Teaching Korean through translation of literary works:

Promoting translingual and transcultural competences at an advanced level

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Benefits of use of literature in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT)

1. Authenticity & convenience
2. Extension of linguistic competence
3. Cultural enrichment
4. Motivating learners
5. Open to interpretation (Sell, 2005)
Translation in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT)


“The goal of foreign language education is to form ‘educated speakers who have deep translingual and transcultural competence. This kind of education encourages the use of literature, film, and other media to challenge students’ imagination and help them consider alternative ways of seeing, feeling, and understating things.” (MLA 2007:4)

“Translation is an ideal context for developing translingual and transcultural abilities as an organizing principle of the language curriculum” (MLA 2007:9) (particularly as regards higher education)
Ecological and Holistic Approaches in FLT

• Developing critical thinking about the interdependence of language and culture is at the core of ecologically oriented pedagogies such as those proposed by van Lier(2004), Kramsch(1993, 2000a, 2009) and Tymoczko(2007)

“Language is inextricably related to general human cognition, the need to communicate and culture... If language conveys not only cultural knowledge, but also expresses, embodies and symbolizes cultural reality, the teaching of culture becomes the very core of foreign language education.” (Laviosa, 2015:50)

“Cultural awareness must be viewed both as enabling language proficiency and as being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency.” (Kramsch, 1993:8)

• Use of translation of literary works in FLT, esp. learning Korean at an advanced level for intercultural awareness and language proficiency
Learning through Translation

• **Course:**
  Korean 101, 4th year Readings – Korean literature

• **Students:**
  23 people
  - 21 Korean heritage speakers
    - 11 first-time Korean students, most having come to the States after attending 1st or 2nd grade in Korea
    - 10 continuing students with 1 or 2 years of learning Korean at Berkeley
  - 2 non-heritage speakers

• **Class:**
  Coursework included reading a translated literary work and translation practice – 1 lesson out of 6
Procedure

1. Pre-survey on translation
2. Introduction of the *The Great Gatsby* and in-class trial translation from the original English to Korean
3. Comparison of two Korean translations of *The Great Gatsby*
4. Translation homework assignments, one from English to Korean, the other from Korean to English
5. Post-survey on translation
Why The Great Gatsby?

1. One of the most famous American novels
2. Popularized through movies
3. Multiple published Korean translations
The cast of characters

- The pool's creator, Tom's best friend, Daisy's elder brother, Gatsby's friend
- Tom's love interest
- Daisy's college friend
- Tom's college roommate
- Daisy's childhood friend
- Tom's wife
- Daisy's high school friend
- Daisy's childhood friend
- Tom's co-worker
- Gatsby's wife

The image shows the cast members of the movie 'The Great Gatsby'.
Translation of *The Great Gatsby*

1. 김영하 번역본 (2009, 문학동네)
2. 김욱동 번역본 (2010, 민음사)
Comparison of two translations

Angry as I was, as we all were, I was tempted to laugh whenever he opened his mouth. The transition from libertine to prig was so complete. ‘I’ve got something to tell YOU, old sport, --’began Gatsby. But Daisy guessed at his intention…‘Please don’t!’ she interrupted helplessly. ‘Please let’s go home. Why don’t we all go home?’…. ‘I want to know what Mr. Gatsby has to tell me.’

1.

다른 사람들처럼 나도 화는 냐지만, 그가 입을 열 때마다 웃음이 났다. 바람둥이에서 도덕군자로의 변모는 정말이지 완벽했다. “당신에게 할 말이 있어요, 친구,” 개츠비가 말을 꺼냈다…. “개츠비 씨께서 이 몸한테 하실 말씀이 있으시다잡아.” (김영하)

2.

나는 다른 사람들과 마찬가지로 화가 치밀었지만 톰이 입을 열 때마다 웃고 싶은 충동을 느꼈다. 톰 이 이제 바람둥이에서 도덕군자로 완벽하게 변해 있었던 것이다. “당신에게 말해 드려 있어요, 형씨….” 개츠비가 입을 열기 시작했다…. “개츠비 씨가 하고 싶은 말이 원지 알고 싶니.” (김욱동)
In-class translation and discussion issues

“By the way, Mr. Gatsby, I understand you’re an Oxford man.” “Not exactly.” “Oh, yes, I understand you went to Oxford.” “Yes – I went there.” A pause. Then Tom’s voice, incredulous and insulting: “You must have gone there about the time Biloxi went to New Haven.”

