Two approaches to quality in institutional settings
Comparison of the revision policies of an intergovernmental organisation and the Swiss Confederation

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Abstract

This paper addresses translation quality assurance and revision policies in two institutional contexts: an intergovernmental organisation (Institution A) and the Swiss Confederation (Institution B). It is based on 20 semi-structured interviews with heads of department, translators and revisers. The analysis is organised in two parts. First, the main aspects of the quality assurance models in place are described and categorised based on the models defined by Joanna Drugan (2013). Second, extending Gabriel González Núñez's (2016) translation policy concept to revision, the paper describes and compares the revision policies of the two translation departments and highlights some advantages and disadvantages of each as put forward by participants. The analysis shows that the organisation of work and the approach to revision is very different in the two institutions. The comparison brings to light significant differences in practice but also notes several beliefs regarding revision shared by both teams. Other findings are that the hierarchical structure in place in Institution A can be burdensome and that discussions organised in Institution B are appreciated overall.

Keywords: revision, institutional translation, interviews, revision policy

1 Introduction

Quality and quality assurance are topics that have boomed lately in translation research and practices. In Translation Studies, the number of works addressing this issue has increased in recent years (Drugan 2013; Koby & Lacruz 2017; Mellinger 2018; Moorkens, Castilho, Gaspari & Doherty 2018; Prieto Ramos 2018; Svoboda, Biel & Łoboda 2017). In the translation industry, the publication of standards – in particular EN 15038 (CEN 2006) and ISO 17100 (ISO 2015) – has focused on quality. Revision is central to quality management, as shown by the fact that it is mandatory in both standards mentioned above. To be certified, a text must have been revised.

The significance of revision goes beyond the fact that it is often a mandatory step in the production of translations. The activity is also expensive, time-consuming and risky, in at least two ways: first, in terms of text quality, which can be compromised, e.g. through the introduction of errors (Brunette, Gagnon & Hine 2005; Künzli 2007; Pontrandolfo

2017; van Rensburg 2017) and second, it can lead to conflict. These two types of risk result from the fact that revision impacts upon both product and process.

Far from a uniform practice, revision encompasses a variety of procedures. Sometimes translation and revision are carried out by colleagues of the same rank, while in other contexts revisers are higher in the hierarchy, which entitles them to make any changes they find necessary (Jakobsen 2019). In the institutional context, examples of these two models are the EU, where all translators revise each other's work, and the UN, where only senior translators are allowed to (Lafeber 2018). In order to determine precisely what the term revision covers, it is necessary to have contextual information, such as the people involved, the nature of the text to be revised, or the procedure applied. This paper examines the act of revision in two institutions from the perspective of the actors involved, using in-depth interviews. It aims to answer the following questions: what is the place of revision in the quality models of two very different institutions? What are the similarities and differences between the two revision policies in place? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two revision policies from the point of view of the actors involved?

The relevance of this study is based on four points. First, while the two models of revision and quality management examined in this paper are well known in the profession, they have never been described in detail nor have they been compared. Second, in Translation Studies, works on quality have been mainly concerned with the quality of the product (Jääskeläinen 2016). The same applies to the literature on revision, which primarily focuses on the analysis of the quality of revised texts or on the factors that lead to the highest quality, e.g. procedures (Brunette *et al.* 2005; Ipsen & Dam 2016; Robert 2012) or the profile of revisers (Pontrandolfo 2017; van Rensburg 2017). One could however argue that quality should be considered from a broader perspective, with proponents like Kristiina Abdallah's which offers a three-dimensional concept of quality, composed of product, process and social quality (see Jääskeläinen 2016). Social quality as an object of study in that field has been largely neglected so far and examining the point of view of the actors seems a good way to shed light on it. Third, works on revision management are still scarce (Rasmussen & Schjoldager 2011; Schnierer 2019), and more studies are needed. Fourth, revision has received little attention in the expanding field of institutional translation. The main works specifically devoted to revision in institutional contexts are analyses by practitioners (Martin 2007; Prioux & Rochard 2007; Yousif 2009).

