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Situatedness and Translation Training: Scaffolding Skills and Progressive Methods

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Abstract: Translation Studies have encompassed professional and contextual frameworks to study situatedness in translation training. Situatedness in translation training is associated with vocational and functionalist perspectives of TS. Situated Translation Learning (STL) has initiated various training approaches and practices planned for the translation students to be prepared for professional activities such as recruitment in translation agencies and universities. These training approaches and practices involve various practice-based proposals such as portfolios, translation tasks, and professional apprenticeships. The present paper is an attempt to analyze the principal arguments regarding scaffolding in translation learning, to highlight the situated translation experience at the University of Isfahan, Iran, and to demonstrate the significance of the progressive and reflective approaches in terms of situatedness in translation contexts. With this idea in mind, the main focus of this study is on the role of portfolios as inclusive scaffolding tools.

Keywords: situatedness, Situated Translation Learning, portfolios, scaffolding in translation learning

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1 Introduction

– *Situatedness in Translation Studies (TS)*

The present research paper attempts to analyze situatedness translation training practices and to scrutinize the potentials of translation training practices to attain progressive and productive learning progression, with particular attention to the progressive and reflective practices/methods. To guidepost situatedness in a form pertinent to TS, the first part of the article has dealt with the prime concepts and approaches to situatedness (e.g. translation situatedness approach, translation learning, translation cognition, and translation curriculum). Accordingly, the first part signposts the debates over the issues dealing with situated learning and situated cognition. The following parts comprise progressive learning and tackle the main arguments associated with the concept of ‘scaffolding’ (Wood et al. 1976) within TS from the progressive, critical and reflective prospects. The theoretical perspectives regarding the situated approaches are projected through making reference to the practice-based ingenious experience at the University of Isfahan, Iran, where progressive and reflective training approaches, specifically those highlighting the role of portfolios that have corroborated peculiarly as an effective practice.

Learning and training situatedness in TS are associated with the professional, functionalist, and realistic perspectives of translation practices (Kelly 2005; Kiraly 2005; Calvo 2015). With this in mind, a ‘vocationally-based syllabus’ (Calvo 2015) is regarded topmost; it is based on motivation and on its importance for students (Muñoz Martín 2010; Aparicio and Moneo 2014). According to Calvo (2015: 306), the functionalist [vocational] approaches ‘do not necessarily equal well-developed, meaningful learning approaches, as this rather depends on whether the teaching methods in place are teacher-centered, content-centered, or student-centered’.

Calvo (2015: 307) classifies three different paradigms for learning, namely; (i) ‘constructivism’, ‘social constructivism’, and ‘situated cognition’. They all indicate that learning is attained through generating meaning while experiencing things. Bearing this in mind, constructivism concentrates on how a learner interacts with the surrounding environment and develops his/her own knowledge. Social constructivism considers learning as a ‘collaborative process’ (Kiraly 2000). Likewise, situated cognition envisages that learning itself and the process of learning only make sense in the course of realistic contexts. Translation situatedness in the first instance, was addressed by Risku (2002). Translation situatedness was illustrated by at least two various examples clarifying that the concept was concerned with Translation Studies namely, (i) situated (translation) cognition regarding translators as ‘agents/players’ irrespective of their ‘psycholo-

gical and physical contexts’ and (ii) ‘situated translation’ (Risku 1998: 95) such as ‘epistemological relativism’, ‘real and professional translation’ and ‘the process of source, target situations’.

2 Situatedness Approaches/Constructs

– Translation

According to Risku (2002: 524), translation situatedness or situated translation (ST) is a response to the notion that arriving at an intrinsic and invariable meaning and truth regardless of the role of context or ideology is possible. Likewise, situated translation is associated with the functionalist (vocational) approaches to translation studies which consider translation as a ‘purposeful activity’ (Nord 2012). The functionalist approaches move beyond linguistic concerns; they entirely identify the professional reality of translation (Byrne 2014: 11). Therefore, the functionalist approaches allow for the integration of the situational factors in the description of translation. These factors could not be represented through the equivalence paradigm (Krüger and Piqueras 2015: 9). As contended by Calvo (2011), translation in a professional setting is a laborious activity to define due to its complicated and ‘ever-changing array of real-life translation-related roles’ (ibid.). Translation situatedness is associated with a particular translation proposal related to identifiable real-life translation roles.

ST is based on the notion that translation competence is dependent on ‘the situated development of intelligent solutions for particular problems arising in specific solutions’ (Risku 2004: 75 as cited in Krüger and Piqueras 2015). Translator competence is defined as ‘the ability to transition from a classroom community of practice to a professional community of practice through situated learning’ (Davis and Enríquez-Raido 2016: 2). Furthermore, ST subscribes to the microscopic view on the intricacies of translation. Given that one is willing to scrutinize translation in real situation, s/he must integrate ‘a host of such situational variables that would otherwise, remain hidden in more microscopic, text focused approaches to translation’ (Krüger and Piqueras 2015: 10). Scholars such as Gouadec (2007) and Risku (2009) have implemented situated translation in their ‘teaching contexts’. However, Risku (2009: 525) has made a distinction between situated cognition and situated translation. The former gained its weight from TS since translation comprises a significant instance of intricate solving expertise set in particular social situations, while the latter does not theoretically result in ‘cognitive psychology’. To put it in a nutshell, translation competence is subcategorized under the tenet of ST, which has to do with matching the microscopic

view (functionalist paradigm) and incorporating the relevant situational factors without becoming unduly complicated and ‘losing the explanatory power’ (ibid.). Moreover, Göpferich (2009: 20) has developed a TransComp translation competence model to master this balancing act.

