Chapter 14
The Role of Expertise in Peer Feedback Analysis:
Exploring Variables and Factors in a Translation Context

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ABSTRACT

Since Kiraly pointed out the beneficial role of collaboration in translation training, increasingly more attention has been paid to the potential benefits of peer collaboration. While Wang and Han studied translation trainees' explicit perceptions of any benefits resulting from peer feedback, the present contribution first investigates the role of translator's implicit perceptions of reviewer expertise in the effectiveness of a peer comment in a case study. It then inquires into the number and type of peer feedback comments in relation to whether the target language that is to be reviewed is the reviewer's L1 or L2. Here, two data sets are hypothesized to yield similar results: (1) a set of native and non-native reviewer comments and (2) the comments written by translators in a direct translation situation and in an inverse translation situation. Findings were surprising, however, and professional, methodological, and theoretical research implications for translation and revision competence models are suggested.

INTRODUCTION

In the preceding decades, many didactic and pedagogical studies have pointed out the beneficial effects of collaborative work in education on the development of various transferable skills (Tudge, 1990; Berg, 1999; Paulus, 1999; Tang & Tithecott, 1999; Wells, 1999; Scardamalia, 2001; Swain, Brooks, & Tocalli-Beller, 2002; Starke-Meyerring, 2008; van Zundert, Sluijsmans, & Van Merriënboer, 2010). Recently, various translation scholars, too, have argued for the introduction of collaborative projects in

translation training (Kiraly, 2001; González Davies, 2004; Muñoz Martín et al., 2007; Pavlović, 2007; Kenny, 2008; Lindgren, Sullivan, Deutschmann, & Steinvall, 2009; Risku & Dickinson, 2009; Zili, 2009; Desjardins, 2011; Huertas Barros, 2011; O'Brien, 2011; Babych, Hartley, Kageura, Thomas, & Utiyama, 2012; Gambier, 2012; and OPTIMALE WP 5.4, 2013a-c). The present empirical studies, however, will focus on the process of the student's writing *act* (Toury, 2012) and, in particular, the revision phase in a translation process, which has been brought to the foreground by Mossop (2010) and Robert (2012) and Robert, Remael, and Ureel (2016). Combining both revision with peer collaboration in a translation setting has already been broached by Wang and Han (2013), who investigated students' perceptions about receiving peer feedback on their own translation, giving feedback on a peer's translation and perusing other students' work. They found that the three activities combined were especially rewarding, appreciating the alternative approach to teacher-centered education, and judging the more passive events of perceiving reviews on their own work and scanning their peers' work as more beneficial than the more active engagement of giving feedback themselves to others. A more systematic approach to collaborative translation exercise in a complete course design is described in Vandepitte (2016), who covered learning outcomes, preparatory exercises, an introduction to peer feedback, and Ghent University students' activities, who not only collaborated with each other in class, but also at home online either with each other or with students from North Dakota State University at Fargo. And Vandepitte and Gonzales (2017) have shown how the introduction of translation by peers and their feedback may lead to deeper insight into writing for different audiences and, in particular, into such linguistic matters as how to formulate definitions.

For the present studies, in which the authors inquire into whether perceptions of language expertise play an important role in student peer feedback, participants - who all signed a form of consent with regard to participating in this study - were engaged in one or two main types of collaborative project. One of the projects was an at-home project where Ghent University master translation trainees gave each other written feedback on their translation work as peers (both in a direct and an inverse translation situation). This situation was already described in Vandepitte (2016) and in Lisaitė et al. (2016), who focused on the effect of student peer feedback on translation competence by applying a text-based PIE-method-based error analysis (Pre-selected Items Evaluation, Kockaert & Segers submitted) to the trainees' translations. The second project was an international Trans-Atlantic and Pacific Project (TAPP) collaboration, which provided Ghent University translation trainees with an international translation/editing setting. This project started in 1999 and more details about this project can be found in, for instance, Humbley, Maylath, Mousten, Vandepitte, and Veisblat (2005) and Vandepitte, Maylath, Mousten, Isohella, and Minacori (2016). For almost 20 years, it has connected cross-cultural virtual teams of writing, usability testing, and translation students at nearly 30 universities, 15 countries and 4 continents in a wide diversity of learning projects. Among other learning outcomes, TAPP-collaboration projects aim to prepare translation students to work in a context that adheres to industry norms BS EN-15038 (2006) and ISO 17100 (2015), involving the provision of quality assurance, including revision and review. It should be noted that the purpose of the peer feedback task was primarily didactic in a non-assessment situation, and it was provided by the students after an explicit, informative session on student feedback, teacher guidelines for which can be found in Vandepitte (2016). In order to provide a full circle feedback loop, which "usually includes a teacher who knows which skills are to be learned, and who can recognize and describe a fine performance, demonstrate a fine performance, and indicate how a poor performance can be improved" (Sadler, 1989, p. 120), students were stimulated to perform such activities in a *peer feedback* loop. From Sadler's explanation, different stages for such a peer feedback loop can be inferred. At the first stage,

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