Developing New Translation Profiles for an Undergraduate Program

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"La traduction est en train de vivre sa révolution industrielle.
Il serait vain de s'acharner à le nier et sans doute même peut-on s'en réjouir»
Durieux, Ch. (1988: 148)

In this article, new translators' profiles are discussed based on the development of two competences in an undergraduate program: the extralinguistic competence, and the instrumental and professional competence, e.g., specialized knowledge, the knowledge and use of modern technologies, and the knowledge of the market. This article focuses on the importance of developing these two subcompetences in translation programs in order to produce competitive professional translators, and it proposes a set of recommended activities for the development of each subcompetence. Likewise, the advantages and disadvantages of these activities are discussed as well as the changes and implications for translation teaching.

Keywords: translation, translation teaching, specialized translation, CAT, translation market, translation profile, translation competence.

Desarrollo de nuevos perfiles de traducción en un programa de pregrado
En este artículo, se discuten los nuevos perfiles de traducción con base en el desarrollo de dos competencias en un programa de pregrado: la competencia extralingüística, y la competencia instrumental y profesional, es decir, el conocimiento especializado, y el conocimiento y el uso de las nuevas tecnologías y el conocimiento del mercado. El artículo se centra en la importancia de desarrollar estas dos subcompetencias en la enseñanza de la traducción para que un traductor profesional sea competitivo, y propone una serie de actividades recomendadas para cada competencia. Asimismo, se discuten las ventajas y desventajas de estas actividades así como los cambios y las implicaciones en la enseñanza de la traducción.

Palabras clave: traducción, enseñanza de la traducción, traducción especializada, TAC, mercado de la traducción, perfil de traducción, competencia traductiva.

Développement de nouveaux profils professionnels dans une licence en traduction
Dans cet article, de nouveaux profils de traduction sont discutés basés sur le développement de deux compétences dans un programme de second cycle: la compétence extralinguistique, et la compétence instrumentale et professionnelle, c'est-à-dire la connaissance spécialisée et la connaissance et l'utilisation de nouvelles technologies, en plus de la connaissance du marché. L'article se concentre sur l'importance de développer ces deux sous-compétences dans l'enseignement de la traduction afin que le traducteur professionnel soit compétent et propose un ensemble d'activités recommandées pour chaque compétence. De même, les avantages et les inconvénients de ces activités sont discutés aussi bien que les changements et les implications pour l'enseignement de traduction.

Mots clés: traduction, enseignement de traduction, spécialisé la traduction, TAO, marché de traduction, profil de traduction, compétence de traduction.

INTRODUCTION

Few articles on translation are devoted to discussing translation profiles and the implications for translation training although these new profiles can be inferred in Holmes' scheme on translation studies (1972). As stated by Scarpa (2001) the classical professional profile (in-house and freelance translation) is already established in the market and new professional profiles (technical writing and localization, among others) are emerging due to the integration of the language industries as well as the use of tools needed to achieve high levels of productivity and quality demanded by the market. The use and benefits of tools are widely accepted today because tools account for the rough of the work, leaving the specialized translator the time necessary to solve true translation problems and less repetitive and mechanical aspects of a translation project (Quiroz 2005: 338). The difference depends on having two skills (or subcompetences): specialized knowledge and the knowledge and use of modern technologies and knowledge of the market.

The manifold professional profiles of specialized translators needed in the language industries can be summarized as follows: specialized translators, interpreters, dubbers, subtitlers, terminologists, technical editors, DTP specialists, project managers, localizers, software testers, etc. It is clear that the possible profiles need at least the following skills:

- detailed knowledge of each involved language and culture
- understanding of general language properties as a human activity
- knowledge of the real language properties (with its agrammaticalities)
- knowledge and use of computer techniques for the processing of natural language
- great capacity of observation and translation analysis
- flexibility to face constant technological changes
- versatility to take part in different translation scenarios
- ability to predict market trends and to take advantage of them.