Fig 1.: TransComp Translation Competence Model (Göpferich 2009: 20)

The TransComp project focuses on the following translation competences: (1) *strategic competence* which is subjected to motivational factors; (2) *translation routine activation competence* which involves the knowledge and skills required to be engaged in certain translation techniques, such as, translation shifts or standard transfer operations; (3) *tools and research competence* which includes skills associated with electronic tools and translation specific conventional tools such as encyclopedias, dictionaries either electronic or paper-based, text processing programs, internet search engines, and online corpora; (4) *communicative competence in at least two languages* which addresses both receptive competence and productive competence whereby the former understands the source text and the latter writes the target text (Göpferich 2008: 156); (5) *the domain competence* which mainly involves the subject matter knowledge for both understanding the source text and creating a particular target text in order to ensure high quality *in vivo* translation; and finally (6) *the psycho-motor competence* which entails psycho-motor skills, such as, computer assisted tools (e.g. computer keyboards).

– *Situated (Translation) Learning and Situated (Translation) Cognition*

Situated (translation) learning (SL) and cognition (SC) are applied through Situated Cognition Theory (Kirshner and Whitson 1997) in that both declarative and procedural knowledge ‘are built through synergic social interaction in a certain context’ (Davies and Enríquez-Raído 2016: 8). In doing so, learning must be situated in the social context. The declarative and procedural knowledge takes priority over theoretical knowledge. Situated translation learning is primarily associated with ‘learning by doing’ (Davis and Enríquez Raído 2016), and it is considered a collaborative activity. SL also aims to move away from the teacher-oriented approaches. For motivational reasons, situated learning is also related to the student-oriented methods; however, a perfect situated translation learning scenario, ‘a vocational content choice’ (Calvo 2015: 307), is applicable using the content-oriented method (Kiraly 2005). According to Lave (1988) and Brown et al. (1989), perfect learning is a function of the ‘activity, context, and culture’. This view is in contrast to the one that involves classroom activities which mainly concentrate on abstract and decontextualized events.

Situated translation learning focuses on two important concepts: ‘*community of practice*’ (CoP), in which translation students move from ‘novice’ at the peripheral stage through carrying out simpler and low risk tasks to the ‘expert’ level via participating in the sociocultural practice of the community and ‘*legitimate peripheral participation*’ (LPP) (Lave and Wenger 1991), in which the ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (Vygotsky 1987) is addressed and reduced through ‘scaffolding’ in a ‘community of practice’. Risku (2009), Varney (2009), and Neather (2012) have applied at least one of the two important concepts of situated translation learning. McLellan (1994) points out that the common traits found in all the successful models and approaches cover a set of six factors: ‘articulation’, ‘reflection’, ‘coaching’, ‘multiple practice’, ‘collaboration’, and ‘apprenticeship’. The two suggested concepts: CoP and LPP are associated with the ‘descriptive analysis of real life apprenticeships schemes’ (Lave and Wenger 1991). Furthermore, they have subsequently applied to other functional and vocational contexts. According to the situated translation learning, knowledge has to be presented authentically. Situated learning takes place when the learning is not deliberate (Davis and Enríquez Raído 2016: 8). That is to say, the translation students’ cognitive and metacognitive needs must arise from a task rather than a syllabus designed for a project within the institution. Consequently, social interaction and collaboration are prerequisites for learning. Hence, the teaching design and procedure must be modified in terms of the community of practice. Davis and Enríquez Raído (2016: 8) argued that ‘practice is foremost without letting go of the theoretical framework’. In doing so, Resnick (1987) considers this practice as a

'bridging apprenticeship' filling the gap between 'abstract learning in formal instruction' and real life application in the 'work environment'. Situated cognition has frequently left an impact on some translation paradigms such as functional translation, vocational approaches to translation studies (Risku 2002: Varney 2009), as well as collaborative learning (Varney 2009).

– *Curriculum*

Calvo (2011) pointed out that contextualized curriculum development requires an extensive analysis of a context whereby a particular curriculum has to be implemented. Such curriculum design is called 'situational analysis' (Kearns 2008), in which situational and local factors such as institutional, project, learner, and teacher related factors are emphasized. Situated curriculum includes some important parameters such as the students and their profile background, legislation in force, disciplinary background, socio-economic context, etc. In translation praxis, situated translation, situated learning/cognition and situated curriculum should be taken into account as the three leading levels when designing translator training. Situated translation consists of various methods planned to prepare translation students for real life situations and practices. Practically, vocational contents necessitate evaluation and assessment approaches which are 'conducive to significant active experiences' (Calvo 2015).

Calvo (2015) observes that three main elements must be taken into consideration for effective situated learning and evaluation/assessment in translation training contexts: (1) '*objectives and progression*' which focus on content development related to the professional practice and learning stage (Risku 2002); this stage aims to advance an appropriate scaffolding and control Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky 1987); (2) "*teaching and assessment*" which concentrate on 'targeting a specific model of professional expertise', collaborative practice (preparing translation students for intricate translation environments), 'peer-oriented learning', and 'student-centered strategies', and finally (3) '*practice and reflection*' which aim to encourage learning (learning by doing in different meaningful settings) to reflect the transferability of learning through what translation students are engaged with, and to focus on the reflection of the effective scaffolding aids. Some of the most outstanding scaffolding approaches aim to contextualize efficiency with regard to the situational curriculum issues.

