

Designing an Instructional Program Based on the Self-monitoring Strategy and Measuring Its Effect on the University Students' Development in Translation Skill

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The present study aimed at investigating the effect of instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy and measuring its effect on the university students' development in translation skill. More specifically, it attempted to answer the following questions: (1) What are the characteristics of the instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy? (2) What is the effect of an instructional program based on the self-monitoring on the university students' development in translation skill? To test the questions of the study, the following hypothesis was formulated: There is no statistically significant difference at the level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the university students' development in translation skill between the experimental group and the control group due to the instructional program. To achieve the aim of the study, the researchers used a quasi-experimental design. The participants of the study were 60 seniors majoring in English language and translation at Al-Ahliyya Amman University. These were purposefully divided into an experimental group and a control group. To examine the questions of the current study, the researchers designed an instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy to measure its effect on the university students' development in translation skill. This program consisted of eight lessons. The validity and reliability of the program and the performance tests were ensured. The experiment lasted for one semester (approximately three months). Students' scores on the translation performance test towards translation were statistically analyzed using the ANCOVA (Analysis of covariance). The findings of the study showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups in translation performance test in favor of experimental group (38.92) which was taught using the self-monitoring strategy.

Keywords: self-monitoring, translation, the self-monitoring instructional program

Introduction

The main aim of translation is to serve as a cross-cultural bilingual communication vehicle among people and it has been of great importance to all nations in transferring knowledge from one culture to another. Moreover, translation plays an important role in people's life. It is a way through which nations exchange their cultural, scientific, and literary achievements. As the whole globe is coming together based on information sharing and communicative advances, it is only natural that there have been a constant demand and unprecedented need for translation of one language to another. Gaikwad (2012) confirmed that since the world

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is changing with the highest speed never before and the transmission of knowledge also with highest speeds up, translation is becoming a worldwide phenomenon catching a considerable attention of the literature lovers, readers, and critics. He added that knowledge is being shared all over the world and translation is the vehicle of the process.

Furthermore, translation is considered as an important component of foreign language teaching and a means of testing foreign language skills. Through translation, students deepen their understanding of various languages and cultures, learn both the foreign language and their mother tongue thoroughly, and enhance their knowledge of structure. The level of translation reflects comprehensive abilities in the foreign language and the mother tongue, so in a world of fast change and development, translation is also faced with great changes and challenges as well as the teaching of translation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of an instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy and measuring its effect on the university students' development in translation skill.

Questions of the Study

This paper attempts to answer the following questions:

- (1) What are the characteristics of the instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy?
- (2) What is the effect of an instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy on the university students' development in translation skill?

Review of Related Literature

Self-monitoring Theory

The self-monitoring strategy is derived from the metacognition theory. Flavell (1971) identified the concept of metacognition as the notion of thinking about thinking. Thinking can be of what the person knows and what the person is currently doing. He further added that metacognition is considered to be deliberate, planned, intentional, goal-directed, and future-oriented mental processing that can be used to accomplish cognitive tasks.

Moreover, Flavell (1979) said that the metacognition theory refers to higher order thinking that involves active control over the cognitive processes engaged in learning.

Because metacognition plays an important role in successful learning, it is important to study metacognitive activity and development to accrete how students can be taught to apply their cognitive resources through metacognitive control. He added that the concept of "metacognition" mainly consists of metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive experiences or regulation. He further divided metacognitive knowledge into knowledge of person variables, task variables, and strategy variables.

Gill (2001) stated that metacognition is a special form of cognitive behavior or awareness of one's own thinking strategies and a reflection of what she/he knows. He added that metacognition is a process where the student carefully considers thought in problem solving situations through the strategies which are considered as the components of the metacognitive theory. These components are (1) self-planning, (2) self-monitoring, and (3) self-reflecting. In addition, the metacognition strategies are the key to aiding students to think critically.

