

# A Longitudinal Study of Translators in Greater China

## Un estudio longitudinal de los traductores de la Gran China

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**Abstract:** In Translation Studies, most of the empirical studies on translators in society rely on a cross-sectional methodology, which takes a snapshot of a population at one specific time. However, giving the evolving nature of translation work, translators would experience changes from time to time. Therefore, follow-up studies of translators are paramount because this approach allows Translation Studies researchers to explain the changes that translators may experience over time. This article presents findings from a longitudinal study which examines translators' possible changes in their occupation, visibility between clients and end-users, capital received and job-related happiness over a three-year period. The analysis is based on 92 Chinese translators in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan between 2009–2010 survey data (Wave 1) and 2012–14 survey data (Wave 2). It is found that freelance translators are less happy than other current translators. Some social variables such as age, level of education, region in which the translator lives, the translator's major field of study and the appearance of the translator's name on translations are found not related to their decision to leave the field. What are found to be significantly related include sex, years of translation experience, and time spent working on translation assignments. It is also found that the turnover rate for female translators is higher than that for male translators. In addition, those who abandon the work of translation are mostly inexperienced translators.

**Keywords:** Longitudinal method; translators' visibility; translators' job-related happiness; translators in Greater China.

**Resumen:** En Estudios de Traducción, la mayoría de los estudios empíricos sobre los traductores en la sociedad, se basan en una metodología transversal, la cual recoge una muestra de una población en un momento dado. Sin embargo, debido a la naturaleza evolutiva del trabajo de traducción, los traductores experimentan cambios temporales. En consecuencia, estudios que se planteen hacer un seguimiento de la trayectoria de los traductores son fundamentales, ya que este enfoque permite a los investigadores de Estudios de Traducción explicar los cambios que se producen en los traductores con el paso del tiempo. Es presente artículo recoge los resultados de un estudio longitudinal que examina los posibles cambios en los traductores debidos a su tipo de ocupación, visibilidad entre los clientes y usuarios finales, el capital obtenido y la satisfacción derivada de su trabajo, durante un periodo de tres años. El análisis se basa en los datos

aportados por 92 traductores chinos procedentes de China, Hong Kong y Taiwán, entre los años 2009 y 2010 (Ronda 1) y entre los años 2012 y 2104 (Ronda 2). Se ha descubierto que los traductores independientes están menos satisfechos que otros traductores en activo. Algunas variables sociológicas como la edad, el nivel de educación, la región en la que el traductor vive, el campo principal de especialización y el hecho de que aparezca el nombre del traductor en las traducciones no están relacionados con su decisión de abandonar esta profesión. Lo que sí resulta decisivo es el sexo, los años de experiencia profesional y el tiempo requerido para finalizar una tarea de traducción. También se ha descubierto que el índice de abandono de las mujeres traductoras es más alto que el de los varones. Además, aquellos que dejan este trabajo son principalmente traductores sin experiencia.

**Palabras clave:** método longitudinal; visibilidad de los traductores; satisfacción de los traductores con su trabajo; traductores en la Gran China.

**Summary:** 1. Introduction; 2. Research questions and methodology; 3. Results of the longitudinal study, 3.1. Where have the translators gone?, 3.2. Who are the current translators? Are they happier?; 4. Limitations and conclusion.

**Sumario:** 1. Introducción; 2. Preguntas de investigación y metodología; 3. Resultados del estudio longitudinal, 3.1. ¿A dónde se han ido los traductores?, 3.2. ¿Quiénes siguen siendo traductores a día de hoy? ¿Están más satisfechos?; 4. Limitaciones y conclusión.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in studying translation practitioners in the workplace. It is clearly evident in the themes of conferences and publications, for example, “Translators at Work: Ergonomic Approaches to Translation Practice and Training” conference in France in 2015; The Status of the Translation Profession in the European Union (Pym, Grin, Sfreddo and Chan, 2013); “The Life of Interpreters and Translators—Joy and Sorrow?” conference in Serbia in 2013; “The Sociological Turn in Translation and Interpreting Studies” conference organized by the American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association in New York in 2010. Selected papers from this conference were published in a special issue of *Translation and Interpreting Studies* (Angelelli, 2012); “The Translator’s Visibility” conference in Santa Barbara, California, in 2010; and “Profession, Identity and Status: Translators and Interpreters as an Occupational Group” conference in Tel Aviv, Israel, in 2009. Papers from this conference were published in two special back-to-back issues of *Translation and Interpreting Studies* (Rakefet and Shlesinger, 2009, 2010). Some scholars have attempted to employ a sociological paradigm and have used empirical research methods to carry out their investigations (see Dam and Korning Zethsen, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012,

