

Teaching Chinese Language in the USA: Challenges and Strategies

在美国教授汉语文：挑战与对策

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Abstract

Chinese language teaching and learning in the USA has been under the heavy affect by the borrowing of L2 theories and practice from outside of China via translation or interpretation (T&I), and exported again to outside of China. Through such re-translation and re-interpretation, the truthful understanding of how an additional language other than the mother tongue should be learnt and taught is unfortunately lost. One issue of T&I is that of double-learning or even multilearning, thus reducing the efficiency of language learning to much less than 50%. The other is that T&I cultivate interlanguages that are errors very difficult to eliminate. By analysing the causes and sources of such by-products, this article aims at proposing an understanding of what T&I has really achieved in the communication between different language users and in their learning of additional languages. Such challenges can be easily remedied once fully understood.

Keywords: translation, interpretation, double-learning, interlanguage, efficiency.

汉语文在美国的教学深受通过翻译借自中国以外理论与实践的影响，而此种借用又被重翻重译到外国用于汉语文教学。这种重翻重译的结果使得对非母语教学的真实理解不幸流失。一个问题是重复学习，甚至多重重复学习，致使语言学习效率远低于50%。另一个就是造就了灾难消除的语言错误，即被称作“介语”²的非此非彼的言语。通过分析这两种副产品的起因及来源，本文旨在揭示不同语言的使用者之间交流及语言学习过程中翻译的真实作用。这类挑战一经认识到，也不难克服。

关键词: 笔译，口译，重复学习，介语，效率。

Introduction

Traduttore, traditore! Translation is at best only a pis aller for the original—approximation rather than identification (L. A. Willoughby, in Rüdénberg and Pearl 1955, 11), as there is no synonymy between words of different languages (Lyons 1968, 458). Therefore, as a technique of teaching meaning, translation is in the long run unsound (Wilkins 1974-72, 130). However, there are cases where translation has to be used, for example, if the students fail to understand, the teacher may ask for a confirmatory translation or translate briefly and move on (Alexander, Kingsbury, and Vincent 1975, 16). The fact is, there is usually no full equivalence through translation (Samovar, Porter, and Stefani 2009-1998, 132). Used in L2 instruction, the efficiency and effectiveness of translation has to be viewed with care. Borrowing ideas from the history of translation and language learning, this article will analyse in detail when translation has a spot to be applied in L2 instruction, and when translation is better stopped as soon as possible towards the tops. The true nature of translation or interpretation, or of the translated knowledge or skills, are also explored. Once an L2 is translated into L1, the translated knowledge is either known already in L1, which provides no new information at all but incurs double-learning in L1 already and in L2 later, or unknown, which creates new words or new

¹ A shorter version of the same was published in 2015 (Feng 冯睿 and Xu 徐弘 2015).

² Interlanguage is better translated into Chinese as “介语” instead of the commonly used “中介语” since an interlanguage is never exactly right in the “middle”, but only “between” languages.

ideas in *L1*, thus proving that *L2* is either better or more advanced, conceptually, linguistically or pragmatically.

China's First Prolific Translator of Western Fiction

With over 180 titles linked to a single name, this translator has been deemed the first prolific translator of western literature in China (Gao 2003), even though he himself had no firsthand knowledge of any foreign language. His name is Lin Shu, or Lin Qinnan (1852-1924). Later research revealed that his translations have many errors, or he had many languages originally mistranslated. The question remaining unanswered or even unanswerable is: how come a person with no knowledge of a foreign language is able to become a prolific translator of the unknown languages?

Things happen doubly, as can be seen in the following historical fact.

A Best-Seller on Formosa's History and Geography

The island of Taiwan was formerly named Formosa, from the Portuguese which means 'beautiful' (*formosa* n.d.). The beautiful island of Taiwan and its 'language', i.e., Formosan, however, was introduced to London in the early 1700s by an impostor, as quoted below:

In the early 1700s, all London was abuzz with talk of a mysterious stranger, a young man named George Psalmanazar. He had arrived from what was to most Englishmen a fantastical land: the island of Formosa (now Taiwan), off the coast of China. Oxford University engaged Psalmanazar to teach the island's language; a few years later he translated the Bible into Formosan, then wrote a book—an immediate best-seller—on Formosa's history and geography. English royalty wined and dined the young man, and everywhere he went he entertained his hosts with wondrous stories of his homeland, and its bizarre customs.