Fisher (2003) mentioned that metacognition involves thinking about one's own thinking. Metacognition includes knowledge of oneself, for example of what one knows, what one has learnt, what one can and cannot do, and ways to improve one's learning or achievement. He further added that metacognition also involves skills of recognizing problems, representing features of problems, planning what to do in trying to solve problems, monitoring progress, and evaluating the outcomes of one's own thinking. Metacognition is promoted by helping students to reflect on their thinking and decision-making processes. Metacognition is also progressed when students are helped to be strategic in organizing their activities and are encouraged to reflect before, during, and after working on a required task.

Alexander and Winne (2006) said that metacognition includes steps, such as encourage analyzing and evaluating of thinking from the viewpoint of improving it, promote self-direction, require self-discipline, evolve self-monitoring, and require self-corrective activities that help the learner strive towards clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, and logic of information.

Self-monitoring Strategy

Self-monitoring is defined as the practice of observing and recording one's own academic and social behaviors. It also relates to the academic content standards. In that, students need to be actively engaged in any language skill or any content area material to gain the required knowledge and ability to evaluate material. Moreover, self-monitoring is considered an individual performance which is considered as a natural step toward becoming independent that can only happen when students take responsibility for their own behavior and essentially become agents of change.

Coleman and Webber (2002) stated that "self-monitoring is the process of having individuals record data regarding their own behavior for the purpose of changing its rate" (p. 103). They added that self-monitoring can contribute to the success of staying on task and task completion during reading and writing. Students are taught the skills necessary to observe their own behavior or task and record if a targeted behavior or task occurred. Some ways include: (1) check marks, (2) hash marks, (3) answering yes and no questions, (4) circling numbers, and (5) coloring boxes in on a grid. Direct instruction, modeling, and practice and feedback are generally used to teach students self-monitoring procedures.

Worthy, Ivey, and Broaddus (2001) asserted that students who use self-monitor strategy during the required task ask questions, such as "Is the text making sense?", "What is happening currently in the text?", and "What will occur later on within this text?", which helps students to focus on the meaning of the text while they read for example. Skilled students continuously self-monitor as they engage in task, asking questions, checking for understanding, and rereading when comprehension breaks down.

Schraw (1998) suggested some strategies to help students monitor their own comprehension during their progress through a task required that a student should ask himself/herself the following questions:

- (1) Do I have a clear understanding of what I am reading?
- (2) Does the task make sense?
- (3) Am I reaching my goals?
- (4) Do I need to make changes?

Zimmerman (1998) believed that self-monitoring has been further examined by comparing effective students to ineffective students. Effective students use self-monitoring procedures to evaluate their performance as needed in order to attain learning goals. They also search for instead of avoiding opportunities to

self-evaluate their learning. Using information gained by comparing current to past performance, effective students adjust performance and strategies as needed in order to attain goals without the need for external feedback. In addition, effective students set proximal and attainable goals to facilitate success in achieving distal learning goals. Effective self-monitoring and goal-setting processes tie directly into favorable self-evaluation and this positive self-evaluation enhances students' motivation to learn and set new goals.

Self-monitoring and Self-questioning

Brigham, Berkeley, Simpkins, and Brigham (2007) said that all self-questioning strategies generally help students understand more of what they read. However, it is important to note that self-questioning strategies can serve a variety of purposes. For example, one questioning strategy might help to prompt students to consider background knowledge *before* reading, while another might enhance students' self-monitoring of understanding *while* reading, and yet another might remind students to summarize what they have read *after* reading. In addition, self-questioning can be integrated into other comprehension strategies and is sometimes an embedded component of an extensive reading strategy.

Mastropieri, Scruggs, and Graetz (2003) said that the idea behind self-questioning strategies like all reading comprehension strategies is that students can be taught to approach text more strategically than they would on their own. For some students, the process of creating questions to ask themselves is extremely challenging. Therefore, simply having students "ask questions about the passage while reading" will not be sufficient. Therefore, the process that teachers use to teach self-questioning is the same as for the explicit teaching of any strategy:

- (1) Explicitly state the importance of strategy use and use clear learning objectives;
- (2) Follow a specific sequence for teaching that includes explicit modeling of the strategy as well as guided and independent student practice;
- (3) Monitor students' progress and provide explicit corrective feedback to students that includes encouraging appropriate attributions read, so it must have been an easy passage;
- (4) Evaluating a task.