2014; Katan, 2009a, 2009b, 2011; Liu, 2011, 2013a and 2013b; Sela-Sheffy, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2014; Wolf, 2006). However, most of the empirical studies rely on a cross-sectional methodology, which takes a snapshot of a population at one specific time. Translators are people who, like those in other professions, experience changes from time to time. Follow-up studies of translators are thus worthy of Translation Studies researchers' attention.

In 2009–2010, an empirical study combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches was conducted to investigate the relationship between translators' visibility and their job-related happiness (Liu, 2011, 2013a, 2013b). In the study, the visibility of translators refers to situations in which translators can directly communicate with clients and end-users. The translator's job-related happiness consists of two elements. First of all, happiness depends on the alignment between what an individual wishes to receive and what the job allows the person to obtain. This allows us to measure whether the translators are satisfied with the capital that they receive. Second, it is comprised of the affective feeling of positive emotions when an individual deals with translation. This allows us to measure the translator's positive affective feelings. Theories from sociology and social psychology, including French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990, 1991, 1997, 2000) and psychologist Peter Warr's job-related framework (Warr 2007) were employed to develop a construct (see Liu, 2011) in order to examine the translators in the greater China region, including China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau. The analysis, based on 193 Chinese translators in the region, finds that visibility is rewarding in terms of social exchanges (social capital in Bourdieu's term) and learning experience (cultural capital), but not in terms of pay (economic capital) and prestige (symbolic capital). In addition, it has statistically been proven that the more visible the translator, the happier they are. Detailed discussions about translators' visibility and their job-related happiness can be found in *Meta* (Liu, 2013a) and *Across Languages and Cultures* (Liu, 2013b) respectively.

After a period of several years, it is worthwhile to know whether the 193 translators still remain in their translation jobs. Have some left the field of translation ("former translators")? If so, why did they quit? Were they unhappy with their translation jobs or were there other reasons? Where have they gone? Do some people still work in the field of translation ("current translators")? If so, are they happier? Do they enjoy

higher status, earn more, learn more, know more people and experience more positive affective feelings than they did some years ago? Also, has their visibility shifted? It was decided to revisit the 193 translators three years later to find out their changes in visibility, capital received and job-related happiness.

## **2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY**

The objective of the present longitudinal study is to compare the 2009–10 survey data (Wave 1) with the 2012–14 survey data (Wave 2) in order to find answers to the following research questions:

1. Did some respondents leave the field of translation?
2. Why did they leave their translation jobs? Is there any relationship between a translator's decision to leave the job and the person's social variables including sex, age, years of translation experience, regional location, level of education, major field of study, time spent working on translation assignments and whether or not the translator's name appeared on the translations?
3. Where did the translators go after leaving their translation jobs?
4. Do some still handle translation-related assignments at work? Why have some decided to quit and some to stay?
5. Are the current translators happier than when surveyed in Wave 1? Are they gaining more symbolic, economic, social and cultural capital? Are they more satisfied with the amount of capital they receive? Do they experience more positive affective feelings when handling translation-related assignments? Have they shifted their visibility?

A longitudinal approach which involves repeated observations of the same variables or respondents over a period of time was employed. Three specific types of longitudinal study are commonly used: (1) trend studies, which examine changes with a population over time; (2) cohort study, which studies changes in a cohort / sub-population across time; and (3) panel study, which investigates the same set of people each time in order to discover the changes in individuals across time (for more information about these three types of longitudinal study and the comparison among them, see Babbie, 2007: 107–110). The form of longitudinal approach that the present study employs is panel study, in

which the same translators are revisited over time. Longitudinal data not only offer more reliable evidence than cross-sectional data but also give an opportunity to identify significant factors that may be important indicators explaining the changes the translators experience participating in a research project over time. Nonetheless, there are several disadvantages of the approach. The obvious one is that it requires more time to manage, and the data are more complex than in a purely cross-sectional approach. Frees (2004) points out that the most important drawback is the loss of individuals over time for a variety of reasons, such as death, unwillingness to participate in the study, or moving out of the study area. These problems are known as “attrition”.