번역본
1] “그런데 말이야, 개츠비 당신 옥스퍼드 나왔다고 한 것 같은데.”
“그건 아니고요”, “아, 맞다. 옥스퍼드 다녔다고 했지.” “네, 다녔죠.”
잠시 침묵. 그리고 도저히 못 믿겠다는 무례한 톰의 목소리.

번역본 2] “한데 개츠비씨, 당신은 옥스퍼드 출신이라면서요?”
“꼭 그렇게 할 수는 없습니다.”
“아니, 맞아요. 옥스퍼드에 가셨던 걸로 알고 있는데요.” “네... 그곳에 있기는 했지요.”
잠시 말이 끊겼다. 그리고 나서 톰은 믿을 수 없다는 듯 모욕적인 말투로 이렇게 말했다.

학생들 “그런데, 개츠비 씨, 당신이 옥스퍼드 사람/졸업생이라고 이해하는데요/알고있는데요.”
“정확히는 아니에요,” “아, 맞아요, 옥스퍼드에 갔다고 아는데.” “네, 거기에/그곳에 갔지요.”
At nine o’clock, one morning late July Gatsby’s gorgeous car lurched up the rocky drive to my door and gave out a burst of melody from its three noted horn...

“Good morning, old sport. You’re having lunch with me today and I thought we’d ride up together.”

[학생 1] “좋은 아침이야, 친구야. 점심 먹고 나랑갈이 차타고 갈까 있으면 하는데.”


[학생 3] “좋은 아침이에요, 친구. 오늘 당신은 나랑 점심을 먹으니가 같이 차를 타고 가는게 좋겠다고 생각했어요.”

[학생 4] “여보게, 좋은 아침. 오늘 나랑 같이 점심 먹지. 내가 태워줄까 하는데…”

[학생 5] “좋은 아침입니다. 친구. 오늘 나랑 점심 같이 합시다. 같이 차 타고 가죠.”

Students’ reflections on what they learned

1. Vocabulary and expressions
2. Differences between the two languages in terms of grammar and structure
3. Better understanding of Korean
4. Use of imagination
5. More “brain” use

Linguistic proficiency
Translingual competence
Cultural awareness
Critical thinking & Creativity
Learning through Translation

• **Course:**

Korean 111

5th year Readings – Reading and Analysis of Advanced Korean Texts

• **Students:**

Many have attended elementary schools in Korea for some years.
Procedure

Session 1
1) Pre-lesson survey on translation
2) Introduction on an American author Raymond Carver and his works
3) Warm-up exercise: translation of a part of a short story and a poem by Raymond Carver where students’ translations are compared
4) Assignment for next class: students read an original short story in English, The Cathedral (1983), and translate a given part of the story into Korean
Late Fragment

And did you get what you wanted from this life, even so?
I did.
And what did you want?
To call myself beloved, to feel myself beloved on the earth.

III. Author's Perspective

Raymond Carver

Commonplace but Precise Language 1983

It's possible, in a poem or a short story, to write about commonplace things and objects using commonplace but precise language, and to endow those things—a chair, a window curtain, a fork, a stone, a woman's earing—with immense, even startling power. It is possible to write a line of seemingly innocuous dialogue and have it send a chill along the reader's spine—the source of artistic delight, as Nabokov would have it. That's the kind of writing that most interests me. I hate sloppy or haphazard writing whether it flies under the banes of experimentation or else is just clumsily rendered realism.

In Isaac Bashevis Singer's wonderful short story, "Guy de Maupassant," the narrator has this to say about the writing of fiction: "No iron can pierce the heart with such force as a period put just at the right place." This too ought to go on a three-by-five.

Even Camus said once that he knew he was finished with a short story when he found himself going through it and taking out commas and then going through the story again and putting commas back in the same places. I like that way of working on something. I respect that kind of care for what is being done. That's all we have, finally, the words, and they had better be the right ones, with the punctuation in the right places so that they can best say what we are meant to say. If the words are heavy with the writer's own unbridled emotions, or if they are imprecise and inaccurate for some reason—if the words are in any way blurred—the reader's eyes will slide right over them and nothing will be achieved. The reader's own artistic sense will simply not be engaged. Henry James called this sort of hopelessly writing "weak specifications."

