

An Analysis of English Specialization Students' Theoretical Knowledge of Translation Methods

Aye Nyein San
University of Computer
Studies(Meiktila)
ayenyeinsan09@gmail.com

Khin Thida Oo
Yadanabon University
khinthidaoo125@gmail.com

Myat Myat Moe
University of Computer
Studies(Meiktila)
myatmyatmoe@ucsmtila.edu.mm

Abstract

The main concern of this study is to examine the theoretical knowledge of Third year and Fourth year English specialization students of Mandalay University of Foreign Languages by exploring the translation methods commonly employed in "The Choice", the translation of the Myanmar Short Story, "Yway-Chal-Paing-Khwint" of SoeHlaing Tint translated by Zaw Tun. The research methods used in this study are both qualitative and quantitative. The data for this study were collected from 48 Third year English specialization students and 61 Fourth year English specialization students from Mandalay University of Foreign Languages. The translation methods were investigated based on the theory of Newmark (1988). The research found that both Third year and Fourth year English specialization students were weak in the knowledge of semantic translation method and idiomatic translation methods because their study and practice of translation methods do not go beyond the classroom. They need to make more practice in the out-of-the-classroom situations. The translator used 5 out of 8 translation methods in the translation of the short story. The most frequently used translation method is semantic translation. It was found that using semantic translation method has a positive effect on the translation text because it can give the readers the aesthetic pleasure with the atmosphere of the original taste of the story.

Keywords: word-for word translation method, literal translation method, semantic translation method, idiomatic translation method, communicative translation method

1. Introduction

Translation plays an important role in global communication. It involves at least two languages: source language and target language. The term translation usually means transferring meaning and conveying messages from one language to another (Cook, 2010). It is the process of converting a source language to a target language and vice versa. Newmark (1981:7) indicates that translation is a craft that attempts to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message or statement in another language.

Newmark (1988) mentioned the difference between translation methods and translation procedures. He stated that translation methods are related to whole texts

while translation procedures are used for sentences and the smaller units of language. He proposed eight types of translation methods. They are Word-for-word translation, Literal translation, Faithful translation, Semantic translation, Adaptation, Free translation, Idiomatic translation, Communicative translation. These eight methods help the translators to get a more clearly translated text to the target readers, who are able to read it without losing the original taste and appreciate the culture and society of the source language.

Foreign language learners need to be equipped not only with the language skills but also translation methods since, after their graduation, they are often assigned paid jobs for translation. For this purpose, the learner should be trained translation methods so that they will be able to cope with the tasks assigned. This research will also explore the students' knowledge of translation methods in third year and fourth year English specialization students of Mandalay University of Foreign Languages by testing their working knowledge of Newmark's (1988) translation methods. Proposed exercises will be provided for helping students to remedy their weaknesses in certain methods.

2. Review of Literature

Many linguists, theorists and translators have made different definitions of what translation is. Larson (1984), for example, states that translation consists of transferring the meaning of the source language into the target language and analyzing the source text by studying the lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation, and cultural context in order to determine its meaning, and then reconstruct it in the same meaning using the lexicon and grammatical structure which are appropriate in the target language and its cultural context.

Newmark (1988) describes that translation means rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text. According to this definition, translation means to translate the meaning of the text from one language to another without spoiling the message of the author.

According to Newmark (1988), there are three main areas of translation. They are (a) science and technology, (b) social, economic and/or political topics and institutions, and (c) literary and philosophical works. A translator should be equipped not only with the knowledge and skill of the target language but also those on his or her mother tongue.

It is also important that a translator should be sensitive to the usage, as well as to the original author's intention and message. Translators usually decide what kind of procedures, strategies and methods should be employed in their translation based on the area of the translation.

