

Methods of Teaching and Training Translators

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Translators have contributed in one way or another to form the languages they have rendered. Through their translation, they connect cultures from different countries. Translators do not transfer terms and clauses from one language into another, they transfer one culture into a different one. This highlights the necessity of finding out methods of teaching and training translators. To be a good translator, it is not enough to learn two languages, since wrong rendering leads to chaos and confusion. Hence, the importance of training translators not only in having command of two languages and translation strategies but also in specific knowledge areas and professional ethics. One of the modern methods of training translators is to make him/her understand the strategies of translation. It is an important component of translation. Moreover, translation training which incorporates work classes develops students' skills of translation and gives them the courage and experience that they need in their professional work as translators. Finally, translators should be trained in using computer translation programs and editing translated texts. Following modern methods in teaching and training translators allows for good and complete products. The educational method of learning translation comes to develop an effective rendering operation from one language to another.

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Introduction

Difficulties in Translation

Translation usually reflects the intellectual and civilised interactions between human beings (Ali, 2007). It is a process of linking firmly between language and thought (Delisle, 1980). If translating is a discourse operation between language and thought, we should accept that in the art or skill of translating, the translator will come across varied and numerous obstacles (Delisle, 1980 cited in Gerding-Salas). Thus, these difficulties make translating very hard

work and it may prevent the production of a complete understanding of a text (Gerding-Salas, 2000).

There are various types of problems in translations such as pragmatic, extra-linguistic, transfer, and linguistic problems (Taki, 2009; Davidovitch and Yossel-Eisenbach, 2019; Ahmed, 2019). One of the main problems the translator may face is his/her comprehension of the original text. Once the translator has encountered this obstacle, the most frequent translation difficulties are of a semantic and cultural nature (Tricás, 1995 cited in Gerding-Salas, 2000). For example: "Linguistic untranslatability" (cognates, i.e. true and false friends, calque, neologisms, aphorisms, etc.), and "cultural untranslatability," (idioms, sayings, proverbs, jokes, puns, etc.). One should adopt a very cautious attitude toward these words or expressions to avoid interference and/or language misuse (Kussmaul, 1995) (Oxford, 1990).

Similarly, the translator may encounter "not found" terms, "for which not even the best dictionary, an expert in the topic or a native speaker of the source language can provide" him/her with a solution to convey an accurate meaning (Gerding-Salas, 2000).

However, Nord (1991 cited in S. Taki, 2009) states that the translation problem is objective, and each translator should solve it through his/her work. The capacity for solving translation difficulties shows the translator's competence in using certain strategies which is an important part of his/her aptitude (Abu-Risha, 2011) (Richards & Rodgers, 2002).

Taki (2009) adds that "students who find a problem in the source text can either ignore or try to solve, and they have to choose solving it because they want the target readers to understand or receive the target text in a certain way. Otherwise, errors (and/or unsolved problems) can be caused by a "lack of knowledge" of general translation concepts (ibid.). Translation problems, if left unsolved, become the origin of translation errors (Nord 1996: 96-100 cited in Taki, 2009). To prevent this, second-language learners, students of translation, and translators should develop translation sub-competencies, especially strategic competence (Tarone, 1980).

This highlights the importance of a didactic translation approach which is "a methodology that allows the development of an effective and efficient transfer process from one language to another", wherein translation is a formal professional activity with a theoretical background, i.e. Translation Theory ("Translatology" in Canada, "Traductología" in Spain, "Translation Studies" in Belgium and the Netherlands) (ibid.) (Avval, 2009).

Through this approach, translation is not considered as a transfer process of ideas from one language to another only, but it is cognitive as well (Gerding-Salas, 2000). Cognition means a mental activity of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, or

the senses. It plays a very important role in detecting and analysing translating problems where information and knowledge are accumulated (Kussmaul, 1995) (Tarone, 1977).

To conclude, William Weaver (Gerding-Salas, 2000), the translator of *The name of the Rose*, claims that "Translation is something you learn only by doing." Nonetheless, teachers of translation may facilitate the task if they take advantage of the appropriate tools and strategies (as it will be dealt with in the section after the following) (Bialystok, 1990) (Varadi, 1980).

A Creative Translator

"A gifted translator is an alchemist who changes a piece of gold into another piece of gold – Renato Poggioli" (ALTA, www.literarytranslators.org/p.3)

Salas states that one of the greatest virtues of a good translator is what is called "contextualized intuition", i.e., the ability to find the nearest common sense interpretation of the "not found" element within its context.