The remainder of this paper will proceed as follows: section 2 focuses on data and method, while section 3 describes the quality models in use in the two contexts studied and categorises them based on the models defined by Joanna Drugan (2013). Section 4, which forms the main part of this article, focuses on the revision policy implemented in the two departments. The departments are first described individually and then compared.

2 Data and method

This paper presents some of the preliminary results of an interview-based study undertaken as part of a PhD thesis on the translator-reviser relationship. It is based on 20 semi-structured in-depth interviews (total time: 27 hours and 21 minutes) conducted in two

translation departments with department heads, revisers[1] and translators. Twelve interviews were carried out in a large intergovernmental organisation (Institution A) and eight in a medium-sized language department of the Swiss Confederation (Institution B). These interviews were supplemented by informal conversations and document analysis. Through in-depth interviews, the researcher can gather actors' subjective views and thus understand work practices through the beliefs and narratives formulated. Although they provide indirect information, in-depth interviews are appropriate to study practices (Kaufmann 2016) and, like other qualitative methods, help collect rich, contextual data (Rubin & Rubin 2012; Miles, Saldaña & Huberman 2014). This research project is conceived of as a case study, in which the cases are selected for their theoretical relevance and, as such, inform the broader topic (Dumez 2015). As the approach is qualitative, the main goal is to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon under study.

This study received ethical approval from the Ethical Review Board of the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting of the University of Geneva. The participants were handed an Information and Consent Form, which they had to sign before the start of the interview. They could choose not to be recorded and their right to withdraw from the study was clearly stated. Data is stored on a server at the University of Geneva and recordings will be deleted when the study is completed.

The first step in the data production process was to conduct six exploratory interviews, which helped define the questions and gain familiarity with the topic. Then the 20 interviews mentioned above were conducted between March 2019 and March 2020. Access to the field was first negotiated with the department heads, following which other staff were interviewed. All interviews were face-to-face and took place at participants' workplaces (with one exception, via Skype, in March 2020). Interviews were conducted in a mode inspired by the concept of "responsive interviewing" as defined by Rubin and Rubin (2012) and drew on a general interview guide customised to the situation. Depending on the discussion, some topics were addressed in more detail than others. As a freelance translator, I had prior knowledge of the contexts studied. For example, I undertook a five-month internship at the Swiss Confederation (in another department), and most of my translation teachers worked in the intergovernmental sector.

Because of the respective size of the two departments, I chose two separate approaches to contact interviewees. In the medium-sized department, it was both possible and desirable to meet the majority of the employees. I thus emailed the translators on a shortlist provided by the department head (some did not want to be contacted). All agreed to take part in the study. Overall, 67% of the department employees were interviewed. In the larger department, it would have been impossible and methodologically irrelevant to meet such a large proportion of the team. After the interview with the department head, I first emailed eight randomly selected permanent staff, of whom four agreed to be interviewed. I also contacted directly an acquaintance who frequently works as a temporary translator for the institution, and a reviser whom I knew through the course of my academic activities, both of whom agreed to take part in the study. After these first seven interviews, it

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[1] In intergovernmental organisations, revisers are senior translators who are authorised to revise (and still translate).

seemed necessary to meet more revisers, especially those recently appointed and those mostly working in the main domain of the section, both profiles missing at that time. The aim was to encompass the diversity of profiles in the department, as diversity is a major factor that boosts validity in qualitative approaches (Flick 2018; Saldaña 2011). Therefore, I asked the department head to identify people in these two categories. I then contacted five people, four of whom agreed to participate. In this department, I thus conducted twelve interviews, including one with the head of the section in charge of proofreading.

I transcribed all the interviews verbatim following my own transcription system, using a denaturalised approach, i.e. full transcription without involuntary vocalisation and with some grammatical corrections (Oliver, Serovich & Mason 2005). Following LeBlanc (2014), I chose not to name the institutions to help ensure confidentiality. In line with Miles *et al.* (2014), I view analysis as an extended process that begins with the first data collection. To feed the ongoing analysis of my data, I transcribed the interviews progressively, kept a field diary, wrote memos in transcripts, and drew up two summaries – one long and one short – for each interview. All this material has been subject to content analysis (Saldaña 2011), which has led to the preliminary findings presented here.