TRANSLATION COMPETENCE

Translation competence can be defined as the knowledge and abilities that a translator must possess in order to complete a translation (Bell 1991: 43). Hurtado (2001: 383) goes a step further and defines translation competence as the underlying knowledge system, aptitudes, and abilities necessary to translate as they have been presented above.

There are many approaches and models proposed for translation competence[1], but we will explain the concept based on the proposal of the Pacte Group (2003: 43-68) and Hurtado (2001: 395), who defines six types of competence or subcompetence:

> Linguistic competence: the underlying systems of the necessary knowledge and abilities for linguistic communication in two languages (grammar, textual, ilocutive and sociolinguistic competences).

> Extralinguistic competence: the implicit or explicit knowledge of the world as a whole and specialized knowledge.

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1 For further reference about translation competence, see Hurtado (2001: 375-408), Nord (1991), Scarpa (2001: 188-202 and 203, 205, 210-211), Vienne (1998), among others.

Transfer competence: the capacity to go through the transfer process from the source text to the target text (analysis and production).

Instrumental and professional competence: the knowledge and abilities related to professional translation.

Physiological-psychological competence: the ability to apply psychomotor, cognitive, and attitude mechanisms.

Strategic competence: the individual, conscious and non-conscious, verbal and nonverbal, internal and external procedures used to solve problems found in the development of the translation process.

TRANSLATION SUBCOMPETENCES TO BE DEVELOPED

New profiles need to further more on the extralinguistic and the instrumental and professional competences, since these two competences definitely differentiate one translator from another in the professional market.

Scientific and technical knowledge, advanced skills in the use of tools for linguistic analysis and translation, and knowledge of the market and information sources are currently decisive and differentiating factors in the success of a professional translator. In 1992, the proceedings of *La station de travail du traducteur de l'an 2001* announced these aspects and at present they are confirmed by the results of the European Union Letrac project (Badia *et al* 1999) and by complete proceedings such as those of *Translation & Technology* (Vanderweghe 1999) and *Traducción y nuevas tecnologías* (Valero and De la Cruz 2001), *Entornos informáticos de la traducción profesional: las memorias de traducción* (Corpas and Varela 2003) and the proceedings of the three versions of the International Conference on Specialized Translation (1999, 2001, 2003), among others.

EXTRALINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

From the perspective of extralinguistic competence, cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities are planned to be developed in relation to those fields of knowledge most translated in the market. According to Zielinski and Ramírez (2005), such important broad fields are technology,

economics, and, to a lesser extent, law. Other fields of importance, according to their study, are medicine and pharmacology. In a recent survey, Quiroz and Franco (2011) confirmed the trend of Zielinski and Ramírez's results.

Likewise, the most translated text types in the market, according to Zielinski and Ramírez (2005), are manuals, operating instructions, web pages, business correspondence, software documentation, commercial reports, and training material. The text types – from manuals to commercial reports – are the ones with the highest demand for translation and they all come from the specialization fields of technology and economics, whereas the text types with the lowest demand for translation come from the specialized field of law.

It is important that specialized translation trainers should have sufficient experience as professional translators in order to offer students training in these types of specialty fields and in the most common text types in the translation market. Thus, the hypothesis of Hurtado (2001), who states that the degree of expertise affects the translation process and final product, can help us improve translator training. Therefore, this competence should be developed mainly in the advanced cycle of a translation program in courses such as scientific and technical translation.

By creating integral courses, whose syllabi include not only a theoretical-methodological component, but also a linguistic knowledge of LSP as well as textual knowledge, future translators will acquire a translation competence in accordance with the present market needs. In addition to the cognitive aspects that students should acquire in these courses, it is also necessary to create awareness of metacognitive strategies as proposed by Cortese (1990: 124-131) and Sorani and Tamponi (1992: 6-7)[2], as is usually done in translation companies (strategies of control, revision, and teamwork).

The following are the specialized fields as well as genres/text types which translation trainers should emphasize within the aforementioned courses:

- Automotive engineering: user and technical manuals, on-line technical services of automotive engineering, advertising, standards, etc.

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2 For these authors, the translation and teaching process should be operatively divided in order to apply cognitive and metacognitive strategies, that is to say, analysis, control, revision, and production.

