

# English Language Teaching for Translator and Interpreter Trainees: Syllabus analysis and design

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## Abstract

This article purports to study the linguistic situation of Language B English in the Spanish Translation and Interpreting curriculum. Most translation lecturers usually complain about the students' poor competence in English when they start their translation and interpretation subjects. We believe that this might be due to the fact that the foreign language subjects are approached from a general viewpoint without taking into account the students' linguistic needs as prospective translators and interpreters. For our purposes, we will review the Language B English syllabi of six Spanish state universities to determine whether the objectives are geared toward the development of the required linguistic skills in accordance with professional translation practice or, on the contrary, these courses adhere to more general teaching patterns whose objectives are clearly different from the ones pursued in a Translation program.

**Keywords:** translation; interpretation; syllabi; objectives; skills.

**Resumen.** *La enseñanza de inglés para alumnos de traducción e interpretación. Análisis y diseño del plan de estudios*

El presente artículo tiene como objetivo estudiar la situación lingüística de las asignaturas de Lengua B Inglés en los planes de estudio de Traducción e Interpretación en España. La mayoría de los docentes de traducción a menudo se queja de la baja competencia del estudiantado en inglés al iniciar las materias de traducción e interpretación. Consideramos que esto podría deberse a que las materias de lengua extranjera se abordan desde un punto de vista general y sin tener en cuenta las necesidades lingüísticas de los estudiantes como futuros traductores e intérpretes. Con el fin de establecer si dicha percepción se ajusta a la realidad, estudiaremos las guías docentes de Lengua B Inglés de seis universidades públicas españolas para así determinar si los objetivos están dirigidos al desarrollo de las habilidades lingüísticas a imagen y semejanza de la práctica profesional de la traducción o, por el contrario, estos cursos se adhieren a patrones de enseñanza generalistas cuyos objetivos son claramente diferentes de los que se persiguen en una titulación de Traducción e Interpretación.

**Palabras clave:** traducción; interpretación; guías docentes; objetivos; habilidades.

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### Summary

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Introduction   | 5. Analysis and discussion |
| 2. Hypotheses   | 6. Conclusion              |
| 3. Foreign language teaching in Translation: the state of the art | Bibliographic references   |
| 4. Research method  |                            |

## 1. Introduction

Translation studies constitute a relatively new discipline in the Spanish university system. Only forty years account for the ever-increasing importance of this discipline in our society. This late entry, however, is not in keeping with the vast number of investigations that try to decipher its nature. Notwithstanding this, most of these investigations generally focus on technical aspects relative to different translation areas such as legal, scientific or film translation, amongst others, and there seems to be a bibliographic void when it comes to the teaching of foreign languages within the framework of these studies, an aspect which, to date, neither the research into the didactics of foreign languages nor the translation theories have tackled. But as Pym (1992: 288) so aptly puts it: «if translators are to be trained, we cannot simply turn our backs on the teaching of foreign languages.»

In spite of this reasonable remark, we cannot overlook the fact that the teaching of foreign languages for translator trainees has been downgraded, especially since translation has become a fully-fledged academic discipline and, as a result, it has become independent from linguistic programs. Although translation departments acknowledge that a thorough command of the languages involved in the translation process is paramount before embarking on any translation activity, this knowledge is usually taken for granted, as «students are supposed to have the required skills at the time of admission» (Gile 1992: 185). Still, admitting that the students' level is not high enough to carry out translation tasks, departments do offer some linguistic skill enhancement courses with the aim of perfecting the knowledge that the students already possess and expanding it further.

However, the linguistic competence does not appear to be the only drawback why some students perform badly in their translation and interpretation classes. In our view, language teaching for translation students should have its own place within Foreign Language Teaching. The goals pursued are at variance with those offered in general foreign language courses, especially those offered in Philology degrees. With this in mind, in this article we will analyze the syllabi of six Spanish universities with the aim of determining whether the objectives are geared toward the development of the required linguistic skills for professional translation or, on the contrary, they just keep to more general teaching patterns.