Gerding-Salas (2000) states that the quality of the translation will depend on the quality of the translator, i.e. on her/his knowledge, skills, training, cultural background, expertise, and even mood. Newmark (1995b cited in *ibid.*) distinguishes some essential characteristics that any good translator should have (Brown, 2000):

- Reading comprehension ability in a foreign language.
- Knowledge of the subject.
- Sensitivity to language (both mother tongue and foreign language).
- Competence to write the target language ... clearly [and] economically.

The last point refers to the competence or the transfer competence which a translator should have. It is the ability to complete the transfer process from source language to the target one, taking into consideration the purpose of the translation and the characteristics of the receptor (Pacte, 2000).

Mercedes Tricás (1995 cited in Gerding-Salas, 2000) refers to "*intuition*, or common sense as the most common of all senses; in other words, making use of *that sixth sense*, a combination of intelligence, sensitivity, and intuition" (Encyclopedia of Translation Terminology, 2007).

Gerding-Salas (2000), emphasises the necessity for sound linguistic knowledge of both the SL and the TL, an essential condition to be a professional good translator. However, neither knowing languages nor being efficiently bilingual is enough to become a translator. Prof.

Constanza Gerding-Salas believes that the translator trainees should have the following characteristics (Jamalimanesh, 2009) (Williams & Burden, 1997):

- Sound knowledge of the SL and the TL, translation theory, transfer procedures, cognition, and methodology.
- Comprehension of what translation is and how it occurs (Bell, 1994).
- Permanent interest in reading various kinds of texts.
- Ability to communicate ideas clearly, empathically and openly.
- Ability to work out synthesis and interrelationship of ideas.
- Capacity to create, foster and maintain a warm work environment, "*an atmosphere of sympathetic encouragement*" (Kusssmaul, 1995).
- Capacity to foster search and research.
- Accuracy and truthfulness; critical, self-critical and analytical capacity.
- Clear assessment criteria".

One last critical point mentioned by ALTA (American Literary Translators Association) is *collaboration*, i.e. to collaborate with writers, native informants, or other translators ([www.literarytranslators.org/p. 6](http://www.literarytranslators.org/p.6)). This is evident in the statement that "this combination of skills and insights can be a highly effective translation strategy, especially when the translator is knowledgeable about ...the original text." (p.4) (Faerch & Kasper, 1983a)

Two Methods of Teaching Translation

Now we briefly review two modern methods or ways of teaching translation and training translators:

Corpora in Translation

Recently, "a large number of studies within the discipline of translation studies have focused on corpora and their applications in translation classrooms" (Vaezian, 2009). These studies mainly look into the type of information trainee translators can extrapolate from corpora and the effect of using corpus data on the quality of translation produced (ibid.). Vaezian (ibid) lists other concepts of corpora of different linguists (Faerch & Kasper, 1984):

Corpora were shown to provide trainee translators with terminological and conceptual information (Zanettin, 1998), collocational information (Stewart, 2000; Kubler, 2003), phraseological information (Machniewski, 2006), information on cognates, false friends (Zanettin, 2001) and semantic prosody (Bowker, 2000) and contrastive knowledge about the two languages involved (Zanettin, 2001; Schmied, 2002).

Moreover, translations produced with corpora were shown to be of high quality in terms of "subject field understanding, correct term choice and idiomatic expression compared to translations produced using conventional resources available to translators such as dictionaries" (Bowker, 1998 cited in Vaezian, 2009) (Hennessy, 2011).

In a typical corpora class of translation, the teacher, in contrast to the traditional translation class wherein the teacher is the absolute authority and he should answer all questions, is the corpus. They may not answer all the student's questions and solve all translation problems (ibid.). This is evident in the statement that "the teacher, in fact, acts as an assistant who helps learners use the data offered by the corpus to do their translation assignments and find the answers to their questions". Thus, whenever the students have a problem, they do not go directly to the teacher to get the answer. Instead, they go to the corpus. However, if they cannot find the answers they were looking for, they have already benefited a lot from their query in the corpus (See Chance Discoveries, Aston, 1999 & Zanettin, 2001).

Kiraly (2000) emphasises student's autonomy and cooperation in the social constructivist approach to translator education. Kiraly (ibid.) asks for translation classrooms in which the teacher helps students to learn the task at hand through hands-on experience.

Moreover, Coffey (2002) states that corpora can be exploited by translation teachers to create teaching and testing materials or "Translation assignment given to students ... can be drawn from source language corpora or from the source language component of parallel corpora in order to have comparison between student's productions with the work of experienced professionals and further to draw student's attention to strategies adopted by professional translators" (Pearson, 2003) (Vaezian: 2009) (Labarca & Khanji, 1986).