After Psalmanazar died, however, his will revealed that he was in fact merely a Frenchman with a rich imagination. Everything he had said about Formosa—its alphabet, its language, its literature, its entire culture—he had invented. He had built on the English public's ignorance of the place to concoct an elaborate story that fulfilled their desire for the exotic and strange (Greene and Elffers 1998, 267-268).

Either Psalmanazar ever visited Taiwan or spoke any Taiwanese or Formosan is what we may never be able to find out. When we juxtapose and view the two anecdotes above, we may wonder at the following similarities. Lin 'translated' the unknown languages with errors unknown to the readers, to the known language users, and was accepted as a prolific translator of the unknown languages. Psalmanazar 'invented' the unknown language to the known language users and was accepted by Oxford University to be a teacher of the unknown language. One explanation is or was provided:

British culture's rigid control of people's dangerous dreams gave him the perfect opportunity to exploit their fantasy (Greene and Elffers 1998, 267-268).

It is the fantasy of the people, or of some people if not all, that is being exploited, especially in a culture with rigid control of its people's dangerous dreams. Both, as they introduced unknown languages to exploit the fantasy of the people, especially people under rigid

control of their dangerous dreams, are as a matter of fact translators and interpreters. The question we may now ask is: what are translators and interpreters actually doing, then?

Translator or Interpreter, Nay, Translator-cum-Learner

Most of the translators or interpreters are language learners, or were language learners themselves. As language learners, they can be described as three BI's, at least, if they aspire to become qualified translators or interpreters. The three BI's are Bilinguals, referring to speech or oral language, Biliterates, referring to the written language, and Biculturals, referring to them having lived in at least two cultures to a certain level of understanding or acculturation. In other words, they have to reach certain level of cultural literacy and oracy in at least two languages. Despite the three BI's, there are only two categories of translators or interpreters: they are either born, which means, preferably, in a family where a mother speaks one tongue while the father speaks another, the family of true bilinguals, or they are made, which means, in most cases, they acquire one language, the mother tongue or *L1*, earlier than the learning of another or an additional language, *L2*, at a later age and stage in life. The conclusion is that the two languages have to be acquired or learned simultaneously or consecutively, and more often than not, reaching two different proficiencies.

Target Language or Mother Tongue (L1), Usually

In most of the translations or interpretations, the target language to be translated into is usually the mother tongue or *L1*. There are only four ways to learn one's mother tongue or *L1*, code-named *MintoM* or *LintoL1*, mother tongue (*L1*) heard or read is turned into the same mother tongue speakable or writable.

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| <i>L1</i> or <i>M</i> | into <i>S</i> | into <i>W</i> |
| from <i>H</i> | ^{<i>H</i>} <i>L1</i> ^{<i>S</i>} | ^{<i>H</i>} <i>L1</i> _{<i>w</i>} |
| from <i>R</i> | _{<i>R</i>} <i>L1</i> ^{<i>S</i>} | _{<i>R</i>} <i>L1</i> _{<i>w</i>} |

Table 1 Learning the L1, 4 cases.

In the learning or acquisition of the mother tongue, translation and interpretation happen all the time, since even a native speaker needs to turn what is heard or read into whatever he or she understands in his or her own native language or mother tongue, then, if necessary, turns his or her thoughts, or notions (Lin 林语堂 1982-30), mostly in the native language or mother tongue, into a spoken or a written form of the same language.

Source Language or Second Language (L2), Usually

In the process of translation or interpretation, the source language or *L2*, as usual, has to be learned for most of the translators or interpreters, if they could not have the fortune to be born and to grow up in a multilingual family. Before they are able to translate or interpret, there are, again, only four ways to learn a source language or *L2*, code-named *SintoS* or *L2intoL2*, the source language (*L2*) heard or read is turned into the same source language speakable or writable.

| | | |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>L2</i> | into <i>S</i> | into <i>W</i> |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|

| | | |
|----------|-------------|-------------|
| from H | ${}^H L2^S$ | ${}^H L2_w$ |
| from R | ${}_R L2^S$ | ${}_R L2_w$ |

Table 2 Learning the $L2$, 4 cases.

By the same token as in the learning of the $L1$, translation and interpretation happen all the time, as a language learner needs to turn what is heard or read into whatever he or she understands in the learned language $L2$, instead of in his or her own native language $L1$, then, if necessary, turns his or her thoughts or notions, mostly in the learned language $L2$, into a spoken or a written form of the same learned language $L2$.

