

Exploring Self-confidence and Educational Motivation and their Relation to Oral Translation Quality of Iraqi EFL Students: A Case Study of Najaf and Karbala

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the self-confidence and educational motivation of the under-graduate male English department students and the effect of these attributes on their oral translation quality. One hundred BA undergraduate male students from two different universities in Iraq, University of Kufa in Najaf and University of Karbala were selected for this research. They received Namni's self-confidence questionnaire (2007), (with reliability 0.88 and 0.81 validity) Harter's motivational scale (1981) (with reliability 0.79 and validity 0.88) and oral translation test of about 60 words driven from the English news from the Voice of America (VOA). They scored by oral evaluation rubric method proposed by Clifford (Psychometric validation and interpreter certification). The 100 students underwent the self-confidence and the motivational questionnaires after that they stood up in front of five experienced raters and the VOA special English report was selected and played to the students in order to test their oral translation ability and quality. After the statistical analysis was taken, it is found that; a) there were significant positive correlation between the self-confidence and oral translation quality of male English translation students, b) there were significant positive correlation between the motivation and the quality of oral translation, c) self-confidence has more influence and was more closely correlated with oral translation quality.

Key terms: Educational motivation, oral translation quality, self-confidence,

1. Overview

Oral translation (interpretation) plays a vital role in the communicative discourse. It includes understanding the source language, changing, and producing information in the target language.

Gile (1995) states that it is important to note that interpreting is not an easy task, that not everyone can make a good interpreter, and that it requires special cognitive skills and not only a mastery of grammar. Gile's (1995) point is that an interpreter must have extra linguistic knowledge of interpreting as a discipline as well as general knowledge about the subject matter being discussed by the clients in order for him to be able to handle the interpreting function properly. Accordingly, oral translation and different factors involving in it should be considered carefully. The extrinsic and intrinsic factors that relate to the environment and psychological parts of the oral translator or interpreter can be investigated. Self-confidence

and educational motivation are among those factors which their effects on oral translation quality has not received much attention.

The high rate of self-confidence and educational motivation may exist in an individual and may effect on oral translation quality. There are many definitions of educational motivation. A search in encyclopedias shows that it comes from the Latin term ‘motivus’ which means ‘a moving cause’. According to (Franken, 1994) motivation is how dispositions lead to action through the interaction of biological, learned and cognitive processes. Previous researches showed that it can be both extrinsic and intrinsic and brings success in educational matters. Self-confidence is an intrinsic factor that can cause good performance in education. A self-confident person perceives himself to be socially competent, emotionally mature, intellectually adequate, successful, satisfied, decisive, optimistic, independent, self-reliant, self-assured, forward moving, fairly assertive and having leadership qualities. So the concept of Self Confidence enjoys important position in the theories of human behavior and personality and is regarded as a basic condition of human existence in modern day world by many thinkers. Both the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were used throughout the questions of Harter's questionnaire (1981)

This paper tried to be aware of the nature of these two factors (self-confidence and educational motivation) and their relationship with the oral translation quality. Furthermore, the aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between the self-confidence, educational motivation and oral translation quality and to know whether there was any significant relationship between them or not. It also determined that which attribute (self-confidence and educational motivation) had more influence on oral translation quality.

2. Significance of the study

The aim of this study is to determine whether there is any significant relationship between self-confidence, motivation and oral translation quality of English department students and also to know which of these factors can predict the quality of translation. In order to do this research, the self-confidence questionnaire, motivation questionnaire and oral translation test were used. There are researches done in the field of the effect of self-confidence and motivation on oral interaction and communication, but little attention have been given to the effect of these variables on oral translation quality. The goal of this study is to provide the conditions that help the English department students to become successful in their field and activities.

The main objective of selecting these aspects is that preparing an environment that allows translators and interpreters do their best that could be a momentous part in the vast area of interpretation training. It may help curriculum designers, interpreters and parents appreciate the importance of self-confidence and motivation in the production of oral translation, if the results of the study reveal some association between the three variables.

To be more exact, the present research sets out to answer the following questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between motivation and oral translation quality?
2. Is there any significant relationship between self-confidence and oral translation quality?

3. Research hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between educational motivation and oral translation quality.
2. There is no significant relationship between self-confidence and oral translation

quality.