## 2. Hypotheses

For the analysis that we present here, we have analyzed the curriculum of six Spanish state universities. Three out of the six universities included in our study have been chosen in relation to the time that they have been offering the Translation and Interpreting degree in Spain. The first university in doing so was the *Escola Universitària de Traductors e Intèrprets* (EUTI) from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) in 1973. In 1979, the University of Granada (UGR) founded its own EUTI and in 1988 the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC) established the third center providing specific training in translation (Kelly 2000: 3). Due to their longstanding tradition in translation, we believe that the main objectives of the English language subjects as a first foreign language in these institutions will be translation-oriented.

Likewise, we also believe that Language B English subjects will be better designed in the cases in which translation departments are responsible for this training, since the objectives will faithfully reflect the linguistic skills required for professional translation.<sup>1</sup> Our hypotheses may, therefore, read as follows:

- The objectives of Language B English subjects will be better defined in the universities with a longer tradition in translation.
- The objectives will be translation-oriented when translation departments are responsible for this training.

## 3. Foreign language teaching in Translation: the state of the art

The importance of teaching languages in a Translation department is self-evident. Prospective translators and interpreters must dominate, amongst other things, their working languages prior to carrying out translation tasks. For this reason, in the first years of the degree, some language subjects are inserted in the curriculum with the aim of providing the students with a full level of competence in their foreign languages. This thorough command of the languages is imperative if the translation subjects are to be approached from a professional viewpoint. Otherwise, the language subjects would just serve the purpose of expanding the students' linguistic knowledge and the professional aspects of translation would just take second place. Or, to put it another way, the translation subjects would take a pedagogical rather than a professional stance, which would be outside the scope of this teaching. As Nord (1997: 78) puts it:

Students with inadequate proficiency in the two languages involved will not be able to focus on pragmatic or cultural translation problems in an appropriate way.

1. As structured in the *Libro Blanco de Traducción e Interpretación* (2004), translation departments usually divide languages into four different groups: Language A (students' mother tongue), Language B (first foreign language that students must command at the time of admission), Language C (second foreign language from which no previous knowledge is required) and Language D (third foreign language that can be studied but for which translation subjects are not normally offered).

Translating will then become no more than an instrument for foreign-language learning, with the focus on linguistic correctness rather than communicative or functional appropriateness. In the training of professional translators, it is thus important to make sure the trainees have acquired an adequate level of language and culture proficiency before embarking on translation exercises.

These subjects thus constitute the cornerstone of a series of courses that the students will have to do throughout their studies, namely, general and specialized translation, interpretation, etc. Seen in this light, it can be stated that «es tracta d'un ensenyament al servei de la traducció» (Berenguer 1997: 449). Language is a means to reach a further goal, but not an end in itself. The didactics of foreign languages for translator and interpreter trainees needs to take translation both from an academic and a professional perspective as a referent to determine its objectives and methodology. If the aim is to learn a foreign language in order to translate, there are two essential aspects that must be borne in mind: translation as an end and the learning of the foreign language as the means (Oster 2008c). Or as Mackenzie (1998: 12) puts it, «language is a tool for the translator rather than the object of study». The students then are not only required to enhance the four main linguistic skills in the foreign language, but they must also learn to use it for professional purposes (López Ropero and Tabuenca 2009: 124).

This constitutes without a doubt a difference with regard to other general language courses offered to other groups like, for instance, language teaching in Philology degrees (Soriano 2004). In the case of Language B, for instance, it should be instructed taking into account that the students will need to translate both written and oral texts from and into the foreign language. All of these teaching tenets have led a great many researchers to stress the specific nature of foreign language teaching in a Translation program (Berenguer 1996, 1997, 1999; Argüeso 1998; Mackenzie 1998; Pérez González 1999; Brehm and Hurtado 1999; Collados, Sánchez-Adam and Seibel 1999; Möller 2001a, 2001b; Audreu and Orero 2001; Beeby 2003, 2004; Soriano 2004; Álvarez González 2006; Mulligan 2006; Clouet and Wood 2007; Stalmach 2008; Oster 2008a, 2008b; Cruz García and Adams 2008; Hernández Guerra and Cruz García 2009; Clouet 2010; Cerezo 2013, amongst others). Even so, we cannot lose sight of the fact that the students do not often possess a competence high enough as to overlook some linguistic competences that should have previously been developed. Most of them come from Higher Secondary School Education and have only been exposed to the language in the foreign language classroom (Calvo Encinas 2009). Therefore, the objectives of these courses must be designed taking into consideration that there is a clear need for language boosting and, at the same time, the acquisition of different competences that translators and interpreters need.