Hartman (2001) identified that self-questioning is a learning strategy that focuses on comprehension concept which is done by using questions that are generated directly from the student. This strategy can be used just as effectively in all areas of learning, such as science, math, language skills, and social studies. Self-questioning can be used before learning a subject, during the actual learning, and after the learning are complete. These steps can be also labeled as planning, monitoring, such as science, math, language skills, and social studies.

According to what was mentioned about the self-monitoring strategy, the researchers realized that the self-monitoring strategy was effective in improving reading and writing in general. Thus this study is trying to investigate how much self-monitoring will help to enhance translation skill.

Self-monitoring and Translation

Das (1983, cited in Sahu, 2009) stated that translation is eminently usable as a review and repair activity in remedial teaching. He further added that the output in the target language for many second language students remains primarily a process of translation with self-monitoring, particularly in the initial stages. The learner's progressive acquisition of competence in the second language is indeed his/her continuing endeavor to refine his/her translation so as to make it more acceptable. The more successfully he/she monitors his/her own

translation, the more efficiency and fluency he/she gains in translating until he/she gains optimal proficiency in the language.

Oxford (1990) indicated that one of the translation strategies is the metacognitive strategy. This strategy involves students' planning for translating, thinking about the translation process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's translation comprehension and production, and evaluating their translation after a task is completed.

She further added that while students translate, they use the following strategies:

- (1) Planning and arranging task: Students may use browsing or terminology management to plan and arrange their translation task;
- (2) Monitoring their process: Students self-monitor error in understanding and producing translation works;
- (3) Evaluating their production: During evaluation, students may revise or modify their original version.

Methods and Procedures

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were purposefully chosen from Al-Ahliyya Amman University. These participants were composed of 60 seniors majoring in English language and translation and divided into two groups. The experimental group was exposed to an instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy, whereas, the control group was exposed to the traditional program.

Instruments of the Study

The researchers designed and used the following instruments:

- (1) A translation performance test;
- (2) The rubric for scoring student's translation;
- (3) An instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy.

Limitation of the Study

The findings of the study were limited to English seniors in Al-Ahliyya Amman University during the first semester of the academic year 2011-2012. They were also limited to the instruments used for collection data of the study and the duration of the study (three months).

Findings and Discussion

The ultimate goal of this study was to investigate the instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy and measure its effect on the university students' development in translation. The finding of the study after analyzing the data was presented according to questions of the study. These questions were stated as follow:

- (1) What are the characteristics of the instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy?
- (2) What is the effect of an instructional program based on the self monitoring strategy on the university students' development in translation skill?

Findings Related to the First Question of the Study

What are the characteristics of the instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy?

Description of the Self-monitoring Instructional Program Rational of the Program

This instructional program was an endeavor to improve and develop the performance of English language students in translation skill. The researchers chose the self-monitoring strategy for many reasons and these reasons are:

- (1) Allowing students the opportunity to fulfill their desire to exercise control over themselves and their environment;
- (2) Involving students in their own behavior change;
- (3) Promoting independent students;
- (4) Increasing on-task behavior in the classroom;
- (5) Improving academic performance and reducing disruptive behaviors;
- (6) Shifting from reinforcement by others to self-reinforcement of appropriate behavior;
- (7) Generating thoughts, feelings, and actions, that are systematically designed;
- (8) Fostering student's motivation.

General Aims

The program aimed to fulfill the following general objectives:

- (1) Developing the teaching of translation in Jordanian universities;
- (2) Enabling students' who are specialized in translation to translate any text independently away of the intervention of the teacher.

Content of the Program

The content material was related to the translation handout of the English language students in Al-Ahliyya Amman University.

It includes:

- (1) Eight translation texts, four in English, they were *The Road to Jerusalem*, *Traveling Cheaply*, *Microscope*, and *THE SECURITY COUNCIL COMPOSITION* and the other four in Arabic, they were قرار الحكومة بشأن موظفي الخدمة المدنية والمراقبين, شيء مني, الجو, عقد عمل.
- (2) The detailed plan of the instructional program which included the general specific objectives, texts, and the procedures that the instructor followed to carry out the instructional program;
- (3) A guide for the instructor which included a brief introduction about teaching the self-monitoring strategy using self-questioning, the plan which the researchers followed to conduct the program included; the objectives of the program, the procedures, teaching strategies, and evaluation.

