is the reason for a paradigm shift from transmission approach to a social constructivist approach in the academic translation teaching?
- What is the difference between classical translation theories and localization industry which is on its way to theoretization?
- Can Holmes's map be redesigned according to current technological innovations brought by ICT?

III. THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM ON THE LOCALIZATION TEACHING, THE QUESTIONING OF THE PARADIGM OF SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM IN TERMS OF LOCALIZATION TEACHING AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE LEGITIMACY OF THE LOCALIZATION PARADIGM

The Position of Paradigms in Translation Studies: More Emphasis on Localization

Translation Studies has witnessed many kind of turns or paradigms that shift from linguistic to culture and recently to technology (Cronin, 2010, Snell-Hornby, 2006). Between 1960s and 1970s, the dominant paradigm in Translation Studies was linguistic oriented translation approaches which were replaced later by functional translation theories and a new concept, cultural turn (see Lefevere and Bassnett). Descriptive Translation Studies under the influence of Polysystem theory, and cognitive approaches (see Hönig, Wills) were also accepted as the emerging paradigms of Translation Studies in the second half of the twentieth century.

According to Handa, social conditions are the determinant factors of paradigm shifts in social sciences (Handa, 1986), which can change quickly or regenerate itself within a short period of time. Thanks to this dynamism, there may be more than one paradigm in social sciences under different categories, which implies a difference from the paradigms of natural sciences because in natural sciences while Newton's law of gravitation was accepted as a paradigm, there was not any other one until the former was refuted by Einstein's Theory of Relativity (see Kuhn, 1962). From Handa's perspective, our study shows that there may be many paradigms in Translation Studies (as one of the branches of social sciences) at the same time whose objectives and functions differ from each other. Whereas Descriptive Translation Studies foregrounds a translation product, cognitive paradigms of Translation Studies focus on the translator's mind, therefore the issues related with the translation process. Then, one might also ask the question whether Kiraly's social constructivism can be the new paradigm of the translator teaching and this paradigm feeds the localization industry by combining theory and practice in interactive classroom activities, which in a way gains a technological turn to translation teaching and Translation Studies in general (see Snell Hornby, 2006).

In the the digital age, what translation students need to know in the translation process is not "know that" but "know how" (Ho, 2008, p.7). Then, today's translators apart from being regarded as bicultural and bilingual experts (see functional translation theories) are also technical communicators (see Pym), one of the features brought by the technological turn to Translation Studies. The technological turn in nature includes the use of technological tools such as translation memories, electronic corpora, electronic dictionaries, online glossaries, termbases, all of which are used in the localization industry, a new term instead of the translation (industry). What is then localization defined? Localization means more than simply cultural adaptation or tailoring. It can be defined as "taking a *product* and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate for the target *locale* (country/region/language) where it will be used and sold" (emphasis intentional) (qtd. Esselink, 2000, p. 3 from LISA). Translation has transformed into a big business and created huge translation markets in the digital age especially through the localization industry, a superordinate term encompassing translation (see Munday, 2008, p.191). The fact that localization was first associated with the concept of industry and thus accepted as an industrial discourse caused Translation Studies to ignore this field of translation mostly on a theoretical basis. However, as the number of writings on localization has increased day by day with the contribution of translation scholars interested in translation technologies (see Austermuehl, Raído, O'Hagan, Mangiron, Ashworth etc), courses on the relevant field are in parallel on the rise. In this way, translation trainees can be accustomed to real world conditions and new translation areas of employment (Pym, 2004, p.1). Still, the conceptualisation of localization among translation theories is a process which has so far not been fully achieved. This gives the impression that there are imbalances among translation scholars against technological issues within Translation Studies. Though increasing, the number of writings on the translation technology has a restricted category among the historical translation theories. This causes machine translation systems and translation memories which can both feed the localization industry to be less influential on the translation discipline and thus localization studies from a

theoretical perspective. However, it should be remembered that translation technologies actually facilitate the translation task performed by a human translator (O'Hagan ve Mangiron, 2013, p. 98). Because of this reason, the translation technology as an emerging area of translation both on theoretical and practical reasons cannot be discarded and this is similarly true of the localization industry.

In parallel with the statements above, Kosaka and Itagaki assert that in localization teaching there is a paradigm shift from the transmission approach to the social constructivism (see Kiraly, 2000). In the traditional transmission approach, information is simply transferred from a teacher to a group of students. This model is generally used in societies which do not have access to the proper education and technological tools due to the financial problems or the economic underdevelopment (Kosaka and Itagaki, 2003, p. 232). However, in social constructivist approach, information is constructed mutually and therefore classroom learning must be re-ordered according to this method (Pym, 2011, p.318). As also can be seen from these explanations, the reason for a paradigm shift in the translation education might be that the teaching of basic translation skills and its transference from a teacher to his/her students via a classical method are not enough for an effective learning setting in the digital age (Kosaka and Itagaki, 2003, p. 248). Besides, in the classical methodology of the translation teaching, the translation task performed by students is evaluated based on that of the teacher. Therefore, this approach does not meet today's criteria in terms of the modern academic translation teaching. Translators from this point on are expected to have some non-translation skills such as the ones related to computer and software engineering, programming, graphic designing and so forth (see Koby and Baer, 2003, p. 212). Then a new approach has been necessary, as repeatedly emphasized i.e social constructivism.

