# TRAINING

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## 1. Translator and interpreter training

Throughout history there have been separate instances of translators and interpreters training in response to specific social or political needs. Such training has sometimes been institutionalized, e.g. for the translation of Buddhist texts in 4th-century China, and in France in 1669, when the Colbert decree established formal training for interpreters of Turkish, Arabic and Persian. See Caminade and Pym 1998 and Sawyer and Roy 2015 for a historical perspective on training.

However, the generalization and independence of translation and interpreting teaching, as training for specific professions, is a relatively recent phenomenon, one that burgeoned after World War II. The teaching of interpreting has had a marked professional orientation ever since its introduction at the start of the 20th century. Before then, translation, in contrast, had constantly been connected to academic higher education institutions (particularly in relation to philological studies), although not as an end in itself but rather as subsidiary support for other knowledge, chiefly as a means of honing language skills.

In the early 20th century, increased international interaction and technological progress led to the gradual emergence of new kinds of translation (consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, dubbing, etc.). Additionally, the translation market underwent significant growth as the practice spread to all areas of knowledge.

Specialized (scientific, technical, legal, financial, administrative) translation took on particular importance and the number of translations performed rose substantially.

Numerous university centres for translator and interpreter training were established to meet society's translation and interpreting needs, including Heidelberg (1930), Geneva (1941), Moscow (1942), Vienna (1943), Graz (1946), Innsbruck (1946), Germersheim (1947), Saarbrücken (1948), Washington (1949), Trieste (1954), Paris (1949, 1957), etc. Such centres then gradually appeared all over the world, increasing from 49 in 1960 to 108 in 1980, at least 250 in 1994 (Caminade and Pym 1998), and 380 in 2006 (Kelly and Martin 2009). CIUTI, an association of university centres with translation and interpreting programmes meeting specific quality criteria, was created in 1964.

Training has changed over time due to the influence of the theoretical approaches developed in Translation Studies. It has also incorporated the different types of translation that have become an established part of the labour market, such as community interpreting, localization, and translation for media accessibility, as well as the tasks professional practice involves (revision, post-editing, project management, etc.). The level, the position and the degree of independence of and the relationship between translation and interpreting training vary from country to country. In higher education, training is available in the form of undergraduate degrees, which tend to provide more general education, sometimes combining translation and interpreting; masters degrees, which can be general (sometimes combining translation and interpreting), specialized in a particular area (audiovisual or medical translation, localization, conference interpreting, etc.) or geared to research; and doctorates, which focus on researcher training. Translator training tends to be widely available at undergraduate degree level, whereas interpreter training is usually offered at

postgraduate level (Kelly and Martin 2009). The European Masters in Conference Interpreting (EMCI) and the European Masters in Translation (EMT), which establish quality standards for programmes, were created in 1997 and 2006 respectively. The first specific doctorate in translation and interpreting was created at the ESIT in Paris in the mid-1970s. The number of such doctorates has been constantly increasing throughout the world ever since, especially as of the 1990s, at the same time as Translation Studies has been consolidating its status (see *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 3/1, 2009, a special issue on research training).

Non-academic training exists too, in the form of specialist courses organized by academic and professional associations and employers.

As training is in high demand, many programmes are taught online (open, distance and blended learning). Recent years have seen the emergence of MOOCs (massive open online courses), which can cover different aspects of training, such as computer-assisted translation or the development of generic translation skills or of knowledge about specific subject matter. The nature of MOOCs means they are not only useful for trainees but also enable professionals to refresh and improve certain elements of their translation competence.

A number of trainer training initiatives have been established, including the Consortium for Training Translation Teachers; didTRAD at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; and various initiatives of the FTI in Geneva.

## 2. Evolution of research on didactics

It was not until the second half of the 1970s that interest in matters related to didactics reached significant levels. Research on didactics thus began, developing especially as of the mid-1980s and becoming firmly established in the new millennium.