Berenguer's (1997) pioneering proposal for German language has probably been the most influential so far. This scholar claims that the teaching of languages for translation students should be constructed on both translation studies and the teaching of languages for specific purposes. This way, we can focus the classes on the students' basic needs and give primacy to communication. Further, she

also stresses that the language should be approached from a contrastive perspective, since translators work with two different linguistic codes simultaneously.

In the case of Language B English, Brehm and Hurtado (1999: 60) believe that «la pretensión de perfeccionamiento es menor en estas destrezas [destrezas orales] en el caso de la formación de traductores». We believe that this approach is based on the fact that the time available to teach the language is quite limited. The language subjects should primarily be aimed at developing the translator linguistic competences, whilst the oral competences are expected to be enhanced in postgraduate courses which seek to train interpreters. But according to Cruz García and Adams (2008: 303), this perspective marks a distance between translation and interpretation. Further, not all the students wind up translating professionally. Indeed, most of them get a job in which they need to use the language actively. Also, those who decide to specialize in legal translation and sit the exam for sworn translator offered by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation have to pass an oral test. Therefore, these scholars stress that both written and oral skills should be practiced on an equal basis.

Mulligan (2006: 839) stresses that the language subjects in a Translation school should cover aspects neglected by previous study.

They [the classes] can concentrate on specific problems, especially those most neglected by previous study, such as pronunciation, understanding of authentic and extensive texts, fluent and continuous language production, exposure to a variety of L2 accents and registers, etc. The profession of translating demands a high standard of linguistic competence in certain skills and areas, such as reading comprehension, both extensive and intensive, of specialized texts; listening comprehension of all varieties of English, while dealing with interference; deduction of meaning from context; the use of dictionaries, both books and online versions; development of a wide variety of registers, fields of knowledge, dialects, specializations, cultural references; and familiarity with a range of text types in both cultures. (Mulligan 2006: 839)

Möller (2001b) prefers to distinguish between the objectives of Language B and C on the following basis:

- Many students do not possess any knowledge in Language C at the time of admission.
- Inverse translation and interpretation subjects are not compulsory in Language C. Hence, written and oral expression are not essential. Reading comprehension is the skill that should be fully developed in the first cycle of the degree, since direct translation C/A is obligatory. It is in the second cycle when, through elective subjects, the efforts are put into developing the other linguistic skills.
- The initial teaching conditions are not the same. The time available to teach Language C and for students to acquire a competence high enough so as to face their first translation subject is quite limited.

Stalmach (2008: 100), however, in the case of Language C Russian advocates a whole language approach on the grounds that all skills must be studied in connection with the others. Civera *et al.* (1999: 72), on the other hand, consider that, in Language C, the writing skill is not as relevant as in Language B, but that a minimum speaking competence is necessary because no in-house translator could object to speaking on the phone or attending a meeting conducted in the foreign language.

From their experience as German lecturers at the University of Granada, Burbat and Möller (2003) propound the *Collage* method, an alternative methodology for teaching this language at the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting. Through this method they attempt to show that:

Un estudiante avanza en su aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera tras reconocer, combinar y anotar, paso a paso, texto a texto, todos aquellos elementos que surgen aparentemente de forma desordenada, poco sistemática y aislada en los diferentes textos. Así se procede como en un collage en el que, igualmente, se compone un cuadro uniendo, aparentemente de forma aleatoria, elementos que finalmente conforman un todo. (*Ibid.*)

In higher courses, the students have to learn how to handle terminology randomly, which bears a strong resemblance to professional translation practice. Nevertheless, its main objective is to enhance the reading comprehension skill, downgrading thus the importance of oral comprehension. It is therefore suitable for training the students in their Language C because interpretation is not compulsory in this language.

