

Abstract of phd. thesis

Perceptions of these Practices: Towards Guidelines for Improving Translation Pedagogy Jordanian Universities Translation Instructors, Practices and Students,

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promote and improve the quality of translation teaching and learning as well as translation as a product.

Statement of the Problem:

Taking into consideration that translation is a very important skill that is highly related to SL and FL acquisition, there might be an urgent need to investigate the issue of translation pedagogy at the university level. Further, translation studies have been almost all the time focusing on translation as a subject matter, in comparison with translation as a whole pedagogical system. Gonzalez and Davies (2002) assert that most of the research has been done on translation training focus on describing what happens in translation and disregard what happens in the translation classroom. For the best of the present researcher's knowledge, the issue of investigating translation pedagogy at the university level does not receive much attention in the literature at least locally.

Purpose of the Study:

The present study aims at investigating how instructors at the Translation Department\ Jordanian Universities teach Translation. This aim is achieved through looking into the actual classroom practices which incorporate both the instructor's and the students' behaviors. Besides, the study will search the instructors' current translation pedagogy and the instructors' and students' perspectives concerning this translation pedagogy. Furthermore, the present study hopefully seeks to appraise the current translation programmes at Jordanian Universities by trying to systematize translation pedagogy and reach a proper translation pedagogy that may result in good quality of translation teaching and learning as well as translation product.

Introduction:

It is no doubt that language teaching and learning has passed through various phases of ups and downs in a perpetual zeal for finding effective pedagogy for acquiring knowledge. Some researchers as House (1981) criticize the traditional way of teaching translation and describe it as a frustrating one. She asserts that in such ways of teaching, teachers teach the course by giving a text to students without having an objective of choosing such text. The text is difficult for students to translate due to the fact that the teacher has not trained students to deal with such complex text before. Consequently, students commit errors. In the next session, the class goes through the same text sentence by sentence where every sentence has to be read by a different student. Finally, the instructor asks the class to suggest alternative translation solutions and correct the suggested version. House asserts that this way of teaching translation is a frustrating one. This line of argument brings to the surface one of the salient debates concerning translation pedagogy, namely, the gap created between theory and practice in translation programmes at university. It follows that there might be a need of new translation pedagogy that might help to improve the translation quality and help learners to take the responsibility of their learning. Further, students are in need to feel motivated in order to achieve progress and promote autonomous learning and self-confidence when learning this skill. Moreover, teachers have to be aware of effective methodologies for teaching translation and training students to be good translators in the future. Thus employing effective pedagogy may

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improve this system towards better translation pedagogical practices at the university level.

Participants of the Study:

The participants of the study were purposively selected. They were a group of translation instructors and students in four Jordanian Universities. The participants were chosen according to certain criteria. The instructors involved in the study are the

ones who give practical translation courses for translation students mainly and other students (of English & other foreign languages). They teach in translation departments mainly and possibly give translation courses for students enrolled in translation programmes in the department of English Language and Literature. The total number of the instructors is twelve. With regard to the students participated in the study, they are B.A. and M.A. students who are specialized in English translation (though some are majored in English Literature but they take translation courses with the translation students) and taught by those instructors participated in the present study.

Instruments of the Study:

The study made use of three research instruments; two are quantitative and one is qualitative. The quantitative instruments included: field-observation and the questionnaire while the in-depth semi-structured interviews with the translation instructors and students represent the qualitative study instrument.

Conclusions:

With reference to the findings and their discussion above, one might conclude that translation pedagogy at JU is in need for considerable rethinking. It seems that these programmes are still in their infancy and they are in need for ongoing modification as to yield better outcomes. First and for most, the students enrolled in these programmes are still suffering from poor English in addition to their weaknesses in their mother tongue. Their past experience at High School seems to be insufficient in polishing and enhancing their English proficiency.

Second, the plans these programmes are based on suffer from the heavy loads of non-departmental

Questions of the Study:

The study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the actual translation teaching practices employed by the translation instructors at the Translation Department\Jordanian Universities as observed by the researcher? And are there any statistical differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between these practices due to the University variable (public/private)?

2. How do the translation instructors at the Translation Department\Jordanian Universities view their translation pedagogies? Are there any statistical differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between these pedagogies due to the University variable (public/private)?

3. How do the translation students at the Translation Department\Jordanian Universities view the translation pedagogies implemented in the translation courses they take and the programmes they are enrolled in? Are there any statistical differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between these pedagogies due to the University variable (public/private)?

4. What are the translation students' perceptions concerning their instructors' current teaching practices? Are there any statistical differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in their perceptions due to the variables of: university, credit hours covered, gender, and specialization in B.A.?