L2-Translation- L1, or (L1-Translation- L2), in the Learning Process

However, in the learning of an additional language, the process is usually contrastively different from that of the learning of the $L1$, or, from an ‘ideal’ process of the learning of the $L2$, when translation and interpretation is interfaced or added, as shown in the following table.

| $L2$ | into $S2$ | into $W2$ |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| from $H2$ | ${}^H L2 > L1 > L2^S$ | ${}^H L2 > L1 > L2_w$ |
| from $R2$ | ${}_R L2 > L1 > L2^S$ | ${}_R L2 > L1 > L2_w$ |

Table 3 $L1$ interfaced learning, 4 cases.

Obviously, $L1$ is standing between input from $L2$ and output of $L2$, forming interference, for lack of a better term, as indicated in the next section. In other words, translation and interpretation creates an interface, which is, more likely than not, errors, between input and output of the language being learned, though helping at the very beginning for novice language learners.

Interlanguage (IL)

An interlanguage (IL), which has been very well researched since the 70s, is surely neither the $L1$ nor the $L2$, despite the fact that most of the second language learners, including translator-cum-learner, use an interlanguage IL for a very long period. Therefore, it is better avoided at the earliest possible time, since an interlanguage is at best a nonsensical language, at worst is simply erroneous. In order to avoid IL , the best plausible process or direction is either $SintoS$ or $MintoM$, as shown in Tables 1 and 2, but never $SintoM$, nor $MintoS$, if possible, which are more applicable in translation and interpretation after, not before, two languages at least, have been mastered to a comparable proficiency, rather than in the learning of languages.

Some researchers tend to give IL a very good name, calling it a systematic transition in any language learning. That is not acceptable from the point of view of language learning except for some research, since the use of a language is either right or wrong, though tolerance can be exerted on some people to take errors, but only to certain extent or percentage. Usually, especially to most native ears, errors are not tolerable, especially for the speech coming out of the mouth of a non-native speaker. Now let us turn to how many errors are possible when the $L1$ is interfaced.

Possible errors in 2 languages

Errors can be found in either *L1* or *L2*, which is a fact unavoidable. Those two errors can be termed *L1*-errors, referring to those made by native speakers of the *L1* as a mother tongue, and *L2*-errors, referring to those made by native speakers of the *L2* as a mother tongue. In other words, *L1*-errors and *L2*-errors can be termed ‘native-speaker errors’, or ‘mother tongue speaker errors’, or ‘natural errors’.

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> |
| Errors (the wrong) | + | + |
| Standard (the right) | + | + |

Table 4 2 kinds of errors for a learner

When two languages are being learned and used, and one is being learned with the help of the other, there will be six possibilities that errors will sure occur, including two ‘native speaker errors’, and four other errors that may affect *L2*, and to some extent, even, *L1*, three of which are likely caused by *L1*. The fourth error, marked as ? *L2* ? *L1* in Table 5, are those even researchers have not found out the causes yet. Can we avoid them?

| Languages | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> | <i>L1</i> on <i>L2</i> | <i>L2</i> on <i>L1</i> | <i>L2</i> cum <i>L1</i> | ? <i>L2</i> ? <i>L1</i> |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 6 Errors (the wrong) | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Noise from | only | only | more <i>L1</i> | more <i>L2</i> | both | unsure |
| Errors in | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> | more <i>L2</i> | more <i>L1</i> | both | both |

Table 5 Six kinds of errors when there are only 2 languages

The answer is a yes and no, since in the use of any languages, errors cannot be completely avoided but only limited, but how even can we limit errors?

There is a way, and one way only.

Using a horizontal model of thinking, two languages can only move in four possible directions combined. When both move left or right, there might be overlaps, *L2* on *L1*, or *L1* on *L2*. The overlaps and the overlaps only, can be translated and/or interpreted, but the overlaps can also be at the same time interference by each other, creating *IL* or more accurately, errors. When both move towards each other, there will be more overlaps, making more possible translations or interpretations, as well as more *IL* or errors. When both move away from each other, there will be fewer overlaps, making less *IL* and fewer translations and interpretations. Obviously, separation is ideal in the learning of each language, with no or minimal interference or *IL* or errors.

| Movements | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> |
|------------|-----------|-----------|
| 2 left | ← | ← |
| 2 right | → | → |
| 2 opposite | → | ← |

| | | |
|------------|---|---|
| 2 separate | ← | → |
|------------|---|---|

Table 6 Left or Right?