López Ropero and Tabuenca (2009: 127), on the other hand, emphasize the need to train students both in listening comprehension and note taking in Language B. Both of these skills are essential in consecutive interpretation. For these purposes, the students need to complete activities in which they have to summarize excerpts of a documentary from the notes taken. These activities draw attention to the importance of understanding ideas, and not just words, using emphasis, connectors, shifts, the verticality principle, abbreviation rules and negation. The notes must help boost short-term memory and understand the listening, analysis and memorization stages.

A novelty if compared to previous proposals is Clouet's (2010) inclusion of seven communicative skills for Language B English: reading, writing, listening, speaking, audiovisual comprehension, oral and written interaction. These must lead to an understanding of how the English language works on its morphosyntactic, lexical and phonological levels, as well as in general, semi-specialized and specialized contexts. Taking this last tenet as a starting point, this author proposes a sequencing for these subjects. In the first three Language B English subjects (6 credits ECTS each),<sup>2</sup> the students are expected to enhance their linguistic skills through general language practice. They must also delve into their knowledge and application of different textual typologies, analysis and systematization of different texts, production of a wide range of extensive texts and analysis and

2. ECTS stands for European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

synthesis of semi-specialized texts. In Language BIV English (12 credits ECTS), amongst other things, the students need to acquire specialized vocabulary to help them tackle their specialized translation subjects, namely, audiovisual translation, economic and legal translation, tourist and commercial translation, as well as scientific and technical translation.

As we can see, scholars tend to advocate a specific approach in the didactics of foreign languages for translator and interpreter trainees. The contents and competences should be designed bearing in mind the professional translation market. In the following sections, we will analyze whether the specificity of this teaching materializes in the Translation and Interpreting degrees or, on the contrary, they keep to more general teaching principles.

#### 4. Research method

In order to ascertain to which extent the teaching of foreign languages in Translation and Interpreting studies have some bearing on professional translation, we purport to analyze the syllabi of six state Spanish universities: University Jaume I de Castelló (UJI), Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), University of Granada (UGR), University of Murcia (UMU), University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC) and University of València (UV). Our sample will comprise the syllabi of Language B English. We will seek whether these syllabi contain specific linguistic references to translation practice, that is, different reading and listening strategies, the acquisition of technical and specialized vocabulary belonging to different fields of expertise, the use of real materials and reference books, the study of the language from a contrastive viewpoint, etc.

In relation to our hypotheses, our choice is based on two parameters:

- The time these universities have been imparting these studies.
- The department responsible for teaching the foreign language subjects.

We consider that the inclusion of the universities that have longer been offering Translation and Interpreting studies in Spain might be paramount to interpret the results of this analysis. As already mentioned, the UGR, UAB and ULPGC were the first Spanish universities to offer a three-year degree in Translation. However, the denomination that these subjects receive in some curricula might also be quite illuminating. From the universities selected, only the UAB and UJI specify that the language subjects are geared to the development of translation skills in the foreign language: *Language B for Translators and Interpreters I/II/III/IV English* (UAB), *Language B (English) for Translators and Interpreters I/II* and *Language and Culture B (English) for Translators and Interpreters* (UJI).

It is also important to note that at the UJI and UAB the Translation department is the one responsible for imparting and coordinating the English subjects, whilst at the UGR, UMU and UV this responsibility rests on the English Philology department. At the ULPGC, both the Translation and Philology degrees belong to the Modern Philology department.

## 5. Analysis and discussion

In the following table, we present a cursory summary of the main objectives pursued by each of these universities in Language B English. For a thorough review of the syllabi, we refer the reader to the web page of the different universities in which all the syllabi included in this study can be found.

### Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)

#### *Reading comprehension for translation:*

Reading strategies, identifying textual genres, the author's intention, main and secondary ideas, discursive markers, cohesion and coherence, intertextuality, ideological traits, etc.

#### *Written production for translation:*

Synthesis strategies, textual genres, main and secondary ideas, writing aimed at author or readership, cohesion and coherence, summarizing, revision and correction, etc.

#### *Oral comprehension and oral expression:*

Identification and analysis of dialects, understanding of a wide range of accents, ideological elements, irony and humor, talks about current issues, oral rhetorical techniques, etc.