From October 2012 to November 2014, the 193 respondents were revisited. Before conducting the longitudinal study, I contacted the respondents to share with them the preliminary findings and their individual job-related happiness level. Some even discussed the findings with me after reading the information I sent to them. This kind of interaction helps develop trust between the respondents and me. Subsequently, they were invited to participate in the longitudinal panel study. After receiving their confirmation, a package containing a cover letter and a questionnaire (in Word format) was sent to the participants asking the same questions, so that consistency and continuity could be maintained for the analysis. Reminders were sent after two months to those who did not return the questionnaire.

### **3. RESULTS OF THE LONGITUDINAL STUDY**

As of November 2014, 92 translators had responded. Of these, 54 stated that they had left their translation jobs, and 38 indicated that they still handle translation-related assignments at work (see Table 1).

Why are there more translators leaving than staying in the field? Why do translators quit their jobs? In the Translation Studies literature, the general focus is on current translation practitioners. Those leaving the field of translation are neglected, and the reasons why they left their translation jobs have not been well studied. However, it is worthwhile knowing why translation practitioners give up their jobs. This is because the findings will not only help current translators better understand their field in order to plan their career but will also allow employers to implement appropriate strategies to keep quality people.

One of the research questions is to find out the relationship between a translator's decision to abandon the translation job and the person's background variables including sex, age, years of translation experience, regional location, level of education, major field of study, time spent working on translation assignments and whether or not the translator's name appeared on the translations. First of all, some studies suggest that the translation market is dominated by females (e.g., Pym, Grin, Sfreddo and Chan, 2013). This phenomenon is, to a certain extent, also supported by the present study, because the sample has a higher proportion of women (in Wave 1, 56.5% of responses are female; in Wave 2, 57.6% are female). Although females are a dominant component of the profession, the present study also indicates that the turnover rate for female translators is higher than that for male translators. Of the 54 former translators, 38 are female and 16 are male. And of the 38 current translators, 23 are male and 15 are female. A Chi-squared test analyzing the relationship between a translator's decision to abandon the translation job across sexes finds a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.003$ ). The result suggests that, in this study, male translators who have entered the field of translation are more likely to stay than are female translators. In other words, male translators are more persistent than female translators.

Why is there such a higher turnover rate for female translators? According to the responses, one of the reasons is women's role in the family: their employment patterns are affected by family life. Of the 38 female former translators, five left their translation jobs because they became full-time housewives, taking care of the family. It is worth noting that none of the male translators abandoned his job for this reason.

In greater China, the turnover rate for Hong Kong translators (14 left the profession; 4 stayed) is the highest, followed by Taiwan (8 left; 5 stayed) and China (32 left; 29 stayed). However, the reason for this phenomenon cannot be identified at present as a Chi-square test analyzing the relationship between regional location and a translator's decision to leave his or her job finds no statistically significant difference ( $p=0.155$ ).

*Table 1: Demographic data of respondents*

	Current translators	Former translators
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Sex	Female	15	38
	Male	23	16
Country	Hong Kong	4	14
	China	29	32
	Taiwan	5	8

It is also found that, in the sample, those who leave are mostly inexperienced translators. This result is supported by a two-tailed Mann-Whitney U test examining the differences in experience (Wave 1 data) (not normally distributed) between former translators (mean working experience=5.07 years, mean rank=40.95) and current translators (mean working experience=7.67 years, mean rank=54.38) in a statistically significant way ( $p=0.017$ ). It should be noted that inexperienced translators are not the same as young translators. In the sample, no tendency can be found to suggest that young people are more likely to give up a translation job than are older people. A Chi-squared test analyzing the relationship between age and the translator's decision to leave a translation job found no statistically significant difference.

Besides, the more time a translator works on translation-related assignments, the more likely the person will continue in the profession. According to the responses in Wave 1, the mean working time (not normally distributed) of the current translators and the former translators is 27.51 (mean rank=54.58) and 17.89 (mean rank=39.16) hours per week respectively. A two-tailed Mann-Whitney U test comparing the mean values across these two groups found a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.006$ ). This shows that the time spent on translation-related assignments is related to a translator's decision to leave or to stay in the field of translation.