4. Review of literature

4.1. Self-confidence

Self-confidence is usually used to refer to a generalized sense of well-being about one's life (Rollnick 2000, p.92). Here we are interested in a person's confidence to undertake a particular behavior, in other words, their belief about their capabilities. The concept is variously called self-efficacy in health-belief model and social cognitive theory, and perceived behavioral control in theory of planned behavior.

People may lack confidence because they fear the consequences, they have had previous experience of failure, or because of their emotional or mental state (depressed, anxious or stressed).

According to Bandura's social cognitive theory self-efficacy is one of three key influences on behavior. Self-efficacy expectations are defined as beliefs about the individual's ability to perform a particular behavior regardless of circumstances or contexts. According to this theory the other influences on behavior are expectations of outcome, that is, beliefs about the effectiveness of the behavior, and social influences including social norms, social support or pressure, and the behaviors of others (Bandura 1977; 1997).

4.2. Motivation

Motivation refers to "the reasons underlying behavior" (Guay, 2010, p. 712). Paraphrasing Gredler, Broussard and Garrison (2004) broadly define motivation as "the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something" (p. 106). Intrinsic motivation is motivation that is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure. As Deci (1999) observe, "intrinsic motivation energizes and sustains activities through the spontaneous satisfactions inherent in effective volitional action. It is manifest in behaviors such as play, exploration, and challenge seeking that people often do for external rewards" (p. 658). Researchers often contrast intrinsic motivation with extrinsic motivation, which is motivation governed by reinforcement contingencies. Traditionally, educators consider intrinsic motivation to be more desirable and to result in better learning outcomes than extrinsic motivation (Deci, 1999).

4.3. Oral translation (interpretation)

Any discussion of translation and interpretation must be accurate in the meaning and definition of the terminology used. Sometimes the terms are used interchangeably; however, they are different in practical application.

The term interpretation refers to the process of orally rendering communication from one language into another language. Translation is the preparation of a written text from one language into an equivalent written text in another language (Rainof, 1980). Both are language-related, but they are not identical disciplines. Each area requires expertise, content domain knowledge, training, and practice. In this document, translation is used when referring to written texts, and interpretation when referring to oral speech.

5. Methodology

5.1. Introduction

It is very important to investigate the factors affecting the oral translation quality. Teachers, parents, psychologists, and of course self-confidence and educational motivation on the assumption that the high rate of these attributes will bring many positive outcomes and benefits for the students. Self-confidence and educational motivation are the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing the educator's traits and abilities.

5.2. Participants

One hundred undergraduate male students of English department from two different universities of Kufa, Karbalaa in Iraq, were selected for this research. They were between 20 to 25 years' old, and all of them were male and they have passed most of the courses in the university and they were seniors. All of them passed the English courses in public institutions. It should also be mentioned that their participation was quite voluntary.

5.3. Instruments

Namni's Self- confidence questionnaire (2007) (with reliability 0.88 and 0.81 validity) Harter's motivational questionnaire(1981), (with reliability 0.79 and validity 0.88) and an oral translation test (The VOA special English report was selected and played to the students in order to test their oral translation ability and quality), from English into Arabic. The mentioned instruments are explained in detail:

5.3.1. Self-confidence scale

First, the self-confidence rank of the students was measured through 32 questions included in Mahmoud Namni's self-confidence Questionnaire(2007). Each question is rated by the five point Likert's scale. The rates of the self-confidence of the students were different because of their age differences.

5.3.2. Educational motivation scale

The second questionnaire was the Harter's classroom effect and motivational scale. It includes 33 items in five point Likert's scale. (with reliability 0.79 and validity 0.88)

5.3.3. Oral translation test

The VOA special English report was selected and played to the students in order to test their oral translation ability and quality. The direction of the translation is Mother Tongue Translation (MTT) i.e. from English into Arabic. Students called to come on the board and stay in front of the class among their classmates. The quality of oral translation is assessed by five experienced raters. They have used the oral evaluation rubric to rate the student's translation. There are five factors in oral evaluation rubric including content, fluency, accuracy, comprehensibility and eye contact. The raters have assessed the student's translation according to these five factors. Total point in this evaluation is fifteen. The raters scoring procedure for the translations were like this:

Content

1. Complete. The speaker clearly conveys the main idea and provides details that are relevant and interesting.
2. Generally complete. The speaker conveys the main idea but does not provide adequate relevant details to support it.
3. Incomplete. The main idea is unclear. Much of the detail is irrelevant or non-existent.