2.1 Aim and Objectives

In response to the research gap mentioned in the introduction section, the present research investigates to explore the theoretical knowledge of English specialization students of Mandalay University of Foreign Languages about the translation methods. The target group is Third Year and Fourth Year English Specialization students of MUFL. Myanmar Short Story, "Yway-Chal-Paing-Khwint" was written by Soe Hlaing Tint. It was translated into English by ZawTun under the title "The Choice". Moreover, the objective of this research are :

- i. to investigate how far third year and fourth English specialization students of Mandalay University of Foreign Languages have been equipped with the theoretical knowledge of translation methods with reference to the 'The Choice' by Zaw Tun.
- ii. to provide reinforcement exercises for some particular translation strategies that the English Specialization students are weak in.

2.2 Research Questions

To achieve the objectives, the present study seeks answer for the following research questions.

1. How far have third year and fourth English specialization students of Mandalay University of Foreign Languages been equipped with the theoretical knowledge of translation methods with reference to the 'The Choice' by ZawTun?
2. How are the reinforcement exercises provided for some particular translation methods that the English Specialization students are weak in?

3. Material and Methods

3.1 Participants

Forty-eight third year and sixty-one fourth year English specialization students who are studying at Mandalay University of Foreign Languages participated in the current study.

3.2 Methods

In this research, Myanmar short story "Ywae-Chal-Paing-Khwint" written by SoeHlaing Tint was used as a source text. The target text was "The Choice" which was translated into English by Zaw Tun. There are a total of 213 sentences in the original story and 235 sentences in the translated short story. In this paper, the researcher analyzed the short story by using the theory of Newmark's (1988) translation methods while comparing the source and target text. Newmark (1988) proposed eight types of translation method and this

paper explored which of these translation methods are used in translating a Myanmar short story into an English short story. The sentences both from source and target language were compared and analyzed sentence by sentence.

3.3 Data Collection

The present research investigates the translation methods employed in translating the Myanmar short story "Ywae-Chal-Paing-Khwint" which has 213 sentences into English "The Choice" which has 235 translated sentences by Zaw Tun. In order to accomplish this research, the researcher used Myanmar short story "Ywae-Chal-Paing-Khwint" written by SoeHlaing Tint as the source language and "The Choice" which was translated into English by ZawTun as the target language.

Moreover, the researcher explored English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods who are studying in Mandalay University of Foreign Languages. In order to accomplish this, the researcher did the following steps; firstly, the researcher gave an explanation of eight types of Newmark's (1988) translation method to the (48) third year and (61) fourth year English specialization students before doing the exercises. Then, students were distributed the exercises and asked to tick the translation methods which they think are used.

The eight types of translation methods proposed by Newmark's (1988) are coded as follows:

No.	Types of Translation Method	Coding
1.	Word-for word translation	WT
2.	Literal translation	LT
3.	Faithful translation	<u>FaT</u>
4.	Semantic translation	ST
5.	Adaptation	A
6.	Free Translation	<u>FrT</u>
7.	Idiomatic translation	IT
8.	Communicative translation	CT

3.4 Data Analysis and Data Interpretation

The data to analyze Third year and Fourth year English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods were collected by asking the students to do some exercises which included five translation methods: word-for word translation, literal translation, semantic translation, idiomatic translation and communicative translation that the translator mostly used in the translation of Myanmar short story 'Ywae-

Chal-Paing-Khwint'. Before they do the exercises they were given the explanation of the Newmark's (1988) translation methods by the researcher.

3.4.1 Data Analysis and Data Interpretation of Third Year English Specialization Students' Theoretical Knowledge of Translation Methods

The following figure shows third year English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods.