In addition to the above-mentioned tests, several statistical tests have been done to examine the relationship between a translator's decision to leave the field and the person's other background variables. The results show that level of education, the major field of study and whether or not the name of the translator appears on the translation are not related to the decision to leave the translation job.

Why do some translators decide to leave and some stay? Were the former translators less happy with their translation work than the current

translators were three years ago? I used the data for several indices, including job-related happiness index (normally distributed), visibility index (not normally distributed), satisfaction index (normally distributed) and positive affective index (normally distributed), collected in Wave 1 to try to find answers to these questions (for the calculation of the various indices, see Liu [2013b]). The results of a two-tailed Mann-Whitney U test and an independent t-test suggest that there are no statistically significant differences in the visibility index ( $p=0.206$ ) and satisfaction index ( $p=0.080$ ) between the former translators and the current translators although the visibility level of the current translators is on average higher (22.2%) than that of the former translators. However, when examining the differences in the job-related happiness indices of the two groups of respondents, the result of an independent sample t-test shows a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.017$ ). This means that the current translators were happier (mean = 0.4833) than the former translators were (mean = 0.4379) three years ago. Also, another independent sample t-test comparing the positive affective indices across the two groups of respondents finds a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.028$ ). In other words, the current translators experienced more positive affective feelings when they worked on translation assignments (mean = 0.5099) than the former translators did (mean = 0.4357) three years ago. Although the former translators left the field, it is necessary to know where they have moved on to.

### **3.1. Where have the translators gone?**

In the present longitudinal study, 54 respondents left the field of translation. Most indicated where they have gone. As mentioned, five female translators stated that they left to take care of their families. Two respondents, who were freelance translators with more than six years' translation experience three years ago, left their translation jobs because they went back to school. A coincidence is that both were doing a master's degree in law at the time of the survey. One explained, "I decided to study law because I thought it was a good idea to understand the knowledge of one more field which could also be useful in translation. Translation after all is mostly a skill." Some freelance translators gave up their translation jobs simply because they did not have time. For example, three respondents, who were freelance translators in China rendering business documents three years ago, gave



up their translation work to devote their attention to their full-time jobs, because they now play a senior managerial role in their companies. One emphasized that translation is still his interest, and sometimes he voluntarily translates for his friends.

The current jobs of most of the former translators do not provide the respondents with opportunities to use the translation skills they learned, except for eight of those who now work as editors, interpreters or who run their own language consultancies. Two respondents, one full-time translator and one freelancer translating fiction for publishing companies three years ago, are now editors. Besides, three respondents (two freelancers from Taiwan and one full-time financial translation officer from Hong Kong three years ago) shifted from working on written translation to handling interpreting assignments. In addition, three respondents in China, all freelance translators previously, now run their own business helping foreign companies to develop business in China by providing language and cross-cultural consultant services. Because China is a vast market, and there are an increasing number of foreign companies expanding their business in the region, there is a huge demand for language and cultural consultancy. People with translation skills and experience are thus in a better position to develop their career in this area.

Although most of the former translators are no longer required to use their translation skills in their new jobs, some can apply the language and communication skills obtained in their previous translation experience to their current jobs. For example, six respondents who are now full-time teachers said that they apply the language skills they learned in their previous translation experience to their current jobs. Of these six, two were originally teachers but freelanced for publishing companies three years ago. They said they do not have time now for freelance translation jobs, but they are happy that they can use their previous experience in their current language teaching duties. This is understandable because both teaching and translation require the practitioners to have excellent language and communication skills. Two others were graduate students working as freelance translators, and another was an advertising services officer managing translation assignments at work three years ago. All mentioned that their previous translation jobs helped to strengthen their language ability and now allow them to perform better in the workplace.

Moreover, some respondents had left their translation jobs to join the sales industry and pointed out that they benefit from their previous translation experience. Three respondents, whose full-time job duties involved translation three years ago, are now full-time salespeople. One explained that his previous translation experience strengthened his language and communication skills so that he now can effectively communicate with English-speaking customers.