3 Scaffolding in Translation Studies: Arguments

Cognitive psychology focuses on the concept of ‘scaffolding’ (Wood et al. 1976), and on how different scaffolding methods can be effective in optimizing the situatedness items in the curriculum. Scaffolding acts as an essential process in the progressive approach to learn professional translation; besides, it has been under the scrutiny of cognitive psychology, constructivists and situated cognition theories. Cognitivists consider scaffolding a temporary aid whereas constructivists view it as a ‘minimally guided approach’ in the learner’s progression to construct knowledge (Calvo 2015: 309). Situated cognition confines scaffolding to ‘minimum guidance, intervention or manipulation by the facilitator and seeking immersion in real settings’ (ibid.). Scaffolding is fundamentally the control of beginners by experts in their practice through a process moving from the easiest to the most intricate global tasks.

According to Davis (2004) and Nord (2005), the reflective and progressive approaches together with scaffolding seem necessary for learning. Nevertheless, Calvo (2011 and 2015) hesitates to concur on the cognitive, constructivist and situatedness-based philosophies regarding their suitability of supporting tasks concerning scaffolding. For instance, the dogmatically situated cognition theorists maintain that scaffolding as a concept might entail dissection of knowledge or skills to create sub-goals in a specified task or action. It may concentrate on certain difficulties in an intermittent and fragmentary fashion. Situated cognition appeals to a global natural setting, which urges learners to encounter the entire complexities involved. Therefore, task-based teaching methods fail to be applicable to situated cognition theories; instead the more expanded approach of project-based learning is testified.

Calvo (2015) introduces a number of principles that when observed, can lead to the compatibility of scaffolding with the situated cognition theories. Thus, scaffolding can be in line with the situated cognition philosophy if it equips translators with competence. Furthermore, scaffolding can be authenticated by the situated cognition theories if it meets the learners’ needs, and helps augment their autonomy as a skilled performer. Scaffolding places emphasis on uncomplicated issues and it gradually develops into complicated tasks. Another factor for crediting scaffolding is that translation-based tasks require a global translation context rather than separate statements or problems. Moreover, the assigned tasks should also enhance learning in action and activate knowledge in a reflective mode. Another point is the incorporation of the theoretical input as long as it scaffolds the translation processes, and consequently the activities that prepare a situation for a learner to interact with various situational circumstances in order to access transferability (ibid.).

As a matter of fact, numerous translation experts have adopted flexibility in relation to cognitive situatedness within the translation training contexts. For instance, Kiraly (2000) puts forward a social constructivist approach which makes use of collaborative and project-based training. He considers expertise and autonomy as ‘authentic reflective actions’, as elements for achieving progression. Nord (2005) projected authenticity to only the highest level; however, Kiraly (2000: 59) allows for the insertion of authentic global tasks in the introductory stages.

Kiraly’s pedagogy (2000) delineates specific scaffolding techniques that include teamwork, reflection and conversational activities sustained by global projects, along with the teacher’s role that involves providing scaffolding by assisting students to recognize the deficiencies of their expertise. Scaffolding for Kiraly (2000) is in line with situated cognition and socio-cognitive apprenticeship; it diverts from the task-based approaches. However, scaffolding based on Kiraly’s notions has been criticized by certain TS researchers due to the fact that his theories on scaffolding are based on his own personal experience as a professional translator and they might not be applicable to others (Robinson et al. 2008).

Regarding translator training, Vienne (1994) assumes that the translator trainers are practicing as professional translators, while they are full-time lecturers (e.g. in the Iranian universities). They are not allowed to work outside the teaching and researching domains in many institutions. This can be inhibitive for designing curriculum in this situated scheme. Non-profitable and commercial projects can constitute good learning materials for motivational or learning purposes. However, the applicability of non-profitable and commercial projects must be analyzed with caution since componential factors, such as; the student background in the curriculum setting may be a failure.

Calvo (2015) contends that a life-like professional experience is meaningful for a trainer. On the other hand, Gros (1995: 187), believes that a field-specific expertise does not automatically lead to rigorous and successful training. Gros (1995) maintains that numerous complexities are feasibly scaffolded by translation management systems, learned procedures, and explicit translation strategies.

Risku (2009) adopts a flexibility approach to scaffolding. Similar to progression and sequencing, the initial stages entail more scaffolding based on professional practices concerned with finding specific problem-solving methods or discovering rules and procedures (Kelly 2005). Accordingly, it can be concluded that scaffolding and progression are compatible with situated cognition.

Although project-based and task-based approaches have been contradictorily set against each other (Kelly 2005: 116), Calvo (2015) maintains that the two

approaches are complementary and that the disparity lies in the progression stages. She addresses a number of factors related to which assigned task can be evaluated as situated. Those factors are considered when a certain task displays a considerate professional sub-text, or when it is embedded in sufficient social, functional, communicative contextualization; besides, when a task is mapped to scaffold learning to yield a perceivable professional task or a sub-task. However, in the field of Translation Studies, a few studies are concerned with progression compared with those on foreign languages and on the role of scaffolding in translation teaching (Harden et al. 2006).

4 Situated Translation and Situated Cognition: Controversies

The arguments over translator training tend to fall within two significant domains which are sporadically addressed within the realm of translation studies: (1) *progression/reflection scaffolding* and (2) the possibility of striking a balance between ‘*specialized skills*’ and ‘*transferable skills*’ (Aparicio and Moneo 2005). This part tends to review the most common critical views leveled at situated cognition and situated translation within the domain of translation studies. Apparently, most of the arguments are elucidated once issues such as transferability and progression are taken into account.

