The Translation Industry in Taiwan in the Context of Globalisation: Facing the Development of Professional Translation and Master of Translation and Interpreting

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Abstract
The post-World Trade Organization economic boom prompted Mainland China to set up regulations for the practice of translation, and in 2007, to establish professional Master of Translation and Interpreting (MTI) degrees, creating a whole new system for cultivating professional translators. Taiwan has reacted slowly in the face of this great change. By discussing related concepts such as the core values of MTI, teaching methods, industrialisation, and market needs, this paper aims to point out how developments of translation programs across the Strait differ. Further, this paper presents how the concepts of “manufacturing-oriented translation” and “service-oriented translation” influence Taiwan’s translation industries in the context of globalisation and emergent MTIs. Highlighted is the need for Taiwan to look beyond manufacturing-oriented translation and find its niche in the translation process.

Keywords
translation industry, Master of Translation and Interpreting (MTI), manufacturing industry, service industry

1. Introduction: Discrepancy in translation degrees across the Strait

Since James S. Holmes presented his influential article “The Name and Nature of Translation Studies” (Holmes 1972, 2000), the focus of translation studies and translation theories has shifted many times, and translation studies have prospered. The overall framework was presented as a figure by Gideon Toury (Toury 1995: 10), and further expanded by Jeremy Munday (2001). However, even the expanded version is outdated by now; failing to cover some important fields such as the use of corpus, and the study of translation industries, which is the starting point of this paper (See Figure 1).
Figure 1. The applied branch of translation studies

In Chinese-speaking regions, economic activities have been booming since Mainland China entered the World Trade Organization in 2001. Within this new globalised context, many translation companies were established (Song 2007: 2), and translation activities flourished. This trend prompted Mainland China to set up MA programs for Translation Studies; first established at Shanghai International Studies University in 2003-2004. Afterwards, in 2006, Zhong Weihe (仲偉合) et al. further proposed a “new direction for translation studies”, suggesting to set up programs for “Masters of Professional Translation” (專業碩士) (Zhong 2006). The concept of “profession of translation” (翻譯專業) shifted from the translation of English literature (Chen 2002), to those of the mainstream translation industry. And Tian-Zhen Xie even claimed that “literature translation has been marginalized, and we [Chinese] are now in the era of professionalization of translation” (Xie 2013: 8).

In 2007, the Beijing government officially authorised 15 universities, including Beijing University, to set up programs for a professional Master of Translation and Interpreting (MTI) degree. The total number of universities/colleges offering such degrees further came to 159 in November 2013, creating a trend that could not be neglected. According to Article 1 in “Plan of Setting up Professional Master of Translation and Interpreting” (翻譯碩士專業學位設置方案), MTI is a professional program which aims to cultivate “high-level, application-oriented high-end translators” (高層次、應