

BRIAN MOSSOP

“Empirical studies of revision: what we know and need to know” (2007)

Keywords:

revision, empirical studies, draft translation, proofreading, experience on the field, quality check, unilingual revision

1. Author information

Brian Mossop is a well recognized contributor to the field of translation. He is a reviser and trainer at the Canadian Government’s translation service since almost 40 years. Currently, working also at the York University School of Translation in Toronto. Member of Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario, Canadian Association for Translation Studies and European Society for Translation Studies.

Main publications:

Mossop, B. 2007. *Revising and Editing for Translators*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.

2. Abstract

The article gives an insight to a practice of quality check from the point of view of empirical studies, which means an observation of this process, for example by the method of keystroke, commenting revisions and recording these analyses or simply by doing draft translation. The author divides his review into other-revision and self-revision cases.

3. Terminology

Unilingual revision - unilingual revision consists of reading over a text without comparing it to another one. The task is then to correct the language, grammar and syntax errors that may be found in the document in order to obtain a final copy.

Quality assurance – the act of maintaining translation services to ensure conformance to customer requirements or other specifications. QA is implemented by the translation service provider.

Proofreading - the final and crucial step before any document is sent to the printer. Proofreading allows one last verification intended to eliminate any typing or typography error that possibly escaped the eye during the revision process. Here, a professional's rigor to supply impeccable documentation is revealed.

4. Methodology

A methodology of Mossop study is comparative due to a division he makes in presenting separately the examples of self-revision and other-revision. The research is based on already existing reports in English and instead of presenting conclusions of the Canadian, it presents observations of its authors (it isn't an applied research).

5. Links with other publications on the subject:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Translation-quality_standards

Samuelson-Brown, G. *Practical Guide for Translators*. Multilingual Matters, 2004.

Nord, Ch. *Text Analysis in Translation*. Radopi, 2005.

6. Critical commentary

In my view, the article of Brian Mossop proves the importance of revision tasks and motivates to practice our skills. Although it seems that any professional in the field of translation has the same knowledge necessary to carry out the process of revision, empirical studies on subject show that in reality they deal with a task in many different ways, which of course has a enormous impact on the quality of the final product.

Translators have a tendency to neglect certain issues, while being focused on others (terminology, style, accuracy, text purpose etc.). Some make a revision in their mind and then type, the others write down their version and then make another one. The result of revision depends also on time spent on it and our experience on the text's subject.

To sum up, the study carried by Mossop don't give us any obvious answer for the question about the method, which could eliminate all types of errors committed during revision process. However, having read his work, we can start to deal with this challenge.

7. Quotations to remember the text by:

“Standard EN 15038 stipulates, in section 3.2.3 (Professional competences of revisers) that they "should have translating experience in the domain under consideration". This is a recommendation rather than a requirement ("should", not "shall"), perhaps reflecting the fact that in practice, translators are commonly asked to revise material in fields in which they do not in fact have translating experience.”

“self-reviser is familiar with the source text when the task begins; since the operation is on one's own work, the relationship to the translator is not a factor, and the temptation to substitute one's own translations or one's own approach to translation is not an issue.”

8. References:

Mossop, B. 2007. „Empirical studies of revision: what we know and need to know”. In: The Journal of Specialised Translation: Issue 08-July 2007. 5-20.