*2.1. Overview*

Where translator training is concerned, Wilss (1976, 1977) and, in particular, Delisle (1980) can be considered groundbreaking works. Delisle has the merit of being the first to call for translation training to centre on developing the translation process in students. Other works from around the same time which stress the importance of process development are Seleskovitch and Lederer (1984[1], 1989) in relation to interpreter training, and Hurtado Albir (1983) in relation to translator training. From a different angle, another groundbreaking work is Nord (1988/1991), in which functionalist theory is applied to translation teaching.

Numerous collective volumes, sets of conference proceedings and special issues of journals on translation and interpreting training have been published since the mid-1980s.

Growing interest in translator training as of the mid-1990s resulted in the publication of many monographs, including Kussmaul (1995), Kiraly (1995), Robinson (1997), Kiraly (2000), Colina (2003), González Davies (2003, 2004) and Kelly (2005).

With regard to conference interpreter training, mention must firstly be made of Herbert (1952) and Rozan (1956), two pioneering texts used in interpreter training since the 1950s. A series of monographs have followed since the late 1980s, including Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989), Gile (1995), Sawyer (2004), Nolan (2005), Gillies

[1] This work incorporates texts already presented or published in 1965, 1973 and 1981.

(2013) and Setton and Drawant (2016). In the case of community interpreter training, the groundbreaking work of Schackman (1984) is particularly noteworthy. See Davitti and Pasquandrea (2014) in relation to dialogue interpreting.

There are also various series that have featured handbooks. Examples are Routledge's *Thinking Translation* series (1992), which includes handbooks on translating into English from various languages; *Aprender a traducir* (Universitat Jaume I), which, since 2004, has published handbooks for subjects involved in translator and interpreter training; and, since 2000, the *Interpreter Education Series* (Gallaudet University Press) on interpreter training.

The didactics of translation and interpreting has thus been firmly established as a specific field of research within applied Translation Studies since 2000. Given its nature, the research undertaken is *action research*, i.e. that which practitioners carry out on their own practice to improve it (Lewin 1946).

The appearance of specific journals is testimony to the consolidation of this field of research. They include *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* (*ITT*), published since 2007, an essential title for the dissemination of such research; *Redit. Revista electrónica de didáctica de la traducción y la interpretación*, published since 2008; and the *International Journal of Interpreter Education* (IJIE), published since 2009.

A study conducted by Yan et al. (2015) highlights the importance such research has acquired in the 21st century. The study analyses 10 Translation Studies journals over the period spanning 2000 and 2012. Among a total of 2274 articles in English, it identifies 323 on training and divides them into the categories of teaching (72%), learning (18%) and assessment (10%). 61.61% of the articles deal with translator training, 26.63% with interpreter training, and 11.76% with both.

### *2.2. Approaches*

The various approaches adopted have evolved from teacher-centred, product-oriented transmissionist and prescriptivist approaches to student-centred, process-oriented approaches more in keeping with current pedagogical thinking.

#### *2.2.1. Transmissionist, teacher-centred and product-oriented approaches*

*Traditional teaching*

We deem traditional translation teaching to be that which is descended from traditional language teaching and its use of translation (grammar-translation method). It is a teacher-centred approach that regards designing teaching as merely consisting of compiling texts without clear selection criteria. An important characteristic is polarization in terms of results rather than a focus on the translation process. Textbooks generally suggest a translation (only one, furthermore, in most cases), and concentrating on correct solutions is also a common practice in classes. Students receive proposed solutions but do not discover the causes of their errors or, more importantly, the process to follow to find appropriate solutions for themselves. Methodological aspects are lacking, with the traditional "read and translate" being the only methodological instructions used. Criteria for selecting texts, activities for learning how to translate them, and considerations related to progression and assessment are all missing.

Traditional interpreting teaching, the approach followed when interpreter training was introduced, is based on teachers transferring their professional knowledge and experience, i.e. training by apprenticeship (Pöchhacker 2004, Stern 2011). In addition to teachers having a dominant role, the different steps, strategies and skills

necessary to work through the process correctly are not identified, and methodological aspects conducive to students assimilating the process are lacking.