Orientation of the Program

- (1) The researchers explained the program to the co-instructor in two sessions and each one lasted for an hour;
- (2) The co-instructor introduced the program to the students in the experimental groups, its aims and the results the program hopes to achieve. She also introduced the self-monitoring and self-questioning strategies and the importance of using them for improving the students' translation skill;
- (3) Following the introductory period was the implementation of the program which had lasted for one semester. The co-instructor instructed the experimental group using the self-monitoring strategy through self-questioning. However, the control group was taught the subject material through applying the traditional method of instruction.

The Role of the Researchers

At the beginning of the semester and before the implementing the instruments, the researcher had several meetings with the co-instructor to agree upon the procedures of implementing the instructional program and the test. Also throughout the semester, the researchers had many meetings with the co-instructor to discuss any current issues or difficulties and to have feedback about students' reaction.

The Role of the Co-instructor

The co-instructor is a professional translator with reputation of being well qualified in his work and having good relationship with his students. The researchers and the instructor had many sessions to discuss the implementation of the study and the role of each one of them. The co-instructors' role was to implement the instructional program designed by the researchers and encourage the students to go on with their translation showing them the benefits they may get after finishing such tasks and he was as a facilitator. He conducted the translation performance both pre and post test.

Duration

This study was conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2010/2011 and lasted three hours per week.

Validity of the Self-monitoring Instructional Program

The self-monitoring instructional program was assessed by a jury which consisted of four university professors specialized in translation and five university professors specialized in methodology to reveal its validity. The jury agreed that this program was suitable for measuring the use of the self-monitoring strategy through self-questioning while students translating a required text.

Findings Related to the Second Question of the Study

What is the effect of an instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy on the university students' development in translation skill?

To answer this question, the researcher used means and standard deviations for both control and experimental groups on the performance translation pre and post tests administrations. The results were as follows (see Table 1):

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Scores of Experimental and Control Groups on the Performance Translation Pre- Post Test

Group	N	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
		Means	Std. Deviation	Means	Std. Deviation
Control group	30	28.30	6.01	33.63	5.30
Experimental group	30	26.97	5.21	38.50	4.64
Total	60	27.63	5.61	36.07	5.51

As shown in Table 1, the students of the experimental group who were taught by the self-monitoring strategy obtained a higher mean score 38.50 on the translation post-test with a standard deviation of 4.64, whereas, the mean score of the control group obtained a lower mean score 33.63 on the translation post-test with a standard deviation of 5.30.

In order to examine the first hypothesis (There is no statistically significant differences at the level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the university students' development in translation skill between the experimental group and the control group due to instructional program). The researcher used ANCOVA for both the experimental and control groups on the performance translation test and the results are presented in Table 2:

Table 2

The Results of ANCOVA of the Students on the Performance Translation Post-Test

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Pre-test	714.881	1	714.881	56.314	0.000
Group	480.241	1	480.241	37.831	0.000
Error	723.586	57	12.694		
Total	1793.733	59			

Table (2) shows that the F value of the group is 37.831 and this value is significant at the level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the students mean scores on the translation performance post-test of the experimental group than those of the control group due to the method of instruction. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3

Adjusted Means and Standard Error for the Performance of the Study Sample Members on the Translation Performance Post-Test

Group	No.	Adjusted Means	Std. Error
Control group	30	33.22	0.65
Experimental group	30	38.92	0.65

Table (3) shows that the adjusted means of the control group who was taught by a traditional way gained 33.22, whereas the adjusted means of the experimental group who was taught using the instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy had 38.92. It is illustrated in Table 3 that the differences between the two adjusted means of the two groups were in favor of the experimental group which was due to the instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the researchers concluded that the instructional program based on the self-monitoring strategy was more effective than the traditional method of teaching translation skill enhancing students' use of correct grammar, appropriate selection of terminology, and acceptable translation structure and revealing the correct idea of the text.

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