The use of grammatical metaphor and translation competence
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Abstract
A great deal of research has shown that the learner’s ability to comprehend and use metaphors in a given language as used in natural discourse is positively correlated with learner proficiency in that language (Liardét, 2013). This study is aimed to test the possible relationship between native Chinese-speakers’ ability to use English grammatical metaphor (GM) and their translation competence from Chinese into English. The working definition and measurement of GM in this study followed Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday & Metthiessen, 2004). Fifty Chinese into English translation pieces were examined for the usage of GM. The translations were made by the candidates who took the Chinese and English Translation and Interpretation Competency Examinations 2010 and scored between 61 and 91 out of 100. The scores were considered as a valid and reliable representation of the candidates’ translation competence since the examinations were held by the Ministry of Education, Taiwan. The usage counts of GM identified and marked manually by the author together with the official scores were subjected to Correlation Analysis and Regression Analysis. The results support the hypothesis that native Chinese-speakers’ ability to use GM is positively correlated with their translation competence into their second language (English). This study has the potential research and pedagogical implications to extend our understanding of the importance of metaphor from language acquisition and learning to the context of translation studies.

Keywords: grammatical metaphor, translation competence, systemic functional grammar

References