It is found that some industries require junior staff members to handle translation-related assignments. However, when the staff members are promoted, they no longer have the opportunity to manage translation assignments or continue to develop their translation skills. The media, marketing and public relations industries are examples. For instance, five respondents, who worked full-time at public relations agencies translating press releases, corporate materials, and speeches three years ago, have all been promoted to managerial level and no longer need to handle translations. Three other respondents, who worked in marketing and were also required to translate materials three years ago, have been promoted to senior positions that do not require them to do any translation. In addition, one respondent, who worked full-time at a TV station and was responsible for translating subtitles and voiceovers, has been promoted to a senior position and is no longer required to work on translation assignments. Although these respondents do not have to perform translation duties, two explained that their previous translation experience is valuable because they now have to hire translators or junior staff to work on translations, and they are capable of judging the quality of the junior staff's translation work.

In addition, six respondents (four from China and two from Taiwan) who were freelance translators rendering IT-related texts three years ago left their translation jobs to focus on developing their careers in the IT industry. Of these six, one was a student of computer science rendering articles related to his field three years ago and is now a full-time software engineer. Two were full-time freelancers and now work in software companies. One was a full-time English translator rendering IT-related documents and is now a project manager in a computer consulting company. Two respondents who were full-time system analysts while working as freelance translators gave up freelancing because they do not have time to take on extra work.

Although these 54 respondents left their translation jobs to take up another career, they are worthy of Translation Studies scholars' attention

because they have contributed to the field and should be respected. Moreover, their responses seem to suggest that they not only know themselves better after spending some years handling translation-related assignments but are also better equipped with skills that may be useful in their future career development. All in all, working as a translator has been a unique and valuable experience for these respondents; otherwise, they would not be willing to take part in this study to share their experience.

### **3.2. Who are the current translators? Are they happier?**

Of the 92 respondents, 38 (23 male and 15 female) indicated that they still handle translation-related assignments at work. Nearly half (16 respondents) are between 30 and 34 years old, with a mean translation experience of 7.67 years. Of these 38, four are from Hong Kong (10.5%), 29 from China (76.3%) and five from Taiwan (13.2%).

Why have these 38 respondents stayed in the field of translation? Are they now working happier than they were three years ago? Unexpectedly, the results of the paired t-tests examining the differences in job-related happiness (normally distributed) between Wave 1 responses (mean=0.4833) and Wave 2 responses (mean=0.4619, normally distributed with  $p=0.572$  from a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test) show that there has been no significant increase in happiness ( $p=0.079$ ). The mean values of the positive affective index for Wave 1 and Wave 2 decreased from 0.5097 to 0.4655 (normally distributed with  $p=0.536$  from a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test). The result is significant ( $p=0.046$ ). These statistics suggest the current translators now experience less positive feelings than they did three years ago. How can these results be explained? Do none of the 38 current translators have a happier work life? Do none enjoy handling translation-related assignments as much as they did three years ago? Are some practitioners happier than when they were surveyed three years ago? Are any current translators suffering? Who are they? In order to find answers to these questions, several pair t-tests and correlation tests were performed.

Surprisingly, it is found that the current translators who are now freelance translators (happiness mean=0.4380) are less happy than they were three years ago (happiness mean=0.4879) in a statistically significant way ( $p=0.010$ ). Of these 38 current translators, 18 are now freelancers. Why are these freelancers less happy than three years ago?

How can this result be explained? Of the four kinds of capital (economic, symbolic, social and culture), the freelancers, on average, earn more economic capital (mean values slightly increase from 2.3611 in Wave 1 to 2.3889 in Wave 2) although this result is not statistically significant. However, these same respondents receive less social and cultural capital than they did three years ago, and this difference is statistically significant ( $p=0.010$  and  $p=0.005$  respectively). In other words, the freelancers now have less opportunity to expand their social network and to learn new things (the mean of social capital received=2.2593; the mean of cultural capital received=2.5093) than they had three years ago (social capital received mean=2.5926, cultural capital received mean=2.7778). Worse still, when the alignment of wish and reality reported by these same respondents was examined, it is found that they are more dissatisfied with the amount of capital they earn (mean=0.4454) than when they were surveyed three years ago (mean=0.4637). A paired t-test examining satisfaction between two waves shows a statistically significant result ( $p=0.043$ ). Furthermore, these same respondents experience less positive affective feelings when dealing with translation-related assignments (mean=0.4306) than they did three years ago (mean=0.5122), and this difference is statistically significant ( $p=0.016$ ). In short, freelance translators are not happy among the current practitioners. All these results make one suspect that the nature of freelance translation work is an important factor affecting job-related happiness. Working as a full-time translator seems to be a better choice than working as a freelancer. This observation comes from the responses provided by the current translators, since there are far more respondents changing from freelancers to full-time translators than vice versa in the past three years. Of the 38 current translators, 18 were freelancers and 20 full-time translators in Wave 1. Three years later, only four respondents (one female and three males) who worked as full-time translators are now freelancers. The female respondent explained the shift is to allow her to take care of her family. Two of the male respondents gave other explanations: one became a lawyer but emphasized that he still loves translation and he now renders texts on a freelance basis; another male respondent ran his own translation company three years ago but is now a freelancer.