According to the cognitive experts, human action can be exposed to various degrees of pattern theorization and description. Cognitive experts point out that situated cognition includes ‘the total rejection of these analytic theories’ (Calvo 2015: 321). In doing so, situated learning is undertaken in a real-world setting. It is assumed that SL is the real setting along with its complicated social realities (e.g. translation) which is varied and too complicated to be theorized, described, and even manipulated through an exhaustive attention to the ins and outs within an educational setting (Aparicio and Moneo 2014). Full disclosure to a community of practice is moreover observed as an ideal path to attain expertise. The notion that translation can be mastered within a job environment can be subdued through the significance of pattern theorization amidst the field of translation training.

According to Chesterman and Wagner (2014), there is a dispute between the vocational approaches to translation studies and the purely academic approaches. In this respect, the questions to be raised are how this sort of professional knowledge must be managed and what kind of theorization is required in order to advocate the vocational approaches. It is possible to expound a reflective learning path instead of subjecting learners to the entire analysis and to the

process of decision making from scratch if particular sub-processes can be recognized. The profile modelling and typecasting of an expert translator withstand generalization due to various real-world contexts and markets and the ‘ever-changing social environment’ (ibid) through which translation approaches and skills can be employed. Even though situated learning, cognition, and curriculum are considered as key components within the realm of TS, there remains a problem regarding which professional model or skill forms the most suitable and reliable reference. This may be due to the fact that the answer is definitely plural. In spite of the intricate nature of translation, an endeavor is made to determine particular and applicable patterns in various environments and to build up some generally approved concepts with regard to the process of translation. Keeping that in mind, some of these theories consider deconstructionism in translation studies with a focus on the context-dependence of translation. Fundamental control of the theoretical aspects may be viewed as an appropriate scaffolding support towards expertise within TS. Likewise, concept generalizability deals with transferability in that learners are encouraged to spot cognitive patterns and to apply them to various real-life contexts. According to Risku (2009) and Kelly (2005), some particular theories follow situatedness through reinforcing operational learning. These theories can still be viewed situated inasmuch as they are not presented abstractly. As noted earlier, the role of the trainer is vital with regard to the learner-oriented methods. In this light, Pym (2003: 491) reported that ‘translating is a process of producing and selecting between hypotheses, and this is in itself a mode of constant theorization. Translators are theorizing whenever they translate’.

The issue that learning methods cannot be applied in the most realistic contexts is another criticism levelled at situated cognition. To this effect, Aparicio and Moneo (2014: 193) make the following statement:

In education, it is not always possible to achieve the desirable degree of realism. On the other hand, some skills cannot be acquired in exactly the same situation in which they will ultimately be used. For example, think of the amount of airplanes that would crash if pilots had to learn to fly by actually piloting airplanes. Furthermore, learning certain skills requires the prior mastery of a general basic declarative knowledge that allows one to solve problems and to acquire procedures.

A growing number of researchers tend to refute professional mimics in support of real world project-oriented tasks whereas some other researchers are in favor of ‘simulated projects’, thanks to the scaffolding purposes. Simulated projects are able to expedite ‘a more progression-significant experience’ (Calvo 2015: 313) and consequently to provide the following potential merits: (1) an obvious scaffolding approach which can be specified through selecting simulated projects analyti-

cally; (2) learners who are encouraged to take on different responsibilities; (3) a number of realistic illustrations which allows for transferability; and (4) the selection of simulated projects which can simply be modified due to different group sizes.

Situated translation can be initiated within translation training contexts in various ways: by requesting briefs for every task of translation, utilizing translation technologies and applying computers or electronic devices in classroom settings, employing the quality control strategies, positioning translation and the task of translation in the market such as productivity and price, summoning professional translators and experts to share their experience and background with learners and carrying out real-world projects.

As Varney (2009) puts it, situated cognition has been under critique for evidently not assisting autonomous individual learning, thanks to its concentration on social learning and realities. Therefore, situated cognition opposes scaffolding since the aim of scaffolding is to pursue autonomous learning performance (individual progression). According to Kiraly (2000), autonomous individual learning performance ('individual learning empowerment') is crucial. Based on Kiraly's (2000) suggestions, autonomous individual learning and social learning are not mutually exclusive.

Last but not least, approaches such as those of vocational training have been allegedly under questioning in terms of what Dewey (2004) considers 'retrospective' (learners' induction through automating a productive role). Nonetheless, it is the task of a trainer to transfer training specialization. Dewey (2004) contends that:

Education may be conceived either retrospectively or prospectively. That is to say, it may be treated as a process of accommodating the future to the past or as a utilization of the past for a resource in a developing future. The former finds its standards and patterns in what has gone before. The mind may be regarded as a group of contents resulting from having certain things presented. In this case, the earlier presentation constitutes the material to which the later are to be assimilated. Emphasis upon the value of the early experience of immature beings is most important; especially because of the tendency to regard them as of little account.

The selection of retrospective and prospective approaches would help both autonomous individuals and social learners. They would permit professional translators to apply their knowledge in order to communicate with the surrounding environment through enhancing particular professional roles so as to become critical and reflective experts. In the field of Translation Studies, as Chouc and Calvo (2011) and Kearn (2008) pointed out, the argument over whether translation training must be specialized or transferrable on one hand; and vocational or

academic on the other hand has not been made crystal-clear. Upon adopting a vocational approach, one has to consider whether this training approach tends to be retrospective (special expert profile) or prospective (creative, transferrable, and critical) (Mayoral: 2001).