- Professional machines and tools: catalogs, installation/user and maintenance instructions, etc.
- Electrical appliances: catalogs, installation and user instructions, standards of do-it-yourself work, photography, and electrical appliances.
- Medicine: product catalogs, installation and user instructions of medical devices, experiment manuals, papers, etc.
- Computer science: product catalogs, installation and user instructions, web pages, software and user interfaces for software, user interfaces for hardware (printers, scanners, faxes, etc.), advertising, user contracts (EULAs), help software, tutorials, etc.
- Telecommunications: installation and user instructions for telephony, software for telephony, and standards.

Following Hanns (1992), the aspects of the above mentioned fields can be taught, taking into account:

- basic and key concepts
- present trends of the field
- most relevant linguistic aspects
- phraseology and terminology
- units of measurement and nomenclatures
- problems of translation
- documentary and terminological resources.

Equally, extralinguistic competence can be complemented in the academic practicum, no longer developing the competences but carrying out this learning process in an independent and autonomous way as a professional translator would do, that is to say, applying cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies.

INSTRUMENTAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

With regard to the instrumental and professional competence, the knowledge and abilities related to professional translation work are to be developed in the translation class. According to Hurtado (2001: 395) this competence consists of several scopes of knowledge: 1) knowledge and use of any documentary sources; 2) knowledge and use of new

technologies; 3) knowledge of the professional market and of the behavior of a professional translator.

Badia and Colominas (2001: 126) state that "the specialization, as well as a minimum knowledge on the operation of a computer and the different computer tools for translation, has become essential conditions to translators for their incorporation into the translation market[3]."

As it has been demonstrated in the Letrac project (1999), universities may have limited information on the real use of new technologies for translation, or they may even consider that such technologies will replace translators, or are unnecessary in many cases. Nevertheless, language industry agents consider that translators must be efficient users of computers, must have experience in the use of tools for computer-assisted translation, linguistic processing and terminology management, and should have experience in the use of information technologies at an advanced level (Badia and Corominas 2001: 126-127). Therefore, their training would have to be reinforced with the abilities required by the market. In this way, translation agencies would not have to invest more than what they are doing nowadays in the training of new translators to complement what is not taught in universities. Thus, the fulfillment of the needs required not only by an agency but also by a freelance translator will be considerably improved in time and quality if we compared them with the traditional method of translating.

In addition, the empirical studies carried out by the Pacte Group (2003) demonstrate that when facing a translation problem, translators tend to activate the instrumental, strategic and transfer competences.

The recommendations for the required translator profile derived from the Letrac project[4] can be summarized as follows (Badia *et al* 1999: 5):

- advanced skills in word-processing as a minimum requirement
- knowledge in desktop publishing (DTP)
- ability to use translation specific tools such as translation memories, terminology management tools and terminology databases, TM systems, dictionaries on CD-ROM and on the web
- ability to use the Internet in general for all kind of services
- ability to work in a practical environment (translation workstation)

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3 My translation.

4 The Letrac project gathered information from more than 30 European universities and some member universities of CIUTI (e.g., Canada).

- knowledge of current hardware and software equipment and components in an environment beyond a single PC.

These skills can be directly developed in particular courses such as computer-assisted translation, localization, practicum, and terminology. They can also be an integral part of other courses, e.g., scientific translation, and technical and technological translation.

The translation teacher should not only teach these skills to develop instrumental and professional competences but also to carry out typical and real-world exercises with tools in order to:

- create translation projects
- create terminology projects
- receive translation/terminology projects
- translate a project
- interact with terminological databases
- interact with translation memories
- send translation projects
- align proprietary or online multilingual material
- pre-translate from other (aligned) translations
- convert, import, and export typical glossaries like Novell, Microsoft, Mac or others from the web to different formats (txt, cvs, mdb, html, xls, doc, etc.)
- control quality using tools to verify spelling and style, tags, numbers, and terminology. Regular expressions and filters could also be used to filter users, dates, segment status, etc.
- interchange data between the different translation and terminology systems (TMX and MARTIF)
- create and translate/localize projects in the most typical formats: RC, MS Word, software helps, HTML, RTF, Quark, Interleaf, FrameMaker, MS PowerPoint, MS Excel, XML, SGML, and Corel
- carry out basic tasks of layout design (DTP) in programs such as Quark, Interleaf, FrameMaker, and PDF Adobe
- convert formats: PDF, Interleaf, CVS, etc.
- create small and simple scripts or macros in Perl, MS Word and Excel for revision tasks or preparation of projects