Comprehensibility

1. Comprehensible. The speaker uses appropriate language to convey the main idea of this item clearly.
2. Generally comprehensible. The message is unclear in places. The language used is inadequate to make the message totally clear.
3. Incomprehensible. The message could only be understood by a sympathetic native speaker. The language used is often distorted by interference from English.

Fluency

1. The student speaks very clearly without hesitation. Pronunciation and intonation sound natural.
2. The student speaks with some hesitation. Problems with pronunciation do not prevent communication.
3. The student hesitates frequently. Problems with pronunciation distort meaning and inhibit communication in some instances.

Accuracy

1. Functions, grammar, and vocabulary are used correctly.
2. Minor problems in usage do not distort meaning or inhibit communication.
3. Problems in usage significantly distort meaning or inhibit communication

Eye contact

1. Excellent. The student rarely refers to the note cards.
2. Fair. The student often refers to the note cards.
3. Poor. The student reads most of the presentation from the note Cards.

Total points: 15

6. Procedure

6.1. Data collection

In the present study, three types of data were collected: The self-confidence and motivation questionnaires which were multiple choices were given to the students in order to be aware of the rate of their self-confidence and motivation. After that the VOA special English reports was played and oral translation test was taken by the five raters from the students of English department in the classroom. The raters have asked the students to come on the board and stay in front of their classmates. Came on the board, CD player was turned on and the students have listened to the report. After listening to about 30 words of the report, the raters stopped the player and listened to the student and then scored their translation. The raters' method for assessing the oral translation was Clifford's oral evaluation rubric. This process was conducted two times for each student. All the data were gathered simultaneously.

6.2. Data analysis

The research question was tried to find the relationship between three variables (self-confidence, motivation and oral translation quality). To answer the research questions, the collected data (scores of the questionnaires and oral translation quality) were analyzed. The scores of the students on three batteries (self-confidence questionnaire, educational motivation questionnaire and oral translation test) underwent descriptive statistics. To answer the research question, a correlation coefficient was conducted among self-confidence and oral translation scores. Another correlation was done between the motivation and oral translation scores.

7. Results

The present section summarizes and discusses the statistical analyses of the collected data. In section, descriptive statistics of the research data are first discussed and then the hypotheses are tested. Descriptive statistics are reported to summarize the characteristics of the data with SPSS software including mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum and charts. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Pearson Correlation Analysis, and Multiple Regression tests have been used to test the hypotheses. To address the research questions posed by the researcher and to test the null-hypotheses proposed, inferential statistics are used including Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Pearson Correlation Analysis, and Multiple Regression tests.

7.1. Descriptive Statistics

As the table below shows, the mean scores of self-confidence, educational motivation and oral translation are respectively 120.38, 124.03, and 9.17.

Table 1:

Descriptive Statistics

variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-confidence	100	96.00	135.00	120.38	0.87
Educational motivation	100	83.00	154.00	124.03	0.95
Oral translation	100	5.00	15.00	9.17	0.21

7.2. Test of normality

In order to ensure the normality of data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is conducted for all data (Table 4.2). Null hypothesis of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is the normality of data. If the obtained P-Value is more than 0.05 then the null hypothesis is accepted.

H₀: The data are normally distributed.

H₁: Data are not normally distributed.

Therefore, the rejection of the null- hypothesis (H₀) indicates that the data are not normal. When the hypothesis is rejected it means that the significance level of the test is less than 0.05 (sig <0.05). The results are shown in the table below and, given that the significance level of the test Sig. in all variables is greater than 0.05, the assertion of the normality of the data is accepted and all variables have a normal distribution.

Table.2

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

	Self-confidence	Educational motivation	Oral translation
N	100	100	100
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	1.270	1.191	1.340
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.080	.117	.055

7.3. Inferential statistics and hypothesis testing

Regarding the normal variables, Pearson Correlation Analysis tests are used to test the hypotheses.

-The normality of the residue is investigating: Kolmogrov-Smirnov test is used for this purpose. If the probability value of this test is greater than 0.05, the confidence of 95% of the normality of the residues is confirmed.-Independence of residuals is investigating, which it can be easily checked using the Durbin-Watson statistic, which is a simple test to run using SPSS Statistics. If the Durbin-Watson statistic is close to 2, independence of residuals will be accepted.- Homogeneity of variance is investigating, for this purpose, the standardized residuals distribution table is used against the standardized predictions, with the presence of symmetry around the zero line and the absence of trend in the graph, showing homogeneity in the variance of the residuals.