3 Two distinct quality models: "experience-dependent" and "maximalist"

This section aims to present the two departments and to describe their quality model. Quality management in translation departments involves much more than revision (Drugan 2013; Drugan, Strandvik & Vuorinen 2018). It encompasses a wide array of topics ranging from recruitment and training to pre-processing of texts, CAT tools, terminology management, feedback and relationships with clients. However, checking a text plays a key role in quality management: it is one of the main factors that distinguish the five top-down quality models defined by Drugan (2013: 125–157), whose first model is maximalist, so called because all translations undergo a full revision procedure. The experience-dependent model refers to the case in which the processing of the text depends on the profile – and hence proficiency – of the translator: translations from experienced translators are not treated the same as translations from juniors. A client-driven quality model means that the clients' input determines quality assurance. In the content-dependent approach, the content of the document determines the procedure, while in the purpose-dependent approach, it is the purpose of the translated text that determines it.

Some elements of Table 1 (on the next page) call for comment. The dichotomy between revision as suggestions and revision as corrections is established for the sake of clarity and must be tempered in the case of the Swiss Confederation. There, while in-text interventions are basically suggestions, some are clearly corrections and therefore not optional (such as typos, spelling or grammar mistakes). Moreover, position in the team plays a role. Interns tend to accept suggestions, while the department head recognised that his suggestions are more likely to be taken than others'.

Table 1: Main features of quality management in the two departments studied, based on interviews and the institutions' website

	Intergovernmental organisation, Institution A	Swiss Confederation, Institution B
Language pairs	Mostly English>French (some other secondary languages)	Mostly German>French (a few texts English>French or Italian>French)
Functions	Translators, revisers Occasionally short-term interns	Only translators Long-term interns (one at a time)
Outsourcing	~25%	Low to almost none depending on the year
Resource persons	Translators: questions to revisers Revisers: work mostly independently, but can consult other revisers No contact with commissioners	Questions to colleagues, including the German translators Questions to commissioners (often the author of the source text)
Which texts are revised?	Texts from translators; revisers are self-revised	All texts
By whom?	Revisers only	All staff members
Types of revision	Full revision Light revision for experienced translators on certain kinds of texts Basic quality control for outsourced texts (spot check to assess overall quality)	Only full bilingual revision (limited exceptions for texts with tight deadlines)
Post-revision steps	Evaluation sheet (not always, due to lack of time) Sometimes: additional discussion	Oral examination of the revisions When on-screen revision: discussion only if questions
Revision status	Correction	Suggestions
Responsibility for revised text	Reviser	Shared responsibility, but mainly with translators
Post-translation check	Proofreading by a separate unit	Sometimes: review by domain expert or checks by commissioners

One difference lies in the people whose help is sought to solve a problem. In Institution A, revisers, i.e. colleagues with the same mother tongue, are the main resource. In Institution B, colleagues with the same mother tongue are obviously resource people too, but German-speaking colleagues are often called upon to solve an issue raised by the source text. Moreover, commissioners (often the authors) are usually solicited and play a critical role, as shown by this quote from the department head: "Not to call the commissioner, that is not normal. We have the commissioners on hand, that is an extraordinary privilege, because it is rare that a text doesn't raise questions"[2].

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[2] "ne pas téléphoner au donneur d'ouvrage, ce n'est pas normal. On a les donneurs d'ouvrage sous la main, c'est un privilège extraordinaire parce que c'est rare qu'un texte ne soulève pas de questions"

The quality management approaches of Institutions A and B both correspond to one of the top-down models defined by Drugan (2013). The intergovernmental organisation's quality policy conforms to Drugan's experience-dependent model (Drugan 2013: 140–145), in which junior staff work under the supervision of senior colleagues, who revise their translations extensively. One difference between Institution A's model and the model described by Drugan is that, in the former, revisers do not have the possibility of being revised. In contrast, Institution B mostly runs a maximalist quality model, according to Drugan's typology (Drugan 2013: 127–133), which means that every translation receives a full bilingual revision (with few exceptions).