- massively feed glossaries from translation memories or terminology extractors
- use spiders to massively obtain material for translation and terminology from the web
- localize interfaces or software in different programs (Passolo, Catalyst, SDL, Transit)
- functionally and linguistically test software interfaces
- adapt translations to European Spanish or any other Latin American variant.

These exercises can be complemented with aspects related to the client and the market:
- relationship with the customer
- international rates and prices
- presentation of translation tests for agencies
- types of works for agencies
- legal and ethical aspects of professional translation
- creation of personal web pages to offer products
- invoicing (client, translator)
- marketing strategies.

These skills and exercises can be placed in different phases of the general process of translation during the configuration and production of a translation memory as described below:
- project reception and preparation
- project configuration
- import of original documents
- translation
- project export
- project revision
- project layout design
- project delivery to the client
- project invoicing
- project evaluation
- maintenance of resources.

DEVELOPING THE INSTRUMENTAL AND PROFESSIONAL SUBCOMPETENCES IN THE TRANSLATION PRACTICUM

Since the translation practicum carried out by students and supervised by trainers, an external agent or client is a continuous activity in translation programs, the practicum could be structured as an agency in order to give it a character closer to the real job of the translator and to take advantage of resources. Therefore, it is suggested to:

1. Create an environment of real and professional work with translation software (free licenses or campus licenses).

2. Create awareness of the translation services offered by students, professors and the practicum sites (the clients) by means of a services contract and a detailed invoicing as is standard practice in an agency.

3. Take advantage of translated material (memories) and terminological glossaries of similar subject fields received from the client to create similar projects and to assure consistency and quality of translations.

4. Create complete glossaries derived from the practicum with a high edition level so they can be published using a terminological data management system or alternatively in HTML, XML or PHP format.

5. Protect the copyright of translation and translation by-products (memories, glossaries, etc.) done by students by means of suggestion 2.

6. Stimulate by means of these actions the profession as a vital social activity for the development of a culture.

7. Keep a database with practicum-related information, maintain continuous contact with the clients and, allow reliable statistics about the number of translated words, subjects, students, clients, tutors, evaluations, etc. in order to show the university's authorities the service provided by a translation program.

8. Create a web page to post the students CVs to promote the profession so that potential clients can be contacted.

IMPORTANCE OF TRANSLATION TOOLS IN THE TRANSLATION PROCESS

Memory-based computer-assisted translation (CAT) is a workstation that integrates, for the first time, management, translation, terminology and revision, among others. The most important components of CAT tools are the translation editor module, the alignment module, the terminological database management system, and the note editor. The CAT environment also contains other elements such as modules for (automatic) text management and analysis, modules for translation memory maintenance and revision.

As we have stated elsewhere (Tebé *et al* 2002), from the point of view of the nature and configuration of a project, CAT programs eliminate the separate conception of the different tasks involved in the translation process, allowing an interaction from texts to terms and from terms to texts. Terminology can be retrieved and reused in various ways for different translations or sets of translations (grouped by translation projects). In this way, quality and productivity factors are improved and speeded up, because translators will gain precision, consistency, and quality in the style and terminology used in a translation and will increase their productivity since they need to invest less time in the translation process and in unnecessary searches.

From a methodological point of view, CAT programs modify the processes and workflow dominant in translation thus far. In short, the work process has changed from a rigid and sequential way in which the translator had to manually control all the working phases to a conception of a process organized in tasks since different professional translators working in the environment can interact more easily in the same translation project: project manager, terminologist, translator, reviewer, etc. This is an aspect which has important consequences for the teaching of translation.

