

Language processing in professional L2 translation: indications from research behaviour

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Translation process research offers opportunities to investigate professional L2 translation (or translation into the second language) beyond anecdotal evidence about its potential differences from L1 translation. Previous studies have examined, for example, revision behaviour (Ferreira 2014), cognitive effort (Pavlović and Jensen 2009) and translators' self-concepts (Hunziker Heeb, submitted). One of the common assumptions about L2 translation is that the frequency and purpose of consulting external resources differ from those of L1 translation. Lorenzo (2002) and others have suggested that this is related to the L2 translators' uncertainty about the success of the communicative act.

Such events of consulting external resources during the task may also serve as indicators of how language is being processed during L2 translation. The L2 translator decides which search term she wants to use to research the information she needs, what type of resource she wants to use and how she uses the information presented. The present study, which is part of the author's PhD project, investigates whether and in what form the information presented in the online resources is actually incorporated into the target text. These data are complemented with other characteristics of the consultation event, such as the type of resource used. Data from screen recordings of the translation processes that were enhanced by visualised eye-tracking data (i.e. fixations as orange dots and saccades as lines) are triangulated with retrospective comments made by the participating L2 translators. As these translators also regularly translate into their L1 (English-German), their research behaviour during an L2 translation task is compared to that during an L1 translation task. Inferences are drawn about the assumed purpose of the consultations, such as for understanding of the source text, for inspiration about target text formulations, for language equivalents or for confirmation of solutions. The analysis of how L2 translators actually perform online consultations provides some insight into how they process language to serve their situation-specific needs.

(315 words)

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