Similar to the statements in the previous paragraph, students are subjects rather than an object in the educational process and they actively participate in the building of knowledge (Austermuehl, 2010, p.7) in the social constructivist approach. Then, in this approach, there is a collaborative attitude between teacher and students to build knowledge and skills (see Kosaka and Itagaki, 2003, p. 232). This collaborative approach, if properly gained to translation trainees during their education, can be more consciously sustained on real-time translation markets or be encouraged in every localization projects. At this point, it would be appropriate to mention that translation (even the literary translation) with the arrival of social constructivism has lost its character of isolation thanks to new tools and new resources though it was once conducted as a solitary activity (see Rosas, 2004). Considering these developments, it can be asserted that for a healthy learning setting supported by the social constructivist approach, a collaborative construction of knowledge and personal experience are required to create a true expertise and an authentic situated action (Kiraly, 2003, p.3).

In parallel with the above-mentioned statements, one can also assume that in the digital revolution, education has been virtualised and distance learning has been made possible which both have paved ways for translation trainers to have a group of students who are conscious about translation related real markets and are used to interactive and computerized courses instead of classical face to face and paper based education (O'Hagan and Ashworth, 2002, p. 109). Then, what can exactly be said about the direction and orientation of the translation training in our modern day? As Samson (2005) also puts it (p.102), translator's workstations have changed and therefore academic translation teaching must focus on how translator candidates can generate digital texts, manage files, use Internet and other technological tools, all of which bring to the mind a paradigm shift affecting the whole translation education. According to Shreve (2000), the translation industry is also an eco-system where changes in a setting might affect the other. Especially, the development of the contemporary language industry has brought some content related and methodological challenges in the translation teaching. Technological alterations and innovations have expanded the scope and diversity of texts in the translation field and as a result many translator tools have come out (Koby and Baer, 2003, p. 211).

Sin Wai also argues in *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Technology* (2015) as an editor of the book that the translation practice has changed in the recent years as a result of the integration of Translation Studies with (probably IT) based disciplines and fields such as computer engineering, computational linguistics, computer programming and so forth. He similarly believes that there is a paradigm shift in the translation teaching with the popularisation of translation technologies contributing in general to the translation or localization industry (see Sin Wai, 2015).

The reason why the social constructivism approach as a new paradigm of the translation teaching has been put forward so as to make localization teaching popular among translation curricula might be the increase of (real time) translation volumes in the localization industry. Therefore, this industry, apart from its industrial aspect can be theorized by the encouragement of translation scholars (see Pym, Austermuehl etc.) just like literary and cultural translations. While the objective of the former is to commercialize a product, the latter focuses on the entertainment, ideology, gender, culture and so forth. Generally most of historical translation theories centre around literary and cultural translations and paradigms of translation theories are mostly formed from these two fields of translation. If translation scholars (see for instance Pym, Austermuehl, O'Hagan) increase their research on the localization industry, they can also find remarkable clues to theorize the industry and turn it into a new paradigm. The first step has been taken from the idea that the social constructivism is an educational paradigm and feeds the localization teaching by causing a paradigm shift and in this way affecting the localization industry. Besides, it should be considered that in social sciences, there might be more than one paradigm, each of which serves differently. Therefore, localization can also be handled theoretically and as a paradigmatic change from lexicographic (terminological) and grammatical issues under the sub-branch of translation aids to new concepts such as computer tools, computer assisted translation tools and localization tools. The presence of such tools as translation aids would also mean the increase of empirical studies on

technological tools. Crespo (2011), for instance, discusses error typologies and seeks to find a more objective approach to measuring quality in localization by benefiting from corpora assisted approaches which encourage empirical studies.

Towards the End...