The advent of CAT environments implies changes in classical working environments (in paper or word processors). We understand that these changes involve an integration of many tools and effect aspects such as translation methodology, workflow, and the teaching of translation for a globalized market. From the methodological point

of view, the following are the main changes that translation memories involve (Tebé *et al*: 2002):

- *Previous analysis of the text*: CAT environments include (automatic) textual analysis tools that allow for comparisons of a new text with the translations previously made by the same translator. In this way, the translator will obtain very useful statistics that indicate the degree of lexical repetition, the percentage of translated text segments, the number of non-solved units in texts or glossaries, etc.

- *Pretranslation revision*: CAT environments, in addition to translation memories, include functions of complete and partial pretranslation in such a way that translators can review the results with the translation memory and assess whether the result is good enough to be validated and fulfills the requirements of the new translation context.

- *Selection criteria*: The selection of terms to be included in a translation glossary can be collected on reliable criteria, based on real needs/problems found in the translation (ambiguity, variation, etc.).

- *Type of units*: A glossary can include, together with nominal terminological units, other non-typical units (collocations, phrases and sentences) generated directly from aligned bilingual corpora.

- *Introducing data*: The process of introducing data can be fast if the terminological units in the source and target texts are marked. This process allows for the creation of an ad-hoc glossary that could be then reviewed or by means of a terminology extractor to build an inventory of the terminology of a translation, to import it to the database, to publish it, and to reuse it later.

- *Simultaneous management of several glossaries*: Several dictionaries can be simultaneously available for each translation, according to subject fields, translation projects, clients or any other criteria (glossary of titles, sections, subtitles, phrases, software strings, etc.).

- *Maintenance*: The maintenance of translation memories and glossaries can be made *in vivo*, contrasting the validity or acceptability of different solutions. The terminology maintenance can be thus synchronized with the translation maintenance.

CHANGES AND CONSEQUENCES DERIVED FROM THE TWO SUBCOMPETENCES

At the moment, the lack of integration of the translation process and the absence of a well-developed instrumental and professional competence favors the dispersion of knowledge, the division of knowledge and the inconsistency of style and terminology, among others. Furthermore, the possibility of reusing materials (translations and glossaries) produced in other courses is not currently done, and the predominant workflows practiced in the present professional market are not shown or carried out. So, the development of these two competences proposed here must imply important advantages given that they:

- *will give students more autonomy* since the competences will make it possible for them to build glossaries and specialized translations from their accumulated knowledge, and will allow them to integrate competences and skills that now may be dispersed in different courses (terminology, specialized translation courses, localization, computer science, etc.).

- *will contribute to reuse and enrich their work* in such a way that the results produced in some courses could be reused in others, and some of the produced works, such as terminological glossaries, could be edited in HTML format and published on the Internet as a result of the practicum or works from other courses.

- *will integrate the learning of computer tools for translation* in the same working process of other courses, a fact that students have constantly claimed as a very necessary aspect in translation training.

- *will give students the chance to work in more real conditions according to the market trends*. In this way, students will be able to work in fields and text types that they will face in real life, and use tools that will enable them to increase their productivity and quality.

- *will prepare students for competitive conditions* to make translation tests for agencies around the world.

With respect to the future of the teaching of specialized translation, it is important to keep in mind that any relevant technological change entails a series of uncertainties and fears as has been already mentioned in the introduction. It is the responsibility of translation trainers to discuss

these questions with students to clarify misunderstandings and warn about some long-term consequences that are not evident but that may modify their status and professional qualification as translators.

CONCLUSION

Finally, as stated by the Letrac project (1999) if the skills or competences proposed are not implemented in the training of translators, students of translation will not get very far on their own in the professional context, and the best jobs will always be given to those who are able to handle all aspects of information technology. Translators working for a company do not expect to first undergo additional training before being able to do the job they are supposed to complete or for which they have been trained. This proposal about developing new translation profiles at an undergraduate program would reinforce the translator's profile and will empower students with sound knowledge to face the profession at national or international scenarios in today's world.

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