*Contrastive approaches*

Of all the forms of contrastive studies of languages, *comparative stylistics* is that which has been most explicitly formulated as a method for teaching translation. Its pioneers are Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), and other relevant works include Scavée and Intravaia (1979) and Legoux and Valentine (1989). Comparative stylistics proposes new language comparison categories, which it calls translation *procedures* (or *technical procedures*). However, these *procedures*: (1) are comparisons that focus on results without explaining the process (the way of *proceeding*) involved in achieving them; (2) are decontextualized comparisons of isolated units; and (3) establish set solutions by proposing a single equivalence. This has serious repercussions for learning, as students might think that a proposed equivalence is directly interchangeable in the two languages involved and neglect to seek context-based solutions. There are also pedagogical shortcomings to bear in mind. Objectives are limited to questions of differences between the two languages, and the methodology is limited to exercises based on using or detecting such differences.

Of greater interest are studies (e.g. Baker 1992) that introduce contrastive considerations from the viewpoint of how texts function (elements of coherence and cohesion, text typologies), reflecting real translation practice more closely. However, such studies do not cover all the types of translation problems translators encounter (cultural, pragmatic, etc.), and they remain focused on results. They are part of the range of instruments available to teachers for organizing course content, but are not a comprehensive solution for objective design.

*Focus on theoretical content*

Another approach has been to focus on the theoretical aspects of translation and/or interpreting. There are thus textbooks and syllabuses which feature solely such aspects, combine *theory* and *practice*, or include a *theoretical* part with practical *applications* (e.g. Tatilon 1986, Newmark 1988).

Training for future professional translators and interpreters chiefly requires the development of *operational knowledge* (*know-how* for solving translation and interpreting problems). Theoretical knowledge is *declarative* (*know-what*) and *explanatory* (*know-why*) knowledge, which is more suited to researcher training (research master's degrees or doctorates, for example).

*2.2.2. Student-centred and process-oriented approaches*

The previous approaches have been developed alongside others that, in keeping with current pedagogical thinking, focus on students and their learning, and are oriented to translation process development. These approaches have progressively incorporated elements that give students an active role, promote their autonomy, encourage interaction between all a group's members (*cooperative learning*) and place emphasis on performing authentic tasks required of professional translators and interpreters. They have thus paved the way for curriculum design to integrate all the key aspects of the education process (objectives, competences, sequencing, methodology and assessment). The most important of these approaches are presented below.

*Objective-based training*

Delisle (1980) brought about a major advance in translation training when bemoaning its lack of systematization and highlighting the need to look for pedagogical strategies. He broached the necessity of heuristic pedagogy and an active, student-centred

methodology which would lead trainees to discover the principles they should follow in the interests of proper translation process development. In his own words, “Teaching someone how to translate means teaching the intellectual process by which a message is transposed into another language; that is, placing the student in the centre of the translating operation so that he can understand its dynamics” (Delisle 1980/1988: 3).

The author's proposals (Delisle 1980, 1993) focus on introductory translation training, putting forward (general and specific) learning objectives and activities for achieving them.

Works that follow on from Delisle's groundbreaking proposal include Hurtado Albir (1996), which deals with an introductory direct translation subject and proposes methodological, professional, contrastive and text-based objectives; Beeby (1996), which looks at inverse translation (to L2); and Hurtado Albir (1999), which covers various subjects involved in translator and interpreter training.

*Focus on the translation process*

Seleskovitch and Lederer (1984, 1989) stress that interpreter training should revolve around students learning a method and grasping principles for working through the translation process, rather than around acquiring reusable equivalences. Since the 1980s, many authors have advocated training that centres on translation process development. Besides Delisle himself, examples include Hurtado Albir (1983) in relation to translator training, and Gile (1995) in relation to translator and interpreter training.