One might also argue that functional translation theories are frequently related to the technical translation like the area of localization but we assert that they only give translators a meta perspective before beginning the translation process to understand and detect the expectations of the target audience or translation theories in advance. However, in localization which can be more associated with the translation practice are also important points in terms of the theoretization. The tools in the field of localization, for instance, require a syntagmatic approach to the translation which emphasizes the paradigmatic imposed on the syntagmatic (Pym, 2001, p.1). Then, in the translation of today's technical texts, there is not a narrative style and translators translate segment by segment which sometimes forces them to do decontextualized translations. In parallel with this, there is now no a single source text but a database of source materials and their translations. These paradigmatic/syntagmatic comparisons and other developments brought by the technology (for instance the fact that there is no a single source text but technology driven databases etc.) can legitimate the localization concept as an emerging translation theory or at least direct new questions supported by descriptive and empirical studies to theorize the so called field of translation. The fact that translation theories might not have historical effects on industrial practices in localization field (see Pym, 2014, p.38) must not be a pretext. Therefore, translation theories must be reviewed and reformed to include this industry by starting to climb up from the localization teaching which is supported by an educational paradigm of the social constructivism. In the academic translation teaching, translation scholars might have slowly adapted them or showed less attention to the integration of translation technologies to the translation process (Austermuehl, 2013, p.326) and besides, most translation trainers might not have specialty on translation technologies in the translation teaching (see Austermuehl, 2013, p. 327), which as a result means possibly less attraction to the localization industry within Translation Studies. However, when new technological improvements are considered within Translation Studies, this tendency must be left and Holmes's classical taxonomy or mapping must be refreshed and re-ordered (see Quah, 2006) in terms of the latest developments in the translation technologies. As known, Holmes (1972) divides the discipline into two categories as Pure Translation Studies and Applied Translation Studies. For the use of technological tools, Applied Translation Studies category is especially of importance since technological tools fall best under the sub-headings of translation aids and translation teaching apart from other sub-headings such as translation policy and translation criticism under the category of Applied Translation Studies. However, there is still a gap between Pure Translation Studies and Applied Translation Studies in terms of linking technological tools to the former that brings to the mind the theoretical basis. In other words, one can argue that technological tools have not been well studied on a theoretical (descriptive, empirical, etc.) basis so far, which causes the gap to increase more between theory and practice (see O'Hagan, 2013, p. 507-508). However, the increasing popularity of technological tools can encourage technology oriented studies and therefore the Translation Studies map might be redrawn (O'Hagan, 2013, p. 514). In parallel, Bowker believes that the integration of the technology into the translation teaching will stimulate the increasing of basic translation skills, supply data for empirical studies, create new areas of study in terms of the evaluation of the effect of the technology in the translation teaching and its practice, also of the human-machine integration (Bowker, 2002, p. 21). Here, it would be appropriate to refer back to the social constructivism concept because the social constructivist approach might achieve the reconciliation of the technology and translator training. In connection, as also put forward before, a collaborative model, one of the characteristics of the social constructivism is of paramount importance to the translation process. In collaboration, while the role of the teacher is relegated to consultancy or guidance, students are expected to take more responsibilities and roles such as being project manager, translator, proofreader, reviser, tester during the training (see Samson, 2005, p. 109) accompanied by the social constructivism. This fact is also expressed by Kosaka and Itagaki. They believe that students get accustomed to their new roles required by ICT through simulated translation tasks². To Kosaka and Itagaki, users are also replaced by students and they might be asked to take different roles on a simulated translation task in classroom activities. Besides, some of the students might play the role of the project manager, terminologist, editor and translator whereas the teacher might be a localization engineer or project manager (see Kosaka and Itagaki, 2003, p. 239 and see Samson, 2005). Then one might think that the translation teaching has shifted from learning by translating to simulated translation practice targeting the professional localization market (see Alcina, Soler ve Granell, 2007, p. 230). By creating simulated translation tasks, social constructivism can also bring to the mind a new concept known as student-centered instruction (SCI) in which students influence the content, activities, materials and learning speed. This instructional approach places students in the center of the learning process. In this way, students can learn independently (Collins & O'Brien, 2003).

² Social constructivist approach in translator training requires the simulation of a real translation market and that's why the way how would-be translators can use technological tools is taught in the interactive classroom activities. Social constructivist approach in translator training, with new technological devices constitutes a paradigm shift. Bowker (2005) compares three student groups in an experimental research and finds out that students using technological tools complete the translation task on time whereas translators without the intervention of technological tools cannot complete it on time though they enhance the quality. However, what digital technologies prioritize today is not the quality but the productivity. Productivity is only achieved through computerized devices.

IV. CONCLUSION

For the maturation of Translation Studies whose status was promoted to an independent discipline especially with the contribution of Holmes's seminal paper in 1972, newer paradigms must be sought and experimentalized in a way combining practical and theoretical field of translation. In the digital age, the translator's workstation has also radically changed and computerized tools are on the rise. That's why a paradigm shift in the academic translation teaching has first been suggested by Kiraly and later other colleagues by considering the latest technological developments in the field. With respect to this, the localization teaching has been popularized and added into translation courses in most of the translation and interpretation departments in the world. We believe that all technological developments contributing to the Translation Studies are paradigm shifts (see also Austermeühl). From this perspective, some translation scholars believe that in localization teaching there has been a paradigm shift. If so, the underlying reason for this fact might be the localization industry itself as it includes nearly 95 percent of the translation markets.

As known, the translation activity except literary translation which is done to entertain readers, generally focuses on the translation/localization industry. In parallel, functional translation theories were also created for the technical texts or in other words the translation industry. In the digital age, we however believe that it is highly time to create new translation theories and paradigms targeting the commercial translation or more appropriately localization markets. Therefore, we also think that the localization industry just like the translation industry can trigger a paradigm shift with new approaches. Pym has already used "localization theory" and "localization studies" concepts in his papers. It is therefore possible to discuss whether localization can be a paradigm or not for translation scholars.

In addition, it is not necessary for a theory to address all scientists, which means that it can be a paradigm for only one scientific community which especially constitutes the group of people who are in search of novelties in the science by leaving former theories and approaches. As mentioned before, in social sciences there may be more than one paradigm having different functions. Then, localization as a paradigm can be pleasantly embraced by some of the translation scholars as paradigm as well.

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