An easy and simple conclusion drawn from Table 6 is: separation for learning languages, opposition or overlapping for translation and interpretation. To better understand this conclusion, let us explore a bit more on *IL* or errors.

More on IL and translation or interpretation

Thinking mathematically, we can reasonably conclude that there are only four categories of, or styles of, *IL*, or *IL*-related errors, based on two languages.

| | | | | |
|----------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| $n = 2$ | L1 over L2 | L2 versus L1 | L2 over L1 | ? L2 ? L1 |
| Interlanguages | + | + | + | + |

Table 7 Four Interlanguages $I_n = 4C(n, 2) = 2n(n-1)$, when $n=2$.

In other words, there are four ways to create *IL*-related errors when there are only two languages. If three languages are involved, there will be twelve ways to create errors, and four, twenty-four. Obviously, *IL* grows by leaps and bounds and should be limited as much and early as possible. This calculation excludes ‘native speaker errors’.

When *IL* is standing between *L1* and *L2*, let us look at the following table to explore how translation and interpretation are learned or trained. In this table, oracy refers to spoken speech, and literacy refers to written language. It is obvious that language learning and translation/interpretation are exactly opposite in directions, on top of the fact that translation and interpretation also incur more *IL* or errors because of the interfacing.

IL, Translation, and Interpretation

| L2 or L1 | | into L2 | | into L1 | |
|----------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | Oracy | Literacy | Oracy | Literacy |
| from L2 | O | ${}^H L2^S$ | ${}^H L2_w$ | ${}^H L2 > IL > L1^S$ | ${}^H L2 > IL > L1_w$ |
| | L | ${}_R L2^S$ | ${}_R L2_w$ | ${}_R L2 > IL > L1^S$ | ${}_R L2 > IL > L1_w$ |
| from L1 | O | ${}^H L1 > IL > L2^S$ | ${}^H L1 > IL > L2_w$ | ${}^H L1^S$ | ${}^H L1_w$ |
| | L | ${}_R L1 > IL > L2^S$ | ${}_R L1 > IL > L2_w$ | ${}_R L1^S$ | ${}_R L1_w$ |

Table 8 *IL*, 8 cases; Translation, 4 cases; Interpretation, 4 cases.

As indicated in the above table, language learning, either *MintoM* for *L1*, or *SintoS* for *L2*, is very easy, compared with translation and interpretation, in which an *IL* is sure inserted or even created to interfere with the learning or improvement of either language.

Learned Proficiency

When a language learner and user learns an additional language *L2*, it is very common that the proficiency of the *L1* is usually much better than that of the *L2*, i.e., the two

proficiencies are not equivalent. For ease of discussion, we will only use four labels to represent four levels of proficiency. H or G12 for a high school graduate with 12 or 13 years of education, U or G16 for a college/university graduate with 16 years of education, G or G22 for a graduate with a Master’s or a doctorate degree with 22 years of education, and P or G28 for a university professor with 22 years of education plus 6 years of work experience.

| Levels of proficiency | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| G28 or P | P2 | P1 |
| G22 or G | G2 | G1 |
| G16 or U | U2 | U1 |
| G12 or H | H2 | H1 |

Table 9 Proficiency, L2 and/or L1

Translated Proficiency

For a single translator or interpreter, there are, as indicated in the above section, only four proficiencies (for this discussion only), to be matched in two languages. Let us suppose we have a book in *L2* on physics that needs to be translated into *L1*, and the book is on level G2. Let us look at two scenarios.

G2 to G1, or G2 to P1?

The translator is on level P1, a university professor of physics, in *L1*. In order for the translation to be done properly, the professor-translator must also be on level G2 or above, or he or she could not even understand the G2-level physics in *L2*. It is also assumed that since the professor-translator is at level P1, he or she is also at level G1, and all levels below G1 up to P1. Therefore, two conditions have to be met in order for the translation to be done properly.

| Physics | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| G22 or G | G2 | G1 |

Table 10 Two conditions for translation

The translator has to have studied physics in *L1*, reaching level G1, and also he or she has to have studied physics in *L2*, reaching level G2, so that the book on physics at level G2 in *L2* can be translated into *L1*, or in some cases, vice versa, all on a G-level. In other words, if physics is not doubly learned or studied in both *L2* and *L1*, or the competence in physics has not reached both levels G2 and G1, she or he simply cannot translate, period. Since the professor-translator is doing the translation, let us suppose there will be two possible outcomes or products based on the language proficiency levels of the professor.

| Physics | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> |
|----------|-----------|-----------------|
| G22 or G | G2 | P1 questionable |
| | | G1 perfect |

Table 11 Which level is it?

