



Translation of strategies into practice

With reference to PhD-study Søren Obed Madsen, 2013, PhD School LIMAC, CBS:
“Lederen som oversætter - et oversættelsesteoretisk perspektiv på strategisk arbejde”

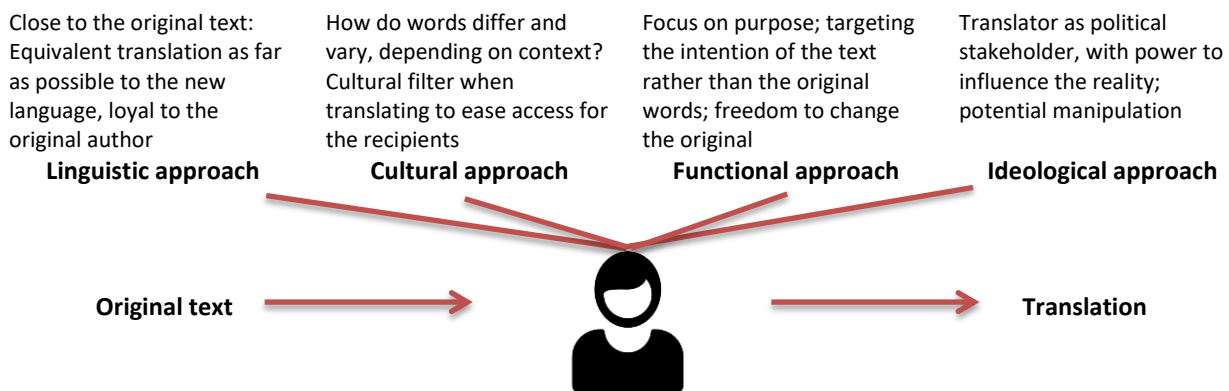
IN SHORT

The study shows that the actual translator (typically a local manager) plays a crucial role for the implementation of a strategy. The actual implementation does not always fit the original intentions and can vary locally.

In See the goal, we interpret the official learning outcomes from the regulations (legislation) as representing the national “strategy” for educating qualified skilled workers. There is a lack between these national strategy papers and the local implementation. The translation processes are neither transparent nor undertaken systematically.

TRANSLATION THEORY: 4 PERSPECTIVES

4 perspectives in translation theory (Munday, 2008; Pym, 2010):



VERSIONS OF STRATEGIES

Emergent strategies:

- Several versions aside with the original
- the original version is the formal version, which is approved by the decision makers

Practitioners will choose that translation which seems to be easiest to understand and implement. They are not caught in one language.

THE TRANSLATORS

A translator is the “in-between” the strategy and practice. He/she connects elements that normally are apart. Translators have to be courage, creative, smart and patient.

4th January 2016

Presentation:

<https://prezi.com/zg8y-bssevef/from-strategy-to-practice/>



In VET, the translators of ordinances, inclusively the in-company learning outcomes, are:

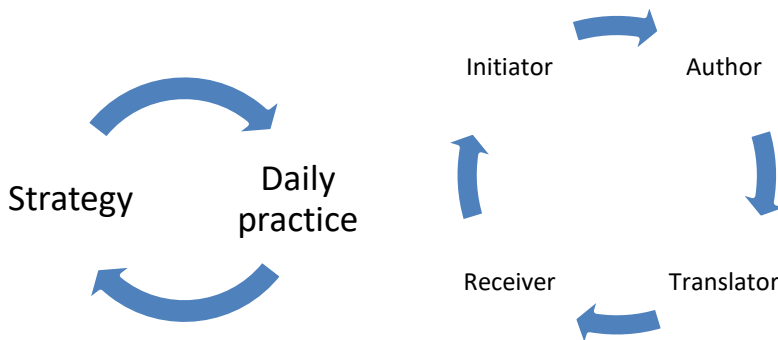
- VET colleges: Educational managers, coordinators, consultants
- Training companies: Directors, HR managers, foremen, trainers (skilled workers)

Can and do all of them read and understand the original strategy? Practitioners may choose the easiest version for them to implement. Thus, there is a risk of that the translator “betrays” the original version.