5 On Distinct Assessment Methods

Thanks to the various training contexts, the approaches associated with the role of the teacher in the classroom (teacher-oriented approaches) concentrate on the classroom practice which is based on the processes of work correction as noted by Kiraly (2005). The instructor takes up in Kiraly words those ‘who will take the next sentence’ (Nord 2012). These approaches, regardless of the content choices (either vocational or academic), indicate ‘a discouraging in-class scenario, reduced to authoritative reviews where the instructor identifies the error in the students’ drafts and provides correct solutions to the translation problems’ (Calvo 2015). By the same token, Kelly (2000: 165) contends that the practices carried out in the teacher-oriented translation classroom are against the students’ self-esteem since the majority of the comments are based on errors. There is a rapidly growing concern associated with the assessment of the methods in a classroom setting. The most common assessment methods and strategies carried out in the classroom contexts usually consist of written translation tests of up to 60 or 90 minutes with a text length between 150 and 500 (words) based on the students’ accessibility and permission to use whatever electronic devices, such as, the electronic dictionaries, glossaries, translation memory tools, and internet during the translation test (product-oriented format). According to Stewart et al. (2010), translation students are required to sit at intervals (specific distance from each other); whether students have access to different electronic devices forms a discouraging scenario in terms of the adapted pedagogic strategy and the availability of schools’ resources (e.g. computer labs). Didactically speaking, based on the mentioned situational conditions, this is the only way a teacher can ensure that translation mirrors the work of translation students whereby they have ‘acquired the subject matter and the linguistic knowledge’ (Calvo 2015: 315) since they are necessary for professional skills development. Alonso (2014) pointed out that the typical professional routine requires allotting more complicated organization such as computerized tools, networking with others, clients, project briefs, project managers, translators, etc. Skopos [functional] approaches to translation training have contributed to the present ‘contextualized briefs’ (another method of assessment). This method of assessment co-occurs in cooperation with the open-book examination formats. Realistic briefs (the position of translation students in the

process of translation through creating a context) can be found in texts based on the functional approaches to translation training. These contextualized briefs involve identifying the main topic to be rendered, the key-indices, and the clients' description. In doing so, these briefs lead to situated learning which encourages learners to engage in the terminological research intricacies and the various subject matters. This helps translation students concentrate on the cohesion strategy and the translation problem solving strategies in the course of their exam.

Thanks to the translation paradigm; the length of a text is vital whereby the translation tasks are basically carried out by heart and the texts comprise collocations of related and unrelated sentences (Nord 2005). According to the available literature on the pedagogic models of translation (Akbari and Segers 2017; Hurtado Albir 1999), there is little interest in establishing reliable and valid criteria as to the duration of a translation exercise (such as a source text) and the correlation to suitable time allocation (e.g. 90 minutes, 120 minutes, etc.).

According to the functional approach, the ideal length of a text tends to be 300 words per hour which is a prototypical presupposition for fully-fledged professional translators. Hébert-Malloch (2004) observed that the average length of a text tends to be 375 words per hour in an empirical study. In most cases, a text comprising 300 words in one page is carried out for a two-hour examination, which means 150 words for a period of sixty minutes. If more time is allotted for carrying out the translation tasks (e.g. one hour and a half for 300 words), it clearly implies that the translators are not fully trained (based on a progressive criterion) and that they have not received professional training. Nevertheless, if translators were interrogated about the average length of texts in projects they are carrying out, their replies may actually indicate that the translation exercises including 300 words are infrequent and that their projects are a lot larger than 300 words. Although a text including 300 words is perhaps a good indicator for evaluating particular problem solving skills based on the allotted time, it would fail to assess larger and realistic commissions (projects) having thousands of words. Therefore, a text including 300 words is refuted with regard to situated translation.

There exist several different substitutes for a one-page text for examination and classwork; the TS state of art is undergoing various research studies on task-based, project-based, and finally portfolio-based assessments and teaching proposals.

As noted by Davies (2004) and Nord (2005), learning through tasks is well-matched with the approaches of situatedness regarding the proper contextualization and 'meaningful professional realism' (Calvo 2015). With this idea in mind, learning through performing tasks is useful 'as a means of scaffolding' at the early

phases of a 'learning process' (Davis 2004; Nord 2005; Calvo 2015). According to Kelly (2005), as long as an entire student group is responsible for an authentic translation commission in a project-based learning, the group members may encounter real problems in realistic contexts. As the recent states of art have indicated, this approach has gained its popularity in TS (Risku 2009; Mitchell-Schuitevoerder 2010). Thanks to the learners' attitudes; learning through portfolios as a collection of items (Kelly 2005: 138) proves the learning has actually taken place. Apprenticeship and final projects are considered other situated learning methods. Work placements have been taken into account as situated contexts [settings] for trainees focusing on community of practice. The researcher's experiences at the University of Isfahan regarding work placements are different in most cases with regard to situatedness.

Final theses in the field of translation and interpreting studies take various formats as a result of the intensive regulations of the Ministry of Education responsible for the University of Isfahan namely: (i) traditional research theses with regard to translation-oriented topics such as finding and comparing proper equivalents through outdated methods and theories which are less situated, (ii) professional and specialized translation projects complemented with various quantitative and qualitative or mixed-method approaches, (iii) a reflective portfolio through choosing different examples of translation and interpreting projects [tasks] conducted in the course of analyzing the performances and (iv) a translation of a book written in English into plain Persian.