If a book on physics at level G2 in *L2* is translated to level G1, it is perfect translation, compared with the same book being translated to level P1, which the professor-translator is capable of reaching and doing. In other words, even if the professor-translator is capable of translating a G2-level physics book into either G1 or P1, he or she has to translate it into G1 only, a level of proficiency much lower than his or her own, the P1-level.

What about the time when the professor-translator needs to translate *L1* into *L2*? Let us suppose the professor has two proficiencies in *L1* and *L2* as before, in *L1* he or she has reached P1, but in *L2* he or she has only reached G2.

| Physics | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | ? | P1 |
| G22 or G | G2 | G1 |
| G16 or U | U2 | U1 |
| G12 or H | H2 | H1 |

Table 12 Different proficiencies

The only translation from *L1* to *L2*, for this translator is able to do, is at level G2, or below. None of the books on physics in *L1* at P1-level, this translator can translate them into *L2* on P2-level, which he or she has not reached yet.

The conclusion is very easy to draw now: if the proficiencies of at least two languages are different, the proficiency of a translation that a translator can reach is always the lower one of the two, or the lowest of the two. In other words, despite the fact that the professor-translator has two proficiencies, P1 and G2, he or she can only do translation or interpretation at G2 to G1, or G1 to G2, the lowest proficiency (G2) of the two languages.

Translated Knowledge, and Skills

What if the professor-translator translated a G2-level physics into P1? Or G2 into U1? That would be both questionable and problematic.

| Physics | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| G22 or G | G2 | <P1 |
| | | =G1 |
| | | >U1 |

Table 13 Lower or higher?

If G2 is translated into U1, $G2 > U1$, what does that mean? That means a college graduate in *L1* has reached a level of proficiency or competence that a graduate with a Master's or a doctorate degree can reach in *L2*, which is possible but very seldom, rendering the translation next to useless, unless a G2-level in *L2* is approximately equivalent to a U1-level in *L1*.

By the same token, G2 translated into P1, $G2 < P1$ is not usable translation as well.

There is another problem.

The known or the unknown

Once *L2* is translated into *L1*, the translated knowledge or skills in *L1* can be either known or unknown to the translator and/or readers of *L1* only. If it is known, double-learning occurs on the part of the translator-interpreter, duplication happens, and the readers read something they already know. If it is unknown, plagiarism is possible. However, for the unknown in *L1* to be translated from *L2*, either new concepts need to be made from the old stock of *L1*, or new coinages (i.e., new characters or words) created in *L1* or borrowings taken from *L2*. As long as the translated is unknown, it is a sure proof that *L2* is superior, technically, pragmatically, or even linguistically. If the new in *L1* needs to be translated from *L2*, how many millions of years will it take to stop or reduce the translation of the new from *L2* and start creation or at least improvement in the *L1*, alone? That is a problem.

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Learning | <i>L2</i> | via <i>L1</i> | | |
| Translation or interpretation | <i>L2</i> | <i>l1</i> | | |
| Double or not | <i>L2</i> | <i>l1_k</i> | <i>l1_u</i> | |
| What is learned, or reviewed | <i>l2</i> | <i>l1_k</i> | <i>l1_{u_{l2}}</i> | <i>l1_{u_{l1}}</i> |

Table 14 Learning of L2 or Reviewing of L1?

L2 is to be learned, by translations into *L1* (*l1*), which is either known or unknown. Either way, *L1* is revisited or reviewed, instead of being learned. At the same time, double-learning happens, reducing the efficiency of language learning to less than 50%. What is learned in *L2* is only partial, *l2*, and what is unknown can be borrowed from *L2*, *l1_{u_{l2}}*, or created in *L1* using old stock of words in *L1*, *l1_{u_{l1}}*.