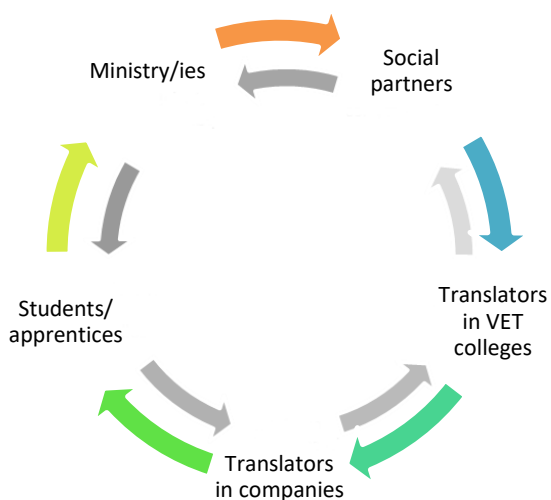
THE CHARACTER OF A STRATEGY

A strategy is not neutral, it will change processes and people. This leads to questions:

- How uniform should the strategy have to be understood?
- How static or how adaptable is your strategy?
- How can the strategy be aligned with daily practice? - Is there a mutual influence?



In See the goal: How does the flow and mutual influence, from ordinance to practice and back to the original strategy document, work locally?



In VET, the ordinances (or according strategical documents) and formal learning outcomes have to be supplemented with plans, such as training plans.

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STRATEGY AS A PLAN, A PROCESS OR A TEXT

A strategy covers aspects of both a plan and a process. A plan is static, while a process is adoptable.

If the strategy is interpreted more as a plan: Fits more hierarchical organizations, with a univocal approach, the managers decide.

If the strategy is interpreted more as a process: There is an arena for negotiations, with a multivocal approach, the paradigm is based on network-thinking.

(Analytical framework:)

Strategy is	A plan	A process	A text
Function	The strategy document instructs receiver on what to do. Reduces the possibilities for the practitioners.	The strategy document offers a range of possibilities to relate to for the practitioners, such as relations, negotiations and power games.	The strategy document offers a range of possibilities, which the translator can use or not. A strategy is something you create from an original.
Success	When the goals of the plan are achieved.	When the processes are conducted and their success criteria are fulfilled.	Dependent on the translator's model for translation.
Anticipations	"Methodological individualism": The world is static. The strategy is firm and subjected to the environment. Highly predictable.	"Methodological collectivism": The world moves. The strategy is not firm and adapts to the environment. Highly unpredictable.	"Pragmatic methodological individualism": The world moves and is static at the same time. The strategy has both firm and flexible elements. The strategy adapts to and influences the environment at the same time.
Role of the managers	The managers have a special knowledge, which enables them to describe what can make the strategy succeed. The managers follow up on the strategy and make things happen.	The managers negotiate with others and have to stay up-to-date with the things going on, internally as well as externally. The group makes things happen.	A manager can be author, translator or receiver. The translators can be in dialogue with the authors, but usually will be on their own with the task. The interaction between individual practitioners and groups make things happen.
Organization	Hierarchical and univocal. Formed by harmony, where all strive for the same goal. Uniform culture and uniform language.	Arena for negotiations, coalitions and multivocal. Formed by interest conflicts between vital practitioners. Differentiated culture and language.	Network and hierarchical. Univocal and unison, dependent on context. One or more authors. Up to the translators to translate the text for a decent understanding of the practitioners. Differentiated cultures and languages, which need translators to be able to understand each other. The translator is mastered by the initiator.

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WORK QUESTIONS & CONCLUSIONS

“Do you see the formal learning outcomes (LOs) as a plan, a process or a text?”

“Who are the translators?”

“How do they choose how to translate the LOs: which perspective + which change?”

“Do you align emergent versions?”

“(How) do you forward experience from practice to the LOs?”

When video recording, we want to:

- a) identify our own bias
- b) make conscious decisions on WHAT and HOW to film
- c) be able to communicate our decisions
- d) contribute to further improvement