6 Towards a New Design for Situated Learning Models

Thanks to situated training; it is advisable that teachers acquire suitable training to access credible pedagogical and methodological venues open to them, and to select proper training in terms of the various situations. With this in mind, Davis and Enríquez-Raido (2016) recommend Richards and Rodgers' (2001) model (as a starting point) for syllabus planning so as to embody SL principles and forms. Therefore, the recommendation above supports the pedagogical and methodological frameworks in terms of approach, design and procedure iteratively as follows:

(A) Approach

Approach covers the teacher's perceptions concerning the nature of the subject and of teaching in terms of the translator and interpreter training and translation.

(B) Design

Design concentrates on the roles of translation students and teachers, the dynamics of the classroom, material covered during the class period, equipment applied in the classroom, and space distribution. According to the SL, real life practices can be amalgamated with hands-on sessions including progressive and reflective learning, tandem projects, peer monitoring, in-house training, ICT, and seminars and symposiums directed by professional keynote speakers. This design empowers the combination of the reflective and progressive aspects of Translation and Interpreting Studies (T&I) and the professional aspects of T&I.

(C) Procedure

Procedures allude to tasks and activities taken from appropriate practices in cognitive and pedagogy studies. *This paper addresses* procedures into 'pedagogical' or 'real life' which are to be amalgamated in a didactic sequence regarding Nunan's division (1989). Pedagogical procedures provide and reinforce suitable reflections that empower the appropriate and efficacious performance of real life practices and procedures. For example, these pedagogical procedures concentrate on moving from 'guided sight translation' (peer-helping with text preparation) to individual sight translation with no text preparation.

Situated learning in TS and interpreting studies (IS) can be addressed through considering different aspects of procedures comprising 'top-down and bottom-up procedures', 'task-based learning', 'project-based learning', and 'problem-based learning' or 'case analyses' (Davis and Enríquez-Raido 2016: 9). Besides, in particular, Collins et al., (1989) proposed the methods of situated learning which occupy a central stage in SL. The proposed method comprises:

(I) Modeling

This strategy includes 'an expert demonstrating a task' (demonstrating a thinking process) so that learners can benefit from the profound understanding of how it is

carried out. Modeling is based on the previous experience; likewise, it allows learners to build their ‘mental conceptual model of the specific process’ (Brown et al. 1989).

(II) Coaching

This strategy is applied when the ‘subject matter expert’ permits learners to carry out a task on the concept in question and consequently offers them some feedback on their performance. Coaching assists and supports the cognitive activities of learners involving scaffolding. Coaching also enables learners to perceive what they do differently in order to sharpen their skills and to acquire the means that help them advance their skills to the next level.

(III) Scaffolding

Scaffolding alludes to the ‘act of implementing methods’ that serves to enhance the learners’ educational experiences, such as, the various activities, group tasks, and games. During the scaffolding process, an instructor checks the learners and evaluates them in terms of their acquired knowledge and skills.

(IV) Articulation

Articulation takes place once an instructor encourages learners to articulate what they know about a concept and what they did during the problem solving process. Bearing this idea in mind, the learners are taught to verbalize the results of reflections. The key components in this strategy are to acquire learning and critical thinking.

(V) Reflection

This strategy empowers learners to compare their ‘problem solving skills’ to those of their peers. It concentrates on self-analysis and assessment. For instance, the instructor analyzes a learner performance focusing on how s/he handles and solves a problem and also on how an expert solves the problem accordingly. Then, the instructor checks the differences between these two groups concentrating on how they solve the problems.

(VI) Exploration

Exploration occurs when learners are assisted to solve problems on their own. It empowers learners to form and test their own hypotheses, and instructs them on the new strategies which they can apply to explore problems. This strategy enables learners to contextualize the problems in a real-world setting (Situatd Cognition).

7 Our Experience through Situated Learning at the University of Isfahan

To date, the learners' cohorts at the Bachelor of Arts at Iranian Universities tend to be large. The researcher has been teaching BA level translation students whose age range is between 18-26 years. In this respect, most student groups at the University of Isfahan consist of 30–50 students at the BA levels (English Language and Teaching, English Literature, and Translation Studies). The number of students and the various factors, such as, the curriculum factors and the availability of technology resources, etc. determine planning and conducting courses. At the University of Isfahan, students have access to the high speed internet, computers, and some software licenses such as SDL Trados, SDL Multi-term, and MemoQ as well as high-ranking academic profiles from secondary education. The translation study group at the University of Isfahan has been planning translation study courses for the BA level for 17 years, for the MA level for 10 years, and for the PhD level for 4 years. The teaching staff groups including lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors and professors are rather middle-aged: 35 to 55 years old, on average and also the teaching staff groups (including part-time and full time lecturers) are familiar with the translation training courses. Scholars became part time lecturers in the Faculty of Foreign Languages as professionals in translation research methods and interpreting studies and literary translation. The teaching staff has been trained at the Iranian Universities such as the University of Isfahan, Allame Tabataba'ei University, Tarbiat Modares University, and the University of Tehran as well as the International universities such as Cambridge University, University of Bristol, University of Auckland, and Monash University. Having undergone specific and particular translator training affects how one perceives training practice. Team-working and peer-working among the teaching staff are crucial to promote their knowledge on training translation. Most of the researchers carry out a number of collaborative teaching projects [tasks] and they have complied with our colleagues on curriculum sequencing with