What both models have in common is that quality is paramount, which comes as no surprise as both institutions work with sensitive content. Another common feature is that there is always some form of post-translation review, although of different types: by a colleague in Institution B and by the administrative staff of the section in charge of proofreading in Institution A. This check was praised during the interviews, e.g. by this reviser who stated that their work is "really necessary, it guarantees the general quality of everything produced"[3]. I would like to highlight here that French spelling and grammar rules are particularly complex. Moreover, revision plays a key role in both departments, although it is organised, practiced and viewed differently. These differences reflect distinct revision policies, which are the focus of the next section.

4 Revision policies in institutions A and B

This section discusses the revision policy implemented in the two contexts studied. Gabriel González Núñez (2016) recently defined translation policy as the conjunction of translation management, translation practice, and translation beliefs. Translation management consists of decisions relating to "the use or non-use of translation within a domain", translation practice refers to the way translation is carried out, and translations beliefs group together the views about translation held by "members of a community" (González Núñez 2016: 92). According to González Núñez, the three are in a dynamic relationship, i.e. they influence and can contradict one another.

Extending this concept to revision, I have defined revision policy as the sum of revision management, revision practice and revision beliefs. Revision management consists of decisions relating to the context in which revision is carried out, such as the kind of texts that are revised or who can revise. Revision practice refers mainly to the procedures applied during revision, the interventions in the text and the various steps (e.g. post-revision talk). In this study, revision practice should be understood as a claimed practice, since the method used provides indirect access to it. Finally, revision beliefs relate to the prevailing opinions about revision in the contexts studied.

The first two subsections hereunder set out the revision policies of the two departments under scrutiny as described by the interviewees, starting with the intergovernmental organisation (Institution A, subsection 4.1) followed by the Swiss Confederation

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[3] "c'est un travail…vraiment indispensable, ça permet de garantir la qualité générale de tout ce qui est produit"

(Institution B, subsection 4.2). Each subsection starts with the description of a translation job, followed by an analysis of the main elements of the department's revision policy (management, practice and beliefs). The third subsection is a comparison of the revision practice of the two departments (paragraph 4.3.1) and their beliefs (paragraph 4.3.2).

4.1 Revision at the intergovernmental organisation: a path to full proficiency

4.1.1 Description of a translation job from assignment to delivery of the revised translation

In Institution A, one of the experienced revisers distributes the jobs among the section's members according to competence, domain, availability and deadlines. Some documents are outsourced. For the texts translated in-house, three distinct procedures are used. The translation job may be given to a reviser. As revisers are self-revised, there is no second look by a colleague. Alternatively, the work may be assigned to a translator and a reviser. The latter will correct the former's translation. Finally, the task may be given to a translator as monitored self-revision, in which there is still a check by a reviser, but looser (the guideline is to spend a third of the time allocated to a normal revision process). This middle-ground solution is used for some experienced translators for limited types of documents. According to the department head, all three procedures are expected to achieve the same level of quality. I will focus on the case in which the translation is followed by a full revision, because self-revised translation is less relevant to an analysis of revision policy and monitored self-revision is a secondary modality.

Translators work without knowing who will be in charge of the revision. When they encounter problems, they can ask a subject-matter coordinator. They must insert comments regarding anything potentially useful to revisers, such as documentation used, sources for terms or expressions, justifications, or problems encountered. Comments are an important time-saving tool for revisers and are numerous in texts, as mentioned by both translators ("my texts are just a series of comments"[4]) and revisers ("there are a lot of people who put in a lot of comments"[5]).

Revisers correct the text in Word in track changes mode. Paper is hardly used nowadays: some use it to revise (among other things, for the final read-through), but most work directly on screen. The revision is a full bilingual revision. Revisers sometimes insert comments to emphasise a correction or explain something to the translator, who has access to the revised document. The revised translation then goes to the section in charge of proofreading.