### Universitat Jaume I de Castelló (UJI)

#### *Reading comprehension skill:*

Reading strategies and styles, text types, text patterns, cohesion and coherence, English paragraph structure, pragmatic and semiotic elements, linguistic variation, etc.

#### *Written competence:*

Planning text organization, practicing text patterns, text types, cohesion and coherence, using grammar correctly and intralinguistic translation (word and phrase substitution), etc.

#### *Linguistic knowledge:*

Style, vocabulary and grammar consolidation.

#### *Using reference books:*

Shortcomings of monolingual/bilingual dictionaries, choosing the best source/finding the right meaning.

### Universidad de Granada (UGR)

#### *Specific objectives:*

To understand different text types placing special emphasis on written and oral English texts.

To produce written texts in English in an appropriate and precise way.

To be able to use the language accurately with emphasis on oral production.

To recognize and use advanced grammar structures.

To improve pronunciation and intonation in English.

To apply spelling and punctuation rules.

To be aware of the varieties of the English language.

To possess a thorough knowledge of the words and expressions that might seem similar in both English and Spanish but have a different meaning.

To understand the use of cohesion and coherence devices.

To use correctly reference books, especially dictionaries and grammar handbooks.

To analyze and synthesize oral and written texts.

To understand oral and written texts related to specialized language.



**Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC)***Grammatical aspects:*

Passive voice, pronouns, articles, sentence structure, infinitives and gerunds, verb tenses, modal verbs, comparatives and superlatives, prepositions, connectors, etc.

*Reading comprehension, analysis and synthesis of different text types oriented to translation:*

To identify the general idea and secondary ideas of a text (skimming)

To identify specific information.

To identify the elements that take place in a communication act (addresser, addressee, context, etc.).

To analyze texts: functions and conventions.

Contrastive analysis of different text types.

*Listening comprehension and speaking:*

To understand basic pronunciation principles.

To understand basic standard varieties of English, accents, rhythm and intonation.

To study the different phonological phenomena between English and Spanish.

Oral texts (interactions, descriptions and opinions).

To understand audiovisual documents.

*Writing:*

Compositions (title, main and secondary ideas, structure, style, register, punctuation, etc.).

To write expressive, descriptive and opinion texts.

To make use of parallel texts.

**Universidad de Murcia (UMU)***Competences:*

Development of all four main skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking).

Ability to read texts about different subjects and with different registers.

Ability to understand and react to texts about different subjects and with different registers.

Ability to produce texts about different subjects, extension and genre.

Capacity to convey oral messages and production of texts about different subjects, with different registers and aim.

Command of a wide range of lexical repertoire.

Understanding of grammar patterns.

Correct use of phonological and orthographical resources.

Fluency and intelligibility in writing.

Knowledge of sociocultural elements of the English-speaking countries.

Ability to organize and present ideas and opinions both orally and in writing.

**Universitat de València (UV)***Competences:*

To demonstrate communicate and social competence in the English language (reading comprehension and written expression, including grammatical and stylistic correction).

To use English to explain linguistic phenomena.

To recognize different grammatical categories and their corresponding functions.

To use tools, programs and software designed specifically for the study of the English language and its literatures, including email, blogs and aula virtual.

To explain theoretical and practical aspects of discursive analysis.

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To identify gender varieties, text organization, points of view, register and style, editing skills, paraphrasing, summarizing, descriptive and argumentative composition.

To identify media discourse and other relevant written and audio-visual material related to the most relevant aspects and events of English-speaking countries in order to better understand their evolution and current situation.

To discuss current events in English-speaking countries through the analysis of the discourse typical of the radio and television.

To translate into the co-official languages of the Valencian Community fairly complex texts found in English audio-visual materials.

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Although some of the objectives established by these universities concur, especially those dealing with general language boosting, there are certain aspects that are worth mentioning. At the UAB all the skills, competences, strategies and activities are developed through texts. In the first year the focus is on more general subjects and contrastive rhetoric, while in the second year the students are expected to tackle more specialized texts, namely, scientific and technical articles, hybrid texts, texts about economics, etc. In *Language B for Translators and Interpreters III/IV English*, the oral skill is also enhanced, since the students will have to take their first interpretation course in the following year. As there does not seem to be any specific coursebook, the materials are chosen in order to satisfy the students' needs. They learn and acquire the language through a typology of texts that they will later have to translate.