regard to ‘curriculum alignment’ (Kelly 2005). Regarding the situated approaches (translation situatedness, leaning and cognitive situatedness, and curriculum situatedness), several methods are introduced at the University of Isfahan: (1) practice-based methods through conducting different projects, tasks, and portfolios, (2) homework and in-house assignments, (3) functional and vocationally led situated translation training approaches, (4) technological translation tools, such as, SDL Trados, SDL Multi-term, and MemoQ, (5) curriculum-based modules on professional translation teaching, (6) an annual Research Week panel inviting both professional translator researchers and translation students, (7) a work placement scheme and (8) the formats of final theses in terms of situated options. To the high honor of the institution, the translation curriculum gets positive feedback from the translation students through ‘*Golestan Academic Portal*’ on annual basis. However, the staff is still confronted with some challenges, such as, the students’ group size. In this respect, the introduction of fifteen-student workshop format is suggested for 50 % of the contact hours (Kelly 2005; Calvo 2015), which has improved the situation of the group size. The number of students in one classroom or workshop constitutes a challenge to some situated methods. For instance, the University of Isfahan is obliged to set up 100 work placements in a city having only 10 official translation agencies (e.g. Basirat, Mostajabi, Darian, Darya, etc.). The colleagues at the University of Isfahan have resolved the issue by some ancillary solutions in terms of work placement through: (1) setting up some virtual (on-line) work placements at the official translation companies or Language Service Providers (LSPs) outside Isfahan Province, such as, Tehran (University of Tehran, Allame Tabataba’ei University) and Mashhad (Ferdowsi University) where translation experts and professional evaluators provide translation students with positive and instructive comments and feedback on their performance, and (2) setting up some work placements in non-translation companies, such as, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, research groups, and non-governmental companies. With this in mind, our experience indicates that sometimes a theoretical work placement is not the most effective asset for learning. This is due to the fact that it is associated with the corporate attitude towards learners; therefore, the University of Isfahan has tended to set up a module system for work placements tutored by translation studies professors (mostly carried out by lecturers and assistant professors). As long as translation students are sometimes engaged in non-governmental companies or in agencies with little or no liability towards learners, it is quite significant to maintain a translation expert. Also, keeping a close track of the translation students’ in-house experience is necessary; one needs to consider the list of appropriate non-governmental companies and agencies that have commitments towards students.

The number of students at the University of Isfahan can have a high impact on the degree of authenticity to be attained. With respect to the English section, two large group shifts are advised consisting of 100 translation students. Finding appropriate, real-world situated tasks and projects is extremely arduous regarding the two large group shifts; however, it is understood that this may be demanding regarding the ‘source real-life material’ (Calvo 2015) which is appropriate to the background of every translation student. In the translation modules (English to Persian) in the final year, the researchers of this article applied a collection of realistic documents collected by them and other translation researchers and scholars. This responds to a reflective concentration on various facets of the translation process. Concerning confidentiality and classifying real-world projects after analyzing their readability (difficulty), minor changes are introduced, such as, replacing real identities with the fictitious ones in the administrative projects. As soon as the minor changes are implemented, the materials can be illustrated realistically. Also, skopos is attained or deduced to set up the positioning of translation students toward the translation process. In this vein, applying skopos is uncomplicated at the very beginning, such as, considering the purpose of translation, client, etc. and it becomes more intricate with the final year (fourth year). This is due to the fact that skopos reproduces real client (audience) descriptions which may involve ‘technical specifications for translation specific software’ (Calvo 2015: 318). The current research team members work as commissioners and the translation students interact with them via the social network facilities, such as, Email, WhatsApp, and Telegram since the team is willing to communicate with the real clients through the professional communication skills. Real query and answer templates are used, along with schedules and invoices as managerial tools. Translation students play three roles in these collaborative projects: (1) translators, (2) revisers and (3) project managers. According to the learning stage, the real-world projects normally range between 500 and 6000 words (a group of 5 students). The students analyze every project and present their translations prior to their peers. Also, individual projects are conducted under similar circumstances. Moreover, scaffolding tasks are also integrated into the following phases to help students concentrate on certain difficulties in the course of the learning process. These scaffolding tasks acknowledged as ‘situated’ ones involve: (1) the identification of translation purposes based on different skopos; (2) the identification of the text genre and micro-macro-textual factors; (3) the identification of the tasks conflicting word-for-word translation (one-to-one correspondence) (Calvo and Ortega 2010); (4) the identification of certain translation readabilities (difficulties) and limitations; (5) the revision of tasks, such as, the identification of sources of errors, and (6) the management of the quality assurance of translation tasks. In order to empower learners to activate their manage-

rial skills, time pressure with deadline is of paramount importance. According to Risku (2009), the managerial skills can be conveyed from one real context to another with ‘no difficulty’, besides; they have additional ‘motivational value’ over the learning experience of the students (ibid.). Consequently, during the last 5 years, the research team at the University of Isfahan with the assistance of Irandoc (academic portal storing theses) has prosperously compiled situated theses which recommend to the students the option between more conventional research projects and real-life (situated) translation projects.

8 The Role of Portfolio in Situated Translation Learning

According to Rico (2010), a portfolio as an educational tool is a collection of items selected by the learners; it is associated with their progression. Applying a portfolio as an essential part of education is beneficial to translation learning as noted by Kelly (2005) and Rico (2010). Calvo (2015: 319) reported that translators use portfolios in a professional fashion at Proz.com to upload their projects and to exhibit the quality of their projects. In this respect, the progressive portfolio consists of self, process, and product assessments together with learning context assessment (ibid.). Nevertheless, as Pozo (2010) contended, portfolio as a professional artefact cannot be transposed to training settings without considering suitable pedagogical adaptations.