4.1.2 Salient features of the revision policy

Revisers have a specific function with rights and responsibilities distinct from those of translators. This hierarchical type organisation has major consequences. As revisers are

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[4] "mes textes ne sont qu'une suite de commentaires"
[5] "il y a plein de gens qui mettent plein de commentaires"

responsible for the revised translations, they can proceed with any change deemed necessary and have the final say. In interviews, revisers mentioned that they tended to amend the text in case of doubt and that they sometimes made changes that resulted from personal feeling or preference.

Studies about trust between actors involved in the translation process have shown that it is a complex process, affected by various factors (Abdallah & Koskinen 2007; Olohan & Davitti 2017). In revision, trust plays a key role because revisers – as the persons responsible for the final translation – must check virtually everything, which is impossible. Trust can depend upon different elements: works previously revised, a translator's reputation or the impression made by the first sentences. Comments play a key role in establishing trust, especially when reviser and translator do not know each other (well). Translators use them to show revisers they have worked rigorously and carefully. They have to learn how to insert comments into their translation in a way that is useful to revisers. When trust is broken, revision becomes tedious, and the degree of intervention increases, as stated by revisers.

In Institution A, revisers are also in charge of evaluating the completed translations, as was the case traditionally in Canada, which has a long tradition in revision didactics and research (Horguelin & Brunette 1998). Evaluation takes the form of a sheet that revisers fill in after the revision, sometimes supplemented by a discussion (typically when the evaluation is negative). As mentioned by the department head, the purpose of the evaluation is twofold: it is a tool for translators to see what they did well and less well in a given translation job as well as a way of assessing translators' performance and progression. Interviews revealed that the evaluation process is very burdensome for translators in general. In particular, evaluation sheets are a significant source of stress. Several revisers lamented having to evaluate their colleagues, even though they recognised that management needs comprehensive evaluation of in-house translators.

The two statuses – translators and revisers – imply a clear distinction in identity, and translators may suffer from the asymmetric relationship. On the other hand, revisers sometimes feel they have to do the translators' job for them, for example by supplementing insufficient research. Some participants, including some revisers, regretted this clear distinction and argued for more collaboration among department members.

In Institution A, revision works somewhat like the old apprentice system, where novices learn their craft from a master. Translators learn best practices and acquire a professional vision (Goodwin 1994) from revisers. Several revisers mentioned that they very much enjoyed teaching rookies the tricks of the trade.

4.2 Revision at the Swiss Confederation: a necessary look and a tool supporting teamwork

4.2.1 Description of a translation job from assignment to delivery of the revised translation

In Institution B, three people – the department head, his deputy and a translator – alternate to distribute work. When a translation request comes in, the person in charge of work

allocation gives the job to a colleague and assigns two or three potential revisers among the other translators. The decisive factor in job assignment is firstly availability and secondly, domain knowledge. Pairs are established to balance strengths and weaknesses of department members. Translators have to ensure that one of the assigned revisers will have time to check their text. As mentioned in section 3, when they encounter problems, they can consult any colleague: French- or German-speaking translators or the author of the source text. Translators use comments to provide information to their revising colleague. An internal rule requires that expressions, sentences or passages about which there is any doubt, must be highlighted.

Revision is full and bilingual, except if time is short (monolingual revision). It generally consists of suggestions and corrections, indicated as such (paper: e.g. different colours; screen: body of the text vs. comments). Revision is generally executed on paper. When a reviser has completed the revision, a brief discussion is organised, during which some revisions are reviewed, and the reviser explains certain choices. The discussion is also a means of going over the revision and refining the correction vs. suggestion categorisation. It can lead to disagreements in which case a third person can be consulted. Sometimes revision is performed in Word in track changes mode, in particular in case of absence or work from home. In such cases, translators contact their colleague if they have any concerns or questions. After the revision, the translator finalises the translation and sends it to the commissioner.