There are many benefits of using corpora in teaching translators and trainees of translation. Here are some of them:

1. Fawcett (1987 cited in Vaezian: 2009) says that the purpose of translator education is to equip trainees with "skills transferable to any text, on any subject" and corpus-based teaching can provide trainees with such skills.
2. A corpus-based translation class provides trainees with an opportunity to experience positive cooperation and group work (ibid.).
3. Corpus can be used to revise and edit translation; thus, it is a good practice for students to improve their editing skills which is highly needed in today's market (ibid.).
4. "Working with corpora demands computer literacy and having basic computer skills." (Ibid.)
5. Corpus-analysis can give future translators the technical skills which seem to be more necessary especially in technical translation (ibid.).

6. In the long term, corpora helps students to increase their productivity and the quality of the translations they produce.

Other benefits stated by Jamalimanesh (2009) include:

- Knowledge is pooled.
- Everyone has a chance to produce a decent piece of work, therefore increasing motivation among even the weaker ones in the group.
- Students are faced with alternatives, and selecting the most appropriate is an invaluable learning process.
- The weaker benefit from collaboration with their more able peers.
- Marking time is reduced as the teacher applies less 'red pen'.
- Lesson preparation allows individual diagnosis of errors: the relative lack of 'red pen' enables both teacher and students to focus on specific areas of weakness.

Technology in Translation Training

It is required from an open-minded person and a professional, like a translator, to think of developing the skills of living among a complex world of modern technology (Esmaili, 2009). The most important question here is how to deal with the programs of training translators in modern methods of technology, and that is to use these methods of technology in the training programs of translators (Nord, 1992).

The proliferation of information has endowed us with huge amounts of information in the form of scientific articles and books which are mostly produced in developed and industrialized countries. This has led to unlimited access to information sources and to exploit them in advance (Jamalimanesh, 2009). Effective and efficient use of the information and knowledge in developing countries makes the translation of original sources inevitable. Thus, a pressing need for the translation of scientific and socio-cultural knowledge has become necessary (ibid.).

Translation training programs must be catered along the line of modern technology. This can be achieved by supporting four key components of learning: active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction, feedback, and connection to real-world experts (Esmaili, 2009). Thus, to give the trainees of translation an appropriate education, technology has to be integrated into the translation training programs in one way or another, since "technology is a versatile and valuable tool for teaching and learning and becoming a way of life" (ibid.).

Some types of technology in training programs of translation include (ibid.):

1. **Search engines**
2. **Website**
3. **Blog:** A blog is a journal that is available on the web. Blogs are typically updated daily using software that allows people with little or no technical background to update and maintain the blog. Postings on a blog is almost always arranged in chronological order with the most recent additions featured most prominently.
4. **E-Learning:** needs the right training an online course, so it delivers an excellent educational experience for all students. This is evident in the statement that"E-Learning can provide a valuable means to help meet challenges of twenty-first century education."
5. **Moodle:** "Moodle is a learning management system for creating internet-based courses started by Martin Dougiamas." It is presented as a freely open source in the software, and the reader is allowed to copy, use and modify Moodle maintaining the original license and copyrights.
6. **Moo: A Moo is** "a specific application is a multi-user domain (MU) that allows multiple users to log on to a coexistent environment (Sleeter and Tettegah, 2002 cited in ibid.). The MU can be object-oriented (MOO), text-based, descriptive environments which are existing for problem-solving.
7. **Various computer technologies and translation tools:** such as high-level word processing, basic DTP and HTML work, as well as deal with terminology and glossary databases, and MAT/MT tools. This will prepare them for the demands of the translation industry.

Conclusion

1. The quality of translation comes from the translator's competence, and that comes from the high-quality of his/her teaching and training, apart from her/his skill and talent.
2. Linguistic competence and being a bilingual do not make a good translator.
3. A good translator shouldn't only be a good reader but should have linguistic intuition. He/she should be able to read lines in-between in both SL and TL.
4. The translator has to be a good summariser and editor.
5. The translated text does not be evaluated by the number of words, pages, or hours spent at work, instead, by the quality of the product.
6. Modern teaching and training of language and translation is a step towards creating a good translator.
7. Corporation in training translation develops the talent and skill of the trainees, and give them the experience to be professional.



8. Students of translation should know how to use computers and MT and as such; however, machines cannot be replaced the skill, talent, linguistic intuition, and imagination of human beings.



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