Pires Pereira et al., (2016: 615) argue that the portfolio ‘cross-scaffold all the learning achieved by rendering it tangible and thus monitorable for the learner’. Darling (2001: 111) maintains that:

A portfolio is a narrative that tells a coherent story of your learning experience in the program, and highlights thoughtful reflection on, and analysis of, those experiences. It is not simply an accumulation of pieces and products; it is an unfolding of your understanding about teaching and learning, and about your development as a professional.

The learners and teachers are the chief players for theorizing and meaning they make via portfolios. A ‘learning portfolio’ (as a combination of self-assessment, process and product assessments, and learning context assessment) is supposed to be a tool which supports ‘the construction of teachers’ specialized reflective cognition and practical epistemology’ (Zeichner and Wray 2001; Pires Pereira et al. 2016: 617). In line with Darling, Pozo (2010) clarifies portfolios as: (1) ‘*a constructivist tool*’ focusing on experiential learning from prior knowledge; (2) ‘*an active method*’ that focusing on the process of formative assessment and

making learning meaningful; (3) ‘a *theoretical action*’ concentrating on meaningful theorization (setting up factors for deciding what is worth reflecting upon (Calvo 2015); (4) ‘a *reflective aid*’ emphasizing the decision making process; and (5) a tool bridging the gap between academic and individual knowledge. The role of portfolio in learning praxis is that it compensates for some of the situated cognition’s bottlenecks and conventional learning environment. For instance, individual learning styles can be recognized as addressing portfolio in a collaborative environment. This strikes a balance between theorization and practical procedure. Portfolio visualizes global processes without skipping details while it develops reflective/progressive learning through enhancing transferable skills and strategies. Pereira et al., (2016: 619), illustrate the portfolio process in the following figure:

Fig 2: Portfolio Process (Pires Pereira et al. 2016: 619)

As a matter of fact, portfolios are suitably handled if they have some bottlenecks. Sometimes, students encounter some problems regarding their progress and failure. In this respect, portfolios can simply the task; they become ‘propaganda’ (Calvo 2015) for their progress to get higher results [scores]. No valid or reliable criteria regarding the grading system except for the holistic system have been established for portfolios (Kelly 2005). The analytic scoring method or the assessment rubrics may be another option to measure portfolios; however, the outcomes are subjective and they vary remarkably from one learner to another.

We apply portfolios on the final year, at the BA level (translation module) for the following reasons: (1) the translation students have to email or hand in their translation reports (assignments) on weekly basis in the form of peer-working or individual working and (2) each translation student must select one translation output to conduct a progressive analysis on what the selected sample illustrates

with regard to personal learning. The selected translation output is a very good indicator of their learning progress; however, we suggest that the translation students concentrate on their weakest translation skills and identify the problems they face in the course of translating. This leads translation students to contemplate how they have learnt skills and strategies to cope with the translation problems and mistakes. The last portfolio is flexible; it is based on its form/structure. However, we recommend that translation students take the following issues into account: the revised translation output must be identified with track-changes through recommended amendments; the final report clarifies what they have selected as a particular work sample; and the fact that their level of expertise would reinforce their decision making and achievements towards learning outcomes. The learning portfolio does not project the performance of professional translation regarding situated learning. Based on the researchers' experiences, reflective analysis is a reliable and authentic tool for scaffolding learning. For the moment, a portfolio is considered a situated tool for translation professionals at the University of Isfahan and it is acknowledged as a new option of scaffolding in translation teaching.

9 Concluding Remarks

Situated translation and cognition are both associated with pre-decision making analysis. Situated cognition is related to the methods of learning on the one hand; situated translation alludes to translation methods, on the other hand. Since a model of translation professional is taken up as a vocational and situated approach, it can be organized both retrospectively and prospectively. The former refers to a particular existing profile; while the latter pays much attention to transferable and reflexive/progressive social changes. Theories in the domain of situated cognition originate from practice-based learning used in real-world contexts and apprenticeship schemes. Situated cognition simplifies an interaction in community of practice and clarifies the management situations from the easiest to the most intricate tasks. The central argument between situated translation and situated cognition can be summarized into three major components: scaffolding, progression, and process. As far as situated cognition is concerned, in terms of work placements, the learning processes are illustrated in a real-world setting and practice. Progression is considered a natural move from the easiest to the most complicate tasks; consequently, scaffolding is associated with the minimum instruction required to control such tasks naturally. The scaffolding methods delineate how a learner learns on the job and how much of his/her job is going to be applied in instructional settings. Never-

theless, going beyond the constructivist approach, our experience as professional evaluators and instructors direct us to comprehensively believe that there is a much growing concern regarding scaffolding methods (progressive and reflective methods) in translation training contexts. Thanks to our innovative and freshly situated experience, we come to the conclusion that scaffolding is a particular component with regard to meaningful learning; it calls for further research in the realm of TS. Based on the observation of our research team at the University of Isfahan, various training approaches and activities (covering different degrees of scaffolding and situatedness) have been proposed and practiced. Thus, it is our conviction that the application of portfolios within the classroom settings will empower situatedness and scaffolding potentials. Also, we strongly believe that the application of portfolios is a successful tool for demonstrating how real-world activities can be exposed to learning settings and conversely how learning through scaffolding methods can be considered as powerful propulsion for professional training in real-world settings.

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