5. To what extent are the translation programme plans at Jordanian universities comprehensive in that they encapsulate all requisites for translator education?

6. To what extent are public and private universities translation students considered competent in their translation? Are there any differences between the public and private universities translation students in terms of their translation competence?"

Significance of the Study:

The significance of the present study emerges from the fact that it investigates a very vital and dynamic branch of SLA, namely translation pedagogy. Its evaluative nature in reflecting on translation pedagogy as a whole system at the university level might crystallize the actual situation and help in taking informed decisions to

formers might suffer and feel frustration about the latter who in return feel at loss. Feeling frustrated because of their weak proficiency level, the students might become unmotivated to attend the translation classes.

It seems there is no contact between students and native speakers of English who might study there or work. Translators, being mediators, are supposed to be familiar with the life style, of the native speakers of English.

Moreover, there is no coordination in establishing translation programmes, especially in private universities which open this field of study without taking into consideration the heavy demands of it and pre-designing of a comprehensive plan that encapsulates all requirements of students' translation competence.

To sum up, the situation in JU's Translation Department is serious and it needs consideration in all aspects including, translation instructors, students, plans, teaching methods, visual aids, just to name a few.

2.9. Recommendations:

Based on the findings and their discussion, the following are recommended:

1. Translation Departments:

a. The plans should be reconsidered based on the findings of the study to encapsulate real ingredients of building a solid base of translation competence.

b. The department is required to consult other translation programmes in the area and at the international level in order to approve its plans and courses.

c. Students should not be admitted in the department unless passing an admission test in both Arabic and English, in addition to an interview.

d. The department is recommended to provide training courses by inviting experienced people in the field to do workshops and to discuss the newly-issues in the field of translation pedagogy.

2. Translation Instructors should:

a. be up-to-date in their teaching methodologies, content and materials of their courses, assessment tools, among others;

courses some of which are duplication for each others. Besides, there is a severe lack in supportive-for-translation courses such as the courses about literature, culture and Western civilization. Other courses needed include courses on knowledge of how to translate and knowledge about translation. Further, the language skill courses seem to be insufficient, especially when considering students poor levels. Another point relevant to the plan is the practical course, especially sight interpreting which is considered a prerequisite for simultaneous interpretation. Furthermore, the field work courses are also required to familiarize students with their prospective careers and awaited tasks and challenges.

A part from the plan, it might be concluded that translation instructors have no training courses on how to teach translation. They have formed their methodologies and practices of teaching translation as they embark in the job. That is why most of them have the same method of teaching with some personal flavor.

The issue of technology is almost completely absent in the whole pedagogy of teaching translation at JU. These universities suffer from lack in technological devices and specialized technical labs for teaching translation. Data show, films, CDs,

among other are not utilized properly in the lecture which takes the traditional perspective of a teacher in front position, students, set in fixed rows, and holding a text given to them last lecture to prepare it at home and bring it for discussion in the coming lecture.

The style of the students' work is almost traditional; real team work, and no workshops. Students work alone and they can ask their colleagues sitting beside without making noise to interrupt the instructor and other students.

It seems that there is no supportive communication between the administration in these universities and the translation department with regard to the admission test and designing the translation plan without restricted by the faculty and the university requirements.

There is no a mutual and amiable rapport between the instructors and the students as the

for the benefit of all participants in the learning process; and
d. there should be workshops and conferences that gather a large number of translation instructors where they can set and discuss the pros and cons of their translation programmes as well as their reservoir of pedagogical experience in the field of translation.

2. Future Researchers:

a. doing more specialized research concerning the types of the courses the Translation Departments offer, especially the more vital courses such as simultaneous interpretation is recommended;

b. duplicating the experimental studies conducted in the field of translation pedagogy at the national and international levels to see their efficiency in improving the system of translation pedagogy at a whole at Jordanian Universities and other Arab Universities might be enhancing;

c. constructing training programmes concerning translation pedagogy is recommended for the purpose of training translation instructors to implement their translation classes more efficiently.

d. take into consideration students' needs and individual differences and vary their teaching techniques and methods accordingly;

c. conduct action research in their translation classes to know their weak and strong points as to remedy the former and develop the latter;

d. focus on teaching students skills and capacities that can be used not only in class but even outside as to prepare them for the future work;

e. emphasize group and team work among students; and

f. utilize technology in their teaching;

3. Translation Students should:

a. develop the skills of autonomous learning;

b. enhance their linguistic, translation, and transfer competence;

c. not depend on the instructor for everything and try to do a lot of practices as much as they can; and

d. develop research skills and use technology.

4. Universities Administration:

a. there should be a sense of communication and cooperation between the Universities Administration and the Translation Departments