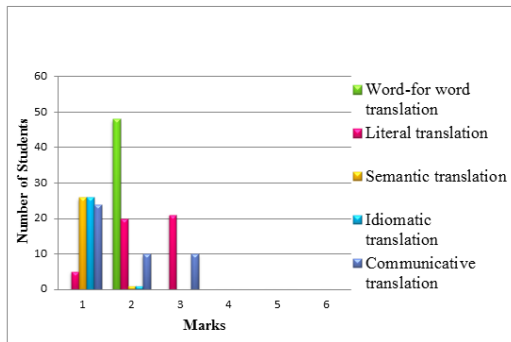


Figure 1.Third Year English Specialization Students' Theoretical Knowledge of Translation Methods

As shown in Figure (1), it is found out that all of the 48 third year students have got 2 marks in two word-for word translation method sentences. Among 5 literal translation method sentences, 5 students have got 1 mark, 20 students have got 2 marks and 21 students have got 3 marks. Among 6 semantic translation method sentences, 26 students have got 1 mark and only 1 student has got 2 marks. Among 5 idiomatic sentences, 26 students have got 1 mark and only 1 student has got 2 marks. Among 5 communicative method sentences, 24 students have got 1 mark, 10 students have got 2 marks and 10 students have got 3 marks.

3.4.2 Data Analysis and Data Interpretation of Fourth Year English Specialization Students' Theoretical Knowledge of Translation Methods

The following figure shows fourth year English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods.

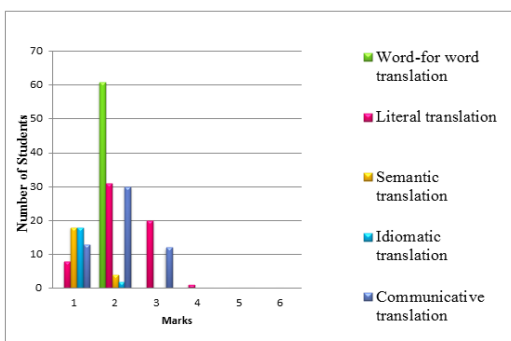


Figure 2.Fourth Year English Specialization Students' Theoretical Knowledge of Translation Methods

As shown in Figure 4, it is found out that all of the 61 fourth year students have got 2 marks in two word-for word translation method sentences. Among 5 literal translation method sentences, 8 students have got 1 mark, 31 students have got 2 marks, 20 students have got 3 marks and 1 student has got 4 marks. Among 6 semantic translation method sentences, 18 students have got 1 mark and 4 students have got 2 marks. Among 5 idiomatic sentences, 18 students have got 1 mark and only 2 students have got 2 marks. Among 5 communicative method sentences, 13 students have got 1 mark, 30 students have got 2 marks and 12 students have got 3 marks.

3.4.3 Comparison of the Overall Score of the Third Year and Fourth Year English Specialization Students' Theoretical Knowledge of Translation Methods

The following figure shows the comparison of the overall score of the third year and fourth year students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods.

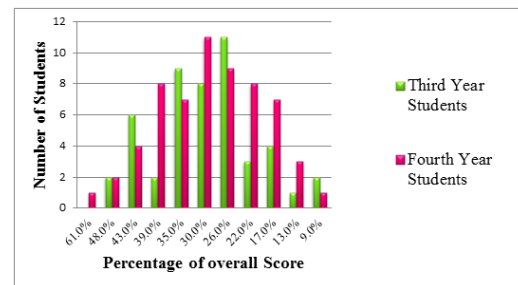


Figure 3. Comparison of the Overall Score of the Third Year and Fourth Year English Specialization Students' Theoretical Knowledge of Translation Methods

According to the overall score, it is found out that Fourth year students' theoretical knowledge is higher than Third year students. Among Third year English Specialization students, there is no student who had got 61% in the overall score of the theoretical knowledge of translation methods while there is 1 student who had got 61% of the overall score of theoretical knowledge of the translation methods in Fourth year. There are 2 Third year students and 6 Fourth year students who got 48% in the overall score of the theoretical knowledge of translation methods, 6 Third year students and 4 Fourth year students who got 43% in the overall score of the theoretical knowledge of translation methods, 2 Third year students and 8 Fourth year students who got 39% in the overall score of the theoretical knowledge of translation methods, 9 third year students and 7 fourth year students who got 35% in the theoretical knowledge of the translation methods, 8 third year students and 11 fourth year students who got 30% in the overall score of theoretical knowledge of translation methods, 11 third

year students and 9 fourth year students who got 26% in the overall score of the theoretical knowledge of translation methods, 3 third year students and 8 fourth year students who got 22% in the overall score of theoretical knowledge of translation methods, 4 third year students and 7 fourth year students who got 17% in the overall score of the theoretical knowledge of translation methods, 1 third year student and 3 fourth year students who got 13% in the overall score of the knowledge of translation methods and 2 third year students and 1 fourth year students who got 9% in the overall score of the theoretical knowledge of the translation methods.