I have friends who've told me they had to bury a book because they needed the money, that editor or their wife was wanting them or leaving them—something, some apology for the writing not being very good. "It would have been better if I'd taken the time." I was dumbfounded when I heard a novelist friend say this. I still am. I think about it, and which I don't. It's none of my business. But if the writing can't be made as good as it is within us to make it, then why do it? In the end, the satisfaction of having done our best, and the proof of that labor, is one thing we can take into the grave.

"On Writing"
But instead of dying, she got sick. She threw up. Her officer—why should he have a name? he was the childhood sweetheart, and what more does he want?—came home from somewhere, found her, and called the ambulance. In time, she put it all on a tape and sent the tape to the blind man. Over the years, she put all kinds of stuff on tapes and sent the tapes off lickety-split. Next to writing a poem every year, I think it was her chief means of recreation. On one tape, she told the blind man she'd decided to live away from her officer for a time. On another tape, she told him about her divorce. She and I began going out, and of course she told her blind man about it. She told him everything, or so it seemed to me. Once she asked me if I'd like to hear the latest tape from the blind man. This was a year ago. I was on the tape, she said. So I said okay, I'd listen to it. I got us drinks and we settled down in the living room. We made ready to listen. First she inserted the tape into the player and adjusted a couple of dials. Then she pushed a lever. The tape squeaked and someone began to talk in this loud voice. She lowered the volume. After a few minutes of harmless chitchat, I heard my own name in the mouth of this stranger, this blind man I didn't even know! And then this: “From all you've said about him, I can only conclude—” But we were interrupted, a knock at the door, something, and we didn't ever get back to the tape. Maybe it was just as well. I'd heard all I wanted to.

Now this same blind man was coming to sleep in my house.

“Maybe I could take him bowling,” I said to my wife. She was at the draining board doing scalloped potatoes. She put down the knife she was using and turned around.

“If you love me,” she said, “you can do this for me. If you don't love me, okay. But if you had a friend, any friend, and the friend came to visit, I'd make him feel comfortable.” She wiped her hands with the dish towel.

“I don't have any blind friends,” I said.

“You don't have any friends,” she said. “Period. Besides,” she said, “goddamn it, his wife's just died! Don't you understand that? The man's lost his wife!”

I didn't answer. She'd told me a little about the blind man's wife. Her name was Beulah. Beulah! That's a name for a colored woman.

“Was his wife a Negro?” I asked.

“Are you crazy?” my wife said. “Have you just flipped or something?” She picked up a potato. I saw it hit the floor, then roll under the stove. “What's wrong with you?” she said. “Are you drunk?”

“I'm just asking,” I said.

Right then my wife filled me in with more detail than I cared to know. I made a drink and sat at the kitchen table to listen. Pieces of the story began to fall into place.
Session 2 - Discussion
1) Main characters and their relationships to one another
2) Appropriate speech styles in Korean among the characters
3) Choice of certain reference terms and expressions
4) Likes and dislikes about the story
5) Assignment for next class: students read the translated version, *대성당*, 2014, 레이먼드 카버 / 김연수 (옮긴이), 문학동네 세계문학전집 119, 285~311

Session 3 – Discussion
1) Evaluation of the published translation
2) Comparison of students’ own translation and the published translation
**Procedure (cont’d)**

*Final paper assignment*

1) Revise and submit the final version of the translation assignment

2) Compare the students’ own translation with the published Korean version of the book

3) Discuss the experience of translation and reading the same story in English and Korean

4) Reflection on the story
Translation of a literary piece

• Raymond Carver
  (1938-1988, American)

• Main characters and speech style choice

  ‘I’
  ‘the blind man’ (Robert)
  ‘my wife’

번역본

학생들

[번역본][학생들] 맹인, 장님, 시각장애인
Comparison of translations: Reference terms

- Negro
  [번역본] 니그로
  [학생들] 흑인, 깃등이, 검둥이

- Bub
  [번역본] 이 사람아, 젊은 양반, 이보게
  [학생들] 자네, 이보게, 친구, 젊은이, 꼬마신사분, 젊은 친구, 아

수업 시간에는 ‘젊은이’나 ‘친구’ 정도로 번역하는 것이 맞는 것 같다는 얘기가 나왔지만, 서로에게 존댓말을 쓰는 세팅에서 로버트가 주인공에게 ‘젊은이’라고 하는 것은 무리가 있었다. ‘친구’도 어감이 좀 이상했다. 내가 정한 세팅에서 말이 되는 것은 ‘남편분‘과 ‘...씨’ 정도가 있는데, 주인공의 이름을 (독자가) 모르니 ‘...씨’라 부르 수도 없고 ‘남편분‘이라 하는 것도 좀 어색하게 들렸다. 그래서 난 그냥 ‘아’라고 번역했다. 사람을 부르기 위한 단어가 아니라 자신이 말한다는 것을 알리는 그런 정도의 단어로. [S1]
Comparison of translations