Double-Learning, or Multi-Learning

As obviously stated or understood, any knowledge or skills, if not doubly learned or studied or practised in both *L2* and *L1*, reaching the same or similar level of proficiency or competence in a specific domain, translation or interpretation simply cannot be done, period. For two languages, there are only four possible proficiencies, combined.

| | | |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Proficiencies | <i>L2</i> | <i>L1</i> |
| 2 ups: double | ↑ | ↑ |
| 1 up <i>L2</i> | ↑ | ↓ |
| 1 down <i>L2</i> | ↓ | ↑ |
| 2 downs | ↓ | ↓ |

Table 15 Proficiency or Deficiency?

Life is fundamentally the reduction of entropy (Chen 2003), or the negative entropy (Gleick 2011, 305), or the taking of low-entropy energy (Greene 2004, 170). Therefore, it is better not to waste one's life, or waste too much of it, in double-learning the same or similar

knowledge or skills in more than one language, in an efficiency of less than 50%, to become translators or interpreters. For most language learners and users, don't translate or interpret. That is the advice.

Before conclusion, we would like to supply two definitions, one for translation, one for learning an additional language.

One genuine definition of translation and interpretation

Translation or interpretation is the overlapped double-learning of the same or similar knowledge or skills, in at least two languages, with the unavoidable creation and reduction of an interlanguage, for a display of the lowest proficiency of either language, by the translator or interpreter, as an unintentional demonstration of the inferiority of the language translated into.

One genuine definition of additional language learning

The learning of an additional language is the non-overlapped learning of knowledge or skills, in that particular language, with the reduction of any interference from the mother tongue, for a display of the highest proficiency of that particular language, by the language learner and user, as an intentional demonstration of the applicability of that particular language, in specific domains.

A Thought Experiment and the Remedy or Strategy

Most of us, second language learners and users, started language learning with matching one target language unit with one or more mother tongue units, such that 'a dog=犬=狗'. Such matching ends up with rules governed by probability. For example, the matching rate of having learned 1,000 L2 items is 1/1000, while the possible mismatching rate amounts to 999/1000. If the language learner and user has an enormous memory, he or she might be able to remember 100,000 such matches, or maybe even 1,000,000 such matches. However, there will be a time when the limit is reached, and the entropy law starts to function, while he or she cannot remember any matches any more. This is the time when errors kick in, i.e., a mismatching rate of $(n-1)/n$, a ratio which is $(n-1)$ times the matching rate of $1/n$. Such a ratio is also the error rate, of $(n-1)/n$.

If the language learner and user stops matching any mother tongue items, and starts to match one L1 item with another, we have the next step, the real learning of an additional language. Let us say, he or she has already learned 'an eye=目', and 'a doctor=醫'. Once he or she encounters 'an ophthalmologist', '目' or '醫' are no longer needed, but 'an eye doctor' is used instead to match so that 'an ophthalmologist=an eye doctor'. Now the language learner and user, once he or she needs to use the target language, there are only three possibilities, 'an ophthalmologist', a correct and professional term, or 'an eye doctor', also a correct but less professional term, and the third term, also in the target language but wrong. In such cases, his or her rate of being correct is always $2/3$, or 67%. The error rate is reduced to $1/3$, or 33%, but the error is also in the target language, a wrong target language term or unit. He or she could never make an error while the mother tongue ever intervenes. This is the only remedy and an ultimate strategy, marking the truthful start of learning and using an additional language.

Conclusion

For any translation or interpretation, the person, translator or interpreter, is always a double-learner, or multilearner, or a replicator, of the same or similar knowledge or skills. Besides, the procedure for translation and interpretation is in the opposite direction to that of language learning. An interlanguage is also inserted between the two languages, the result of which is mostly unwanted errors. On top of all that, the translated proficiency is always the lowest of the languages involved because a translation or interpretation, theoretically and scientifically, should not be elevated. In any case, if the translated knowledge or skills are unknown, the original is proven superior. Therefore, in the learning of languages, translation or interpretation are to be avoided as much and early as possible, and translation or interpretation is only possible for very few people, since a translation or an interpretation, if the source is correct, can only be more wrong or less wrong, but never can they be correct since, as stated earlier, the source or original is the only one that is correct.

For the purpose of language learning and using, the true moment of learning starts with the learning of a target language, using the target language and the target language only, to learn and understand the target language. Unless the language learner and user, without being aware of the challenge and the strategy, still learns and uses the target language with unknown and uncleared interference from the mother tongue.

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