

Simulated Translator-Client Relations in Translator Training: Translator Behavior around Risk Management

Authors : Maggie Hui

Abstract : Risk management is not a new concept; however, it is an uncharted area as applied to the translation process and translator training. Risk managers are responsible for managing risk, i.e. adopting strategies with the intention to minimize loss and maximize gains in spite of uncertainty. Which risk strategy to use often depends on the frequency of an event (i.e. probability) and the severity of its outcomes (i.e. impact). This is basically the way translation/localization project managers handle risk management. Although risk management could involve both positive and negative impacts, impact seems to be always negative in professional translators' management models, e.g. how many days of project time are lost or how many clients are lost. However, for analysis of translation performance, the impact should be possibly positive (e.g. increased readability of the translation) or negative (e.g. loss of source-text information). In other words, the straight business model of risk management is not directly applicable to the study of risk management in the rendition process. This research aims to explore trainee translators' risk managing while translating in a simulated setting that involves translator-client relations. A two-cycle experiment involving two roles, the translator and the simulated client, was carried out with a class of translation students to test the effects of the main variable of peer-group interaction. The researcher made use of a user-friendly screen-voice recording freeware to record subjects' screen activities, including every word the translator typed and every change they made to the rendition, the websites they browsed and the reference tools they used, in addition to the verbalization of their thoughts throughout the process. The research observes the translation procedures subjects considered and finally adopted, and looks into the justifications for their procedures, in order to interpret their risk management. The qualitative and quantitative results of this study have some implications for translator training: (a) the experience of being a client seems to reinforce the translator's risk aversion; (b) there is a wide gap between the translator's internal risk management and their external presentation of risk; and (c) the use of role-playing simulation can empower students' learning by enhancing their attitudinal or psycho-physiological competence, interpersonal competence and strategic competence.

Keywords : risk management, role-playing simulation, translation pedagogy, translator-client relations

Conference Title : ICHE 2016 : International Conference on Higher Education

Conference Location : Boston, United States

Conference Dates : April 25-26, 2016