4.2.2 Salient features of the revision policy

The system used in Institution B is characterised by a high degree of collaboration, starting with the draft translation and continuing through to translation delivery. During the revision, this collaboration mainly takes the form of a discussion after revision is completed. The discussion is recognised by staff members as having many virtues. First, it diminishes the demoralisation of receiving a corrected text, as stated by the deputy head: "Having the opportunity to talk is less demoralising than simply sending the text back with the person left alone to face the screen with the corrections"[6]. Revision can indeed be very demoralising for those revised, as evidenced by these quotes from Institution A: "In the beginning, the first two years, when all you see is red, you just want to cry" and "I see young translators who are traumatised by the revisions"[7]. It is worth noting that the violence perceived by translators during the revision process depends more on the way the corrections are presented than on the number of interventions. Second, the discussion is described as a means for both professionals to save face. Third, it can be an opportunity to find another way to solve problems through an exchange of ideas. Fourth, it promotes social contact among staff and can reduce the feeling of loneliness translators may experience. Nevertheless, discussions after a revision elicited some reservations as well, in

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[6] "de pouvoir parler, c'est moins violent que simplement de renvoyer le texte et que la personne se retrouve seule face à son écran avec des corrections"

[7] "au début, les deux premières années, quand on voit tout rouge, on a juste envie de pleurer"; "j'en vois des jeunes qui sont traumatisés par les révisions"

particular regarding the length of the discussion: some translators objected to long discussions covering all revisions one by one or lengthy exchanges on secondary points.

In this department, translators have the final say and are responsible for the translated text. Revisers mostly act as a safeguard, not as substitutes. According to the department head, revisers are not supposed to solve problems – such as doing research or calling the commissioner – but only to point them out to translators. Revision therefore constitutes advice. Yet, this does not mean that the process is free of power relationships. One interviewee mentioned that he likes to spot shortcomings when revising work by colleagues who intervene a lot in his own texts.

Finally, revision serves other uses. First, it can be a way to get acquainted with a domain: the reviser may be a novice with a certain kind of text, in which case, the terminology and specificities of the text are the responsibility of the translator. Second, revision can help translators enhance their competence by discovering alternative translation choices. Third, according to the department head, checking someone's work promotes tolerance towards others and encourages questioning of one's own translation practice.

4.3 Comparing the two revision policies

4.3.1 Different practice…

Procedures are quite different in the two departments. In the intergovernmental organisation, the use of paper is scarce, while still frequent in the Swiss Confederation. Moreover, the degree of intervention seems different in both institutions. More time is given to revision in the intergovernmental organisation compared to the Swiss Confederation: in the former, 1 hour is devoted to revision for every 2.4 hours devoted to translation; in the latter, the ratio is about 3.5. Bearing in mind that revision fills possible gaps in translators' competence in Institution A, it is logical that revision requires closer examination of the translation. Although no text was analysed in this study, revision is likely to be more invasive there: all translators stated that revision was sometimes akin to a rewrite, as did some revisers, recalling the times they were revised. Translators also complained about changes whose value they questioned. The hypothesis that revision is more extensive in Institution A than B is supported by the department heads' discourse. In A, the head promoted a fairly invasive level of intervention and believed under-revision was a greater problem than over-revision. In B, the head declared that revisers should hold back and limit their changes to those they could justify.

Justification is a key point in revision. According to textbooks (Horguelin & Brunette 1998; Mossop 2020), most if not all interventions must be justified, i.e. revisers must be able to explain why they intervened in the draft translation. In the intergovernmental organisation, all interviewees acknowledged that some changes are a matter of personal preference. This practice could be analysed in light of the perception of translation competence in this context. As revisers are considered by the interviewees as more competent than translators, it can therefore be assumed that their judgement is more valuable. Moreover, revisers are invited to show translators how to improve their text, even where the

latter is already quite good: the head stated that revision should help "translators learn to do even better"[8]. It appears that the main goal of revision is to help translators become high-level professionals who no longer need to be revised. In the Swiss Confederation, the system is set up in such a way as to promote the application of the principle according to which "all intervention must be justified". As translators have the final word, revisers have to persuade their colleagues to adhere to their modifications. However, some interviewees stated that, when they have no justification to give, they label the revision as a suggestion or make a comment. Suggestions could also be seen as a means of expressing personal preferences.