(1) I didn’t blame him for that.
“비슷한 듯 싶지만 자세히 들여다보면 다른 뜻을 가지고 있는 표현들이다” (S12)

번역본 [그건 뭐라고 할 수 없었다
학교] 그의 탓을 할 수는 없었다, 나는 그의 행동을 비난하지 않았다,
뭐라 할 수 있는 것이 아니었다, 나는 그를 이해하였다

(2) Spiffy.
‘ 멀끔멀끔
학교] 멋쟁이군, 볼., 깔끔했다, 말쑥했다

(3) “(……) Now watch it, there’s a chair. That’s it. (……)”
‘맹인이기 때문에 아내가 더 깊은 생각으로 말을 했을 거라 저는 생각이 들어서 ‘느껴질 거예요’라고 썼습니다.” (S13)
Translation of Pronouns

(1) My wife said, “I want you to meet Robert. Robert, this is my husband. I’ve told you all about him.”


(2) But they were there.

[번역본] 그래도 차이는 있었다.

[S16] 하지만 그들은 거기에 있었다.

“영어에서는 대명사를 자주 사용하지만 한국어에서는 가끔 사용한다” (S1)

(3) She and I began going out, and of course she told her blind man about it.

[번역본] 그녀와 나는 만나기 시작했고 당연히 그녀는 그 일을 맹인에게 말했다.

[S1] 그녀와 내가 사귈 때도 그녀는 어김없이 그것을 그녀의 장님에게 말했다.
Positive Effects of Translation Practice

• Effective in learning subtle differences among synonyms
• Helps students think critically
• Translation reflects each student’s different societal values with respect to factors such as gender, age, and personal stance on understanding of the historical and political context
• Enhances students’ translingual and transcultural competences
• Rare opportunity to teach grammar in advanced classes
• Special writing activity where students are forced to use new vocabulary
• Promotes learner-oriented learning, flexibility, and creativity
• Advanced students can create their own styles of translation: fostering future translators
Challenges & Future Improvement

1. Text selection can be challenging
   - Writing style
   - Messages of the story
   - Students are not always interested in literature
2. Difficulties with classes with mixed level students
3. Develop on evaluation criteria and test materials

Thank you.


“I don’t have any blind friends,” I said.

“You don’t have any friends,” she said. “Period. Besides,” she said, “god-damn it, his wife’s just died! (...)”
Students’ reflections and comments

• “나는 부모님과 많은 사람을 위해 매일같이 통역하며 자라왔기 때문에 이번에 책을 번역한다고 들었을 때 분명히 쉬울 것이라고 생각했다. 하지만 번역을 하며 생각보다 어렵다는 것을 느꼈다.” (S#11)
• “영어 단어가 구사하는 느낌을 그대로 한국어로 옮기는 것이 가장 큰 과제였다.” (S#4)
• “영어 용은 어렵게 번역을 할까 고민도 했었다. 그래도 번역은 재미있었다. 우선 자신감이 생겼다. 미국에 살면서 영어와 한국어를 번갈아 써야 하는데 번역 연습이 많은 도움이 된다고 생각한다.” (S#1)
• “번역을 하는 내내 호칭과 존댓말을 통일하는 데 계속해서 신경을 써야 했다. (...) 번역하면서 전체 소설을 읽지 않고서는 절대 내용을 정확하게 번역할 수 없었을 것이라는 점을 깨달았다.” (S#12)
• “번역이라는 작업은 이중언어를 (머릿속으로) 동시에 사용하게 한다는 점이 새로웠고 흥미로웠다.” (S#16)
• “번역을 함으로써 책에 대한 이해도도 더 높아진 것 같다.” (S#8)
• “언어를 완벽하게 구사하는 것은 물론이고 각 나라의 문화와 표현법도 잘 알아야 한다는 점을 직접 느낄 수 있었다.” (S#21)