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Topic 2: Research Questions on the Translator's Cognitive Processes: Early Period

Pamela Gerloff [1, 4] ("Possibility Pamela")

- Which way of coding the data makes inter-subject and intra-subject comparisons possible?
- Which methodology can be developed for researching learner processes of second language translation via the use of concurrent protocols?
- Which way of coding the data is comprehensive, reliable, generalizable to other categories of learners and to other foreign language processing tasks, and which can be used to compare learner processing both across and within subjects?
- Regarding the two category systems for analyzing the talk-aloud protocol: Do professional translators tend to translate larger units than novices?
- Does a higher degree of translational competence automatically correspond with a higher degree of translation process automatization?
- Do professional translators do significantly more "processing" overall than bilinguals and the bilinguals significantly more than the foreign language learners?
- Does the translation process get easier and faster the more competent and facile a person becomes with a foreign language?

Hans G. Hönig [2, 3]

- Is a person with good foreign language competence a good translator as well?
- What role does a translator play in the communication process? Is he the sender, the receiver, both or neither?
- Are there any factors which influence a translation? Which are they and what effect do they have on a translation?
- Is there a correlation between the sympathy for a source text and the frequency and types of errors in the translation?
- Do translator's strategies depend on their understanding of a source text? And what does 'understanding a text' mean?
- Do translators have the competence to realize their knowledge gaps when they read a source text? And are they able to close those gaps?
- Does an extensive source text analysis improve the later translation?
- Do you learn how to translate by doing it or by using methodical translation knowledge?
- Can we create a general strategy for translating?
- How rational do translators act?
- How do translation students learn to deal with their intuition?
- Are intuitive and cognitive processes related?

Donald C. Kiraly [4]

Regarding mental processes and translator's competence:

- What do translators actually do mentally when they translate?
- How (and whether) can translation processes and competences be understood and then influence pedagogical purposes like the development of more confident, creative, and competent translators?
- Is it realistic to expect a specialized skill like translating into a foreign language to be part of a translator's competence?
- Does automatization of translation processes increase with the evolution of the translator's competence?
- Can components of translator competence be identified for pedagogical intervention?

Regarding language teaching and translator training:

- What are the initial steps to take in filling the pedagogical gap in translation teaching?
- What is the best approach to translation skills instruction?
- Is it possible to identify the general and specialized components of translator competence as targets for pedagogical intervention and development?
- Can a data analysis method be developed that can be readily

applied to verbal report data on translation processes and that could be used in further experiments to deepen our understanding of translation processes?

- Can evidence be found in verbal report protocols to support or contradict the proposed social model of translation processes as a basis for a translation pedagogy?
- Can evidence be found in verbal report data to contribute to a tentative model of cognitive translation processing that could serve as a theoretical foundation for the development of a translation pedagogy?
- Can a model of translation processes serve as a model for translation instruction?

Regarding the difference between translation students and professional translators:

- How do the actual mental processes of translation students differ from the processes of professional translators?
- Is it possible to develop a model of translation processes to serve as a frame of reference for translator trainees and for translation teaching?
- Do professional translators and translation trainees use dictionaries the same way? Do they have systematic strategies for retrieving translation equivalents with the help of dictionaries? How are such lexicographic retrieval strategies integrated with other translation strategies?
- What processing phenomena can be identified in the verbal reports of translator and translator trainee subjects?
- Is there a clear distinction between the approaches that professional translators and novices take to foreign language translation?
- Is there evidence of differences between professionals and novices regarding their expectations of what their completed translation should be like and, if so, what are the repercussions of their expectation on translation processing?

Hans Peter Krings[4, 5]

- Regarding talk aloud protocols (Dechert/Sandrock): Are unproblematic passages even verbalized? Shouldn't we be using particularly tricky texts for these studies, so that we can have more significant data?
- Regarding Lörscher's studies in which no dictionaries were allowed: Do translators uncritically accept translation equivalents proposed by bilingual dictionaries, or do they use collocational or connotational knowledge (if they have it) to evaluate the proposed equivalents?
- Regarding Lörscher's written ST to oral TT studies: Do previously translated sections of the text influence how the translator processes the coming sections?
- Regarding Gerloff's studies: Do strategies and processes correspond 1-to-? (Krings: They do not.) Is there a distinction between strategic (controlled) and nonstrategic (automatic) aspects of text processing and if so, how can we determine them?
- Are the processes that occur during L1 to L2 translation different from the ones occurring during L2 to L1 translations? If so, how? (-> They are and it is mostly the order in which the processes occur, which differs. However, they are applied linearly in both cases.)
- How can we draw conclusions from these studies that are relevant to the way how translation skills are taught?
- Kring's hypothesis: Does the automaticity of processing increase with the development of translator competence? (-> Findings: The opposite is true; the professional translator is much more aware of which strategies they apply and why, has a higher level of conscious control = translation monitor.)
- Is the translation training too non-communicative (teacher assumes the role of both the client and the readership; the primary function is the testing of linguistic knowledge)?
- Do think-aloud protocols allow us better insight in the translation processes and strategies?
- Is there a distinction between automatically and spontaneously translated text elements and are they subject to deeper processing? (Findings confirm the latter.)
- Does the structure of the translation process depend on the type of translation problem (grammatical, semantic, stylistic as well as puns,

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metaphorical expressions and instances of literary finesse)?

Wolfgang Lörscher[6]

- What is the mental - not directly observable - translation process?
- Does every person who has a command of two or more languages (with various degrees of proficiency) also possess a rudimentary ability to mediate between these languages?
- Do translation strategies exist? And if so, which specific translation strategies are there?
- Could knowledge of those strategies help us teach translation better?
- Are the recognizable strategies of oral text production and the strategies operating within orally produced interlanguage specifically shaped under the conditions of oral translation?

Some general questions asked by scientists from other study fields[4]

- Wolfram Wills: How far does intuition play a role in translation? What kind of study/experiment is needed to determine an answer to this?
- Bianca Sherwood: Is TC innate in bilinguals? How do natural translation skills differ from trained translation skills?
- How can we come up with models that accurately describe our findings/theories in a way that does not exclude the interdependence between certain aspects/processes/factors?
- Can we reconstruct the translation processes?
- Do we need to look at empirical data collected during the translation process in order to get a proper understanding or should we concentrate on the results (i.e., the produced texts)?

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2 Hönig, Hans G. *Strategie der Übersetzung*. 2nd ed. Tübingen: Narr, 1984. Print.
3 Hönig, Hans G. *Übersetzen lernt man nicht durch Übersetzen*. Ed. Susanne Hagemann. Berlin: SAXA Verlag, 2011.
4 Kiraly, Donald C. *Pathways to Translation*. Kent: Kent State University Press, 1995. Print.
5 Krings, Hans P. "Translation Problems and Translation Strategies of Advanced German Learners of French (L2)." *Interlingual and Intercultural Communication*. Ed. Juliane House and Shoshana Blum-Kulka. Tübingen: Narr, 1986. 263-276. Print.
6 Lörscher, Wolfgang. *Translation Performance, Translaton Process, and Translation Strategies. A Psycholinguistic Investigation.* Tübingen: Narr, 1991. Print.