After comparing the two sets of data (Wave 1 responses and Wave 2 responses), it is found that more respondents have shifted from working as freelancers to working as full-time translators. Seven who handled

translation assignments on a freelance basis three years ago have become full-time translators. One of them explained, “I see God’s faithful hand as a translation professional, allowing me to do what I am capable of, to improve my skills, to receive good feedback and to keep ongoing collaboration with many clients.”

#### **4. LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

After conducting this longitudinal study, a better understanding of translation practitioners has been gained. In summary, one of the most important findings is that freelance translators are less happy than other current translators. Although some people say that there are many advantages to working freelance (for a detailed discussion see Fraser and Gold, 2001; Gouadec, 2007), the present study has discovered a different story. In addition, some social variables including age, level of education, region in which the translator lives, the translator’s major field of study and the appearance of the translator’s name on translations are not related to decisions to leave the field. What is found to be significantly related is sex, years of translation experience, and time spent working on translation assignments. It is also found that the turnover rate for female translators is higher than that for male translators. In addition, those who leave translation are mostly inexperienced translators.

Despite some of the above insights gained from this longitudinal study, there are limitations that cannot be overlooked. First of all, the analysis is based on 92 translators. While this sample size is sufficient on which to base statistical analysis, the findings obtained cannot be widely generalized. Also, the interval of the two phases (from Wave 1 to Wave 2) is only three years, and thus the likelihood of the translators experiencing many changes at work may not be significant enough. A second problem is that the technique used was not controlled since convenience sampling method and snowball technique were used to recruit participants. A third problem is the response rate of the questionnaire survey. A total of 92 translators responded to the longitudinal study, with a response rate of about 48%. However, missing data are not an abnormal phenomenon in a longitudinal panel study because, as emphasized and explained by Frees, “we know that people become tired of responding to surveys on a regular basis” (Frees, 2004: 263). To address attrition for carrying out a longitudinal panel study, some strategies have been used to increase the response rate as

mentioned before. A fourth problem is that the present study leaves some questions unanswered. For example, why is the turnover rate for female translators higher than that for male translators? Because the present study does not look at job-related happiness from a gender perspective, future research into this topic is worthwhile. And why are the former translators mostly inexperienced? What are the reasons behind these phenomena? Chriss points out that “the translation industry has a relatively high turnover rate” and suspects that is “a result of people testing the waters and then finding them too hot or too cold. But plenty of people find them just right and stay in the field for years or even decades” (Chriss, 2006: 44). The opinion of Chriss may not provide a complete answer to the questions, but it helps explain why inexperienced translators are more likely to abandon their jobs: they are new to the industry and might have found that they did not want to develop their career in the field after “testing the waters.” Further research examining these questions is deemed necessary.

In addition to researching why the turnover rate for female translators is higher than that for male translators and why the former translators were mostly inexperienced translators, other research areas are worthy of investigation. For instance, would the results be different if a larger sample size was used and participants from different sources were recruited? As mentioned, the time interval between Wave 1 and Wave 2 is not long, and the visibility levels of the respondents in Wave 2 are similar to those in Wave 1. In view of this, the same sample of participants can be contacted again after a few more years to further ascertain their visibility, capital received, and job-related happiness. Thus, one could determine whether they change their visibility and visibility preference when they become older, and, if they do change their visibility preference, whether or not these changes make them feel happier. Finally, there are good reasons for carrying out several waves of data in a longitudinal panel design, not least, it allows the researcher to study the complexity of the inter-related variables and draw useful conclusions.

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