At the UJI, Language B English subjects are also translation-oriented. Based on notions taken from translation studies, discourse analysis and contrastive linguistics, the objectives of these subjects have clearly been designed taking into consideration the subcompetences that comprise the translation competence. One of the main books used is Brehm Cripps, Justine (2004), *Targeting the Source Text. A coursebook in English for Translator Trainees*, Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I de Castelló. In the first year, the language is approached with the aim of perfecting the knowledge that the students already possess. Listening and speaking, though, take second place, as the students have to reinforce these skills on their own with materials provided by the lecturers. In the second year, though, the teaching takes on a more general approach. As a matter of fact, the book employed is O'Dell, Felicity & Broadhead, Annie (2012). *Objective Advanced*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), which is aimed at training the students for the Cambridge Advanced Certificate in English. Unlike the previous year, listening plays a crucial role. It is also important to note that cross-curricular contents about culture are introduced in the classroom.

At the UGR, the different linguistic competences do not appear to be divided into the syllabi. Although there seems to be a progression in relation to text difficulty, there does not seem to be any reference to the specific methodology that these subjects should follow in a Translation program. Solely the correct use of reference books, especially dictionaries and grammar handbooks, is mentioned. The coursebooks employed correspond to general English, e.g. Norris, Roy

(2008), *Straightforward. Advanced*, Student's book: Macmillan. Only in the last course Language BIV (English) a small part of the teaching is devoted to the study of the English language through texts in different specialized fields, namely, journalistic texts, legal texts, scientific and technical texts, business English, etc. However, no reference to specific materials is made.

At the ULPGC, it is emphasized in every syllabus that Language B English subjects are aimed at developing the capacity to use the language as a professional tool for translation from a contrastive viewpoint. A novelty is that all seven skills subsumed in the European Common Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) are enhanced, namely, reading, writing and written interaction, listening, speaking and spoken interaction, as well as audiovisual translation. In Language BIV English (12 credits ECTS) listening comprehension is practiced taking as a referent conference interpretation. The students are expected to make notes and summarize oral texts. This way, they can become acquainted with the basic mechanisms that govern interpretation. Further, the classes focus on the use of English in different areas of expertise: Academic English, Legal English, English for Economics and Business, Scientific and Technical English, Medical English, etc. These are aimed at sensitizing the students with the language that they will encounter in their specialized translation classes.

Although Language B English seeks to consolidate the students' previous knowledge and acquire some new, at the UMU the objectives that shape these subjects are quite general and, therefore, could also be applied to other English courses in which the goal is to train the students to establish communication in everyday life. An aspect worth mentioning is that some emphasis is placed on the acquisition of socio-cultural knowledge of the English-speaking countries, which, in our view, is vital in this training. However, just a full list of general English books is provided in the syllabi and no specific materials seem to be employed either.

At the UV, the efforts geared toward the implementation of a program in accordance with the students' needs are scarce. The syllabi are shared with English studies and the coursebooks used focus on the teaching of English for general purposes, e.g. Doff, Adrian & Goldstein, Ben (2011), *English Unlimited. Advanced*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press or Brook-Hart; Guy (2011), *Complete First Certificate. Student's Book with Answers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. A positive aspect, as specified in the objectives, is the introduction of some audio-visual materials in the classroom with the aim of familiarizing the students with a real use of the language. This emphasizes the need to expose the students to the way that the language is used by native speakers in real communication. The UV is the Spanish university offering more credits for Language B English subjects. Unfortunately, no specific methodology seems to be utilized.