7.3.1. The first hypothesis analysis

The first null-hypothesis investigates the relationship between educational motivation and speaking quality. Regarding the normality of the variables, Pearson correlation test is used to test this hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between educational motivation and oral translation quality.

H₁: There is significant relationship between educational motivation and oral translation quality.

Therefore, the rejection of the null- hypothesis (H₀) implies that there is a significant relationship between educational motivation and the oral translation quality.

The null- hypothesis is rejected, if the significance level of the test is less than 0.05. (Sig <0.05). The results of the Pearson correlation test are shown in the table below.

Table 3

Correlations between Oral Translation Quality and Educational Motivation

		educational motivation
Oral translation quality	Pearson Correlation	.621*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on the above table, Pearson correlation coefficient between educational motivation and speaking quality is 0.621, which is close to +1, indicating a strong and positive correlation between the two variables. Also, the significance level of the test is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 (Sig. = .000 <0.05). Therefore, with 95% confidence, the null-hypothesis is rejected and it can be said that there is a significant relationship the correlation coefficient between educational motivation and speaking quality.

7.3.2. The Second hypothesis analysis

The second null-hypothesis investigates the relationship between Self-confidence and oral translation quality. Regarding the normality of the variables, Pearson correlation test is used to test this hypothesis.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Self-confidence and speaking quality.

H₁: There is significant relationship between Self-confidence and speaking quality.

So, the rejection of the null- hypothesis shows that there is a significant relationship between self-confidence and speaking quality. The results of the Pearson correlation test are shown in the table below.

Table.4:

Correlations between oral translation quality and Self-confidence

		Self-confidence
Oral translation quality	Pearson Correlation	.509*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on the above table, Pearson correlation coefficient between self-confidence and oral translation quality is 0.509, which is close to +1, indicating a strong and positive correlation between the two variables. Also, the significance level of the test is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 (Sig = .000 <0.05). Therefore, with 95% confidence, the null-hypothesis is

rejected and it can be said that there is a significant relationship the correlation coefficient between self-confidence and oral translation quality.

8. Discussion

This study investigated the effect of the self-confidence and motivation on oral translation quality. In order to be aware of this relationship, a self-confidence questionnaire, motivational scale and oral translation test were used and 100 male students of English department from two different universities of Kufa and Karblaa were participated in this study. First, the students answered the questionnaires then their oral translation quality were assessed by five raters. All the stages were done simultaneously in the class hours.

As stated in the overview, this study sought to find the relationship between these three variables: oral translation test, motivation and self-confidence questionnaires which were collected from the male students of English departments.

According to the results, the hypotheses were rejected. Moreover, the research makes clear that there was a significant relationship between the motivation, self-confidence and the oral translation quality of translation students. It can be said that the higher the student's self-confidence and motivation, the better their oral translation quality.

Self-confidence in oral production is a factor that may influence the performance of the students' production. It could be the case that lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes are related to language performance barriers. Besides, if we analyze the fact that when students perform an oral production task, students are the focus of the attention of the whole classroom and as a result, students could experience fear or language anxiety that may affect performance. The situation that students can experience may depend on self-confidence. The term self-confidence includes certain attributes: emotional intelligence/emotional competence, resilience, confidence, attitude, trust, intuition, cognitive ability, doubt, depression, narcissism and uncertainty. In accordance with Abraham (2004) these attributes can positively or negatively affect self-confidence. Above all, in the language learning process there's an attribute that clearly affects self-confidence in students: emotional intelligence. In self-confidence emotional intelligence is a positive attribute because its influences and empowers performance.

Learner's motivation is an important variable to consider when developing, monitoring, and assessing instructional effectiveness in education. Defining motivation is an elusive process, as difficult to do as grasping a slippery fish in a dark cave. Motivation is a hypothetical construct. It cannot be directly and scientifically measured. Psychologists concerned with learning and instruction use the term motivation to describe those processes that can energize and give direction or purpose to behavior (Wlodkowski, 1989). It is highly unpredictable and changeable, subject to many influences beyond the control of teachers and designers (Keller, 1987).

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