Gile expresses the need to focus on the process well: “The idea is to focus in the classroom not on results, that is, not on the *end product* of the Translation process, but on the process itself (…) the process oriented approach indicates to the student good Translation *principles*, *methods* and *procedures*” (Gile 1995: 10).

*The translation task and project-based approach*

The task and project-based approach is a methodological framework that arose in language teaching. Its main aim is to give curriculum design scope for the integration of all its different elements, i.e. objectives, content, methodology and assessment. It conceives of instructional design as a set of *tasks*, and distinguishes between *preparatory tasks* and *final tasks*, with the former laying the groundwork for the latter to be performed.

Hurtado Albir applied this approach to students' introduction to translation in the early 1990s (Hurtado Albir 1992, 1996), and later to the different subjects involved in translator and interpreter training (Hurtado Albir 1999). Teaching units are organized on the basis of different types of tasks that prepare students for one or more final tasks (translation in a particular genre, for instance). A range of instruments are used to design tasks, including texts; translations to be analysed, compared, revised or corrected; questionnaires; contrastive exercises, exercises related to documentary resources, etc.; worksheets to be completed; support texts; and translation process recordings (Hurtado Albir 1996, 2015a, 2015b). The handbooks in the *Aprender a traducir* series (Universitat Jaume I) follow this approach, with Borja (2007) applying it to the teaching of legal translation and Jimenez (2012) to interpreting, for example.

Other authors who have applied the approach to translator training are González Davies (2003, 2004) and Li (2013). González Davies (2004) distinguishes between three types of procedures, namely activities (brief, concrete exercises for practising specific points); tasks (chains of activities with the same global aim and a final product); and projects (multicompetence assignments that enable students to engage in pedagogical and professional activities and tasks geared to an end product). Li, meanwhile, proposes six task cycle stages, specifically pretask, task, reporting, analysis, revising and reflection.

Tasks can vary in length and number. A *project* encompasses different learning objectives and features greater sequentiality. Translation projects (with larger-scale final tasks, such as translating a film) are of particular relevance to specialized subjects. See Kiraly (2000, 2005, 2012) and Li et al. (2015), for example, in relation to the use of projects in translator training.

As a flexible methodological framework, this approach allows for the integration of elements of pedagogical models such as *problem-based learning*, *case studies*, *cooperative learning*, *situated learning* and *the flipped classroom*. It also makes the inclusion of competence-based training possible.

*The social constructivist approach*

Kiraly (2000) has drawn on constructivist theories of learning to propose a social constructivist approach to translation training, the cornerstone of which is *collaboration* between students and teachers. He advocates changing their roles, with the former taking responsibility for their own learning and the latter acting as guides and creating situations in which students can develop their professional skills.

Kiraly puts forward an *empowerment* model based on student autonomy, multidirectional interaction between students and teachers, and real collaborative translation projects that reflect professional translation practice. It thus falls into the category of *situated learning*, entailing active involvement in authentic, experiential learning. Kiraly proposes the *constructivist workshop* concept as an alternative to translation classes.

The premises of the social constructivist approach to learning underlie most proposals for student-centred, process-oriented translator and interpreter training.

*Competence-based training*

Competence-based training (CBT), a continuation of objective-based training, began to be applied at the turn of the millennium (Kelly 2005, Hurtado Albir 2007, 2015a, 2015b, etc.).

CBT's foundations lie in cognitive constructivist and social constructivist learning theories. Curriculum design revolves around competences in this approach, which features an integrated model of teaching, learning and assessment, resulting in the *operationalization* of the competences corresponding to a curriculum. CBT distinguishes between *specific competences*, which are inherent to a particular discipline, and *general* (or *transversal*) *competences*, which apply to all disciplines, and is geared to a holistic type of training that combines both. To establish a university curriculum's competences, a description of the relevant *professional profile* is vital. It is thus important to conduct labour market studies to identify prevailing and emerging best professional practices for each profile, as well as the knowledge and skills it requires.