4.3.2 …but many shared beliefs

While revision management and practice are quite different in Institutions A and B, both contexts share many beliefs. As mentioned above, in Institution A, revision aims at improving deficient translations by junior staff and is a way to compensate for the lesser skills of young translators. In Institution B, revision is used as a management tool to compensate for the shortcomings of the team as well, though to a lesser degree. According to the department head and his deputy, pairs are designed to form the best combination possible, particularly regarding domain knowledge but also regarding source language comprehension and writing skills.

In the intergovernmental organisation, revision is seen as more difficult than translation, and hence reserved to senior staff. In the Swiss Confederation, while all staff do revise, interns and junior staff translate first and do little to no revision. This may be because revision is perceived as more complex and best left for when the basics are fully mastered.

In both institutions, revision is a way to transfer know-how among department members. In Institution A, this learning process is formal (in particular through evaluation) and rather unidirectional (from revisers to translators). In Institution B, the process is bidirectional, with interviewees admitting to learning much when revising.

An element strongly present in both is that revisers do not work in a vacuum: they receive detailed information from translators, for example through comments or highlighting. This communication was praised in interviews by people doing revision. Moreover, in both institutions, revisers tend to revise people, not only texts. What is meant here is that revisers adapt their way of working to the translator they are revising. They may pay particular attention to what they think the translator has not done optimally or, to a lesser extent, be more relaxed with aspects in which the translator has shown proficiency in past translation jobs. To revise a person also means that revisers can adapt the degree of revision to the expected reception of the revised text. For example, a newly promoted reviser in the intergovernmental organisation stated that she holds back when the draft translation is of low quality to spare the translator and avoid a negative reaction. In this case, the reviser works not only on product quality, but also on social quality by avoiding creating a negative work atmosphere.

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[8] "pour que…le traducteur apprenne à faire encore mieux"

5 Conclusion

Revision is paramount in the quality management of the two departments studied. In the Swiss Confederation, all texts are revised, while in the intergovernmental organisation all texts translated by junior staff are thoroughly checked by senior colleagues, who spend most of their time revising. As the department in the Swiss Confederation revise all translations, it falls into the maximalist quality model as defined by Drugan (2013), even if the procedures are less extensive than in Drugan's model. As far as Drugan's typology is concerned, it is debatable whether all settings in which all texts are revised should be described as maximalist.

Given that both institutions use two distinct quality models, their revision policy should have been expected to be very different. That is true for revision management and revision practice (as claimed by interviewees), which both differ significantly. Yet beliefs show another picture. They seem very different at first glance, with revision mainly working as a necessary second look at the draft in Institution B, and as a means of remedying insufficient proficiency of young translators in Institution A. However, taking a closer look reveals shared ground: in both contexts, revision is meant to compensate for shortcomings in the team; is regarded as too difficult for rookies and contributes significantly to the exchange of know-how within the team (though in a rather unidirectional way in Institution A).

In this article, González Núñez's (2016) concept of translation policy has been adapted to analyse the revision phenomenon and, hence, the concepts of *revision* management, practice and beliefs were coined. These concepts have proved useful to structure the argument. They have also helped put forward common features in two policies that showed major differences.

The data collected for this study highlights the fact that revision is a difficult task. Even after many years of practice, it can still be a challenging job, according to some participants. Moreover, it is not easy to have one's text revised. In Institution A, translators suffer from the hierarchical system and from the correctional nature of revision, although they do not question the competence of revisers. The constant evaluation of their work is regarded as cumbersome.

The organisation of revision is key in the management of a translation department. Considering only the social level, revision can produce a poor working environment or operate as a strong team-building tool. Discussion following revision could be seen as a way to promote good reviser-revisee relationships. This was praised by interviewees in the Swiss Confederation. The value of collaborating during revision should be stressed since there is much evidence in the literature showing that revision does not always improve the quality of translations (Brunette *et al.* 2005; Künzli 2007; van Rensburg 2017).

The main limitation of the study is the same as that of all interview studies: reliance on participants' statements. In a further study, an analysis of draft and revised translations could complement this approach. Future research could examine other types of revision, like in-house revision of outsourced translation. Another way to complement this study could be to conduct a survey to measure, using statistics, the relations between job satisfaction and different aspects of revision policy.

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