4. Findings and Discussion

In exploring the English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods based on Newmark (1988), Fourth year English specialization students' theoretical knowledge is higher than Third year English specialization students' theoretical knowledge. The maximum overall score percentage of Fourth year English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods is 61% and the maximum overall score percentage of Third year English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods is 48%. However, 9% is the minimum percentage of overall score in both Fourth year and Third year English specialization students. Fourth year English specialization students have 31.2% in average percentage of overall score of the theoretical knowledge of translation methods but Third year English specialization students have 26% in average percentage of overall score of the theoretical knowledge of translation methods. This is probably because fourth year English specialization students have two-year experiences of learning translation, being exposed to the theoretical knowledge and practice while third year English specialization students have only one-year learning experience in translation.

According to the research findings, the English specialization students' knowledge of translation methods shows that their knowledge level of semantic translation method is low probably because their study and practice of translation method do not go beyond the classroom. It is not enough for students only having the theoretical knowledge but also need to have practical work. Therefore, they need to make more practice in the out-of-the-classroom situations so that they will become independent translators.

5. Conclusion

This research was an attempt to explore the English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of

translation methods based on Newmark's (1988) theory. Fourth year English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation methods is found to be higher than Third year English specialization students. This may be because Fourth year English specialization students have more experience of learning translation than Third year English specialization students.

Both Third year and Fourth year English specialization students are weak in the knowledge of idiomatic translation method and semantic translation method. They all should be given some reinforcement exercises in these translation methods that they are found to be weak in because it will probably help the students who want to become future translators to understand gradually that choosing the appropriate translation methods plays an important role in completing a good translation.

Further studies can be done on the other translation works of the same author in order to investigate whether the same translation methods are employed or not in these works. An exploration of English specialization students' theoretical knowledge of translation techniques, strategies or procedures can also be carried out in further researches.

References

- [1] Cook, V. (2007). The goals of ELT: reproducing native-speakers or promoting multi-competence among second language users? In J. Cummins and C. Davidson (Eds.) *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (pp. 237-248) Norwell, MA: Springer.
- [2] JP, S. R. (2013). Translation analysis on figurative language in the oldman and the sea by Ernest Hemingway Into LelakiTua Dan Laut BySapardiDjokoDamono. Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of SarjanaSastra (S.S.) in English Language. (Journal Article)
- [3] Larson, Midred L. (1984) *Meaning-based translation: A guide to cross-language equivalence*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- [4] Newmark, P. (1988) *A textbook of translation*. New York, Prentice Hall International (UK) Ltd,
- [5] Newmark, P. *Approaches to translation*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- [6] Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: what every teacher should know*. New York. Newbury Publisher.
- [7] Plonska, D. (2014). Strategies of translation. *University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw. (Journal article: Psychology of Language and Communication, Vol. 18, No. 1)* (Retrieved from <https://content.sciendo.com>)
- [8] SoeHlaing Tint. (2018). Ywae-Chal-Paing_Khwint. In SoeHlaing Tint, Ah -Than Teik- Nay-Kya- Thu- Myar (pp. 95-106). Yangon: Lynn Loon Khin.

[9] Wiersema, N. (2003). Globalization and translation: a discussion of the effect of globalization on today's translation. (Translation Journal)

[10] Zaw Tun. (2018). The Silent Voices and Other Stories. The Choice (pp. 25-35). Yangon: Lynn LunnKhinSarpay.