Hurtado Albir (2007) has proposed six specific categories of competences for translator and interpreter training, namely methodological and strategic; contrastive; extralinguistic; professional; instrumental; and translation problem-solving competences. In 2009, the European Master’s in Translation (EMT) framework established a translator competence profile. Produced by European experts, it describes the competences today's professional translators require. It distinguishes between six types of competences, namely translation service provision competence, language competence, intercultural competence, information mining competence, thematic competence and technological competence.

With regard to competence operationalization, Hurtado Albir (2007) has set out a proposal encompassing: (1) a competence's definition; (2) a competence's elements, i.e. observable behaviours that are part of it and can be used as *indicators* for

establishing each level's learning outcomes and for assessment; (3) associated content; (4) possible tasks for competence acquisition (methodology); and (5) assessment procedures. Competence operationalization makes it possible to integrate all the key aspects of the education process.

*Focus on professional aspects. Translation in situation and situated learning*

Some authors focus on professional aspects. Vienne (1994) does so in his situational approach, in which he stresses the need to translate texts in their real communicative situation and according to authentic commissions already completed professionally by the teacher, who thus takes on the role of a client. Gouadec (2003) has also advocated such an approach.

Mention should also be made of proposals that apply the premises of *situated learning* (derived from *situated cognition theory*) to translator and interpreter training. Situated learning holds that knowledge needs to be presented in an authentic context that would normally involve that knowledge, and thus places emphasis on establishing pedagogical procedures (tasks and projects) that facilitate transition to real professional practice in translator and interpreter training (see, for example, Kiraly 2005, and González Davies and Enríquez Raido 2016).

These ideas highlight a growing concern for employability in training. That concern was also reflected in the *Memorandum* that the BDÜ (Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer) produced in 1986, containing recommendations for organizing translation and interpreting training programmes to meet the demands of the profession. Its continuation came with the POSI (PraxisOrientierte StudienInhalte für die Ausbildung von Übersetzern und Dolmetschern) project in the 1990s, which was sponsored by the FIT (Féderation International des Traducteurs) and designed to improve practice-oriented training for translators and interpreters. Mention should also

be made of the EGPS (European Graduate Placement Scheme) project (2012-2015), which aimed to enhance the employability of graduates from Master's in Translation programmes.

### *2.3. Areas of research*

Research has focused on different areas:

- Development of general guidelines for curriculum design (objectives, competences, subjects involved in training, content, etc.).
- Design of specific subjects. Examples include introduction to translation; inverse translation (to L2); technical translation; scientific translation; legal translation; business translation; audiovisual translation; conference interpreting; community and dialogue interpreting.
- Methodological aspects. Research on preparing teaching units, tasks, group dynamics, etc.
- Assessment criteria and procedures (instruments and tasks).
- Technology use in teaching and learning: electronic corpus use in translator/interpreter training; technology use in translator/interpreter training; online translator/interpreter training.

Research has also been carried out on aspects related to how translation competence works and is acquired (e.g. Schäffner and Adab 2000; PACTE 2003, 2015; Moser Mercer 2008; Hurtado Albir 2017).

## 3. Challenges ahead

The curriculum-related challenges training is currently facing are chiefly a consequence of: (1) changes in the translation and interpreting profession; (2) constant academic and professional mobility in present-day society; and (3) pedagogical and technological advances in recent decades.

With a view to meeting those curriculum-related challenges, research must tackle methodological challenges to ensure that the work undertaken is genuine *action research* for transforming pedagogical practice. In that respect, progress must be made, as it already has been over the last decade, in the use of qualitative and quantitative methods that allow for the collection and analysis of data on aspects of training. For that purpose, it would be advisable to use techniques and instruments such as direct observation; audio, video and computer recordings; interviews; questionnaires; students' output; diaries (kept by students or teachers); and discussion groups.

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**Further reading**

Pöchhacker 2004; Kelly 2005; Kelly and Way 2007; Stern 2011; Colina and Venuti 2016.