In our view, the syllabi in a Translation program should be constructed in accordance with the following four tenets:

*a) The development of the translation competence*

PACTE research group (2003, 2009, 2011) defines translation competence as «the underlying system of knowledge required to translate.»<sup>3</sup> Language teaching for translator trainees should present a methodology of its own and clearly differentiated from general language teaching. There is an impending need to establish a connection between the educational context and the labor market. Among the different subcompetences that make up the translation competence, we deem necessary to further develop the linguistic, extra-linguistic, strategic and instrumental subcompetences. Due to time constraints, the knowledge about translation subcompetence and psycho-physiological components should be fully developed in other subjects devised for these purposes. This does not mean that certain aspects about translation can be highlighted in the foreign language classroom, but we think that this training corresponds to other subjects and experts.

*b) The study of the language from a contrastive viewpoint*

This is, without a doubt, one of the cornerstones of this teaching. Translators work with two linguistic codes simultaneously and this may give rise to some linguistic interference that may obscure the translated text. It is thus necessary to separate both languages in contact and avoid copying structures from one language into the other since a translation replete with shadows of the source language is a bad translation.

Las posibles alteraciones de la lengua de llegada tienen que ser voluntarias, fruto de una elección estilística por su parte [por parte del traductor], no de la interferencia del sistema lingüístico de partida. (López Guix and Minett 1997: 21)

This contrastive principle must not be understood as a mere comparison as grammar rules, as with the Grammar-Translation Method. Its scope should aim a bit further and be applied to the lexical, syntactic, textual and sociocultural levels, as well as to writing (Hurtado 1996: 41). It must thus be based on the use of the language in specific communicative situations (Berenguer 1996).

To date, various authors have considered the study of the language from a contrastive viewpoint a teaching objective in Translation studies (Berenguer 1997; Brehm and Hurtado 1999; Clouet 2010). Nevertheless, Möller (2001b) regards it as a methodological approach of these studies. But in any case, all of them attribute one way or another the contrastive principle to the teaching that concerns us here.

3. PACTE (Proceso de Adquisición de la Competencia Traductora y Evaluación). Their interests lie, amongst others, in empirical and experimental-based research into translation competence and its acquisition in written translation. PACTE attribute the following subcompetences to their translation competence model: bilingual subcompetence, extra-linguistic subcompetence, knowledge about translation, instrumental subcompetence, strategic subcompetence and psycho-physiological components.

*c) The methodology*

Prospective translators and interpreters should develop competences in the foreign language by working with real texts such as newspaper or scientific articles, specialized texts, conferences, etc. These materials are not adapted to linguistic levels and are a faithful representation of what the students will encounter in their translation and interpretation classes and, subsequently, in their professional career.

Berenguer (1997) is of the opinion that the instruction should start with general texts and move gradually to more specialized ones. As already mentioned, this could be due to the fact that most students have only been exposed to the language in high school and, as such, they still need to develop competences in it. Nevertheless, we consider that if more specialized texts were to be used from the beginning, the linguistic difficulty could also be calibrated through the use of semi-specialized texts.

We consider the introduction of specialized, but simple, texts in the English classes important for the studies of translation, so that students or prospective translators do not only learn the language but are also exposed to its particular oral and written representations constituted by real text types. [...] We think that the ideal way to apply this foreign language to translation is to use a range of text types (specialized texts) from the beginning to teach English and train the students according to their future as translation professionals in a market requiring, at the same time, a certain degree of specialization, on the one hand, and diversification, on the other. (Cruz García and Mulligan 2004)

On the other hand, and due to the nature of translation, it is imperative to impinge on different text typologies. Further, these texts should be exploited taking into consideration the context in which all the elements are embedded and the extratextual elements that shape them.

*d) The approach: English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*

The teaching of foreign languages in a Translation program should also take as a starting point the teaching of languages for specific purposes. This highlights the demand to cater for the students' linguistic needs as translation students and future professionals. As Fuentes Luque (2000: 145) has stressed: «campos de la traducción hay muchos, casi tantos como aventureros de la profesión». For this reason, the syllabi should include at least the study of the most relevant specialized languages, namely, medical English, legal English, business English, English for science and technology, etc. Only if this tenet is covered will the contents be appropriate and relevant.

Prioritza l'aspecte comunicatiu de la llengua [...] i diferencia els objectius d'aprenentatge en funció de l'ús que en farà l'estudiant en el món professional. Segons els diferents camps d'aplicació es desenvoluparan unes habilitats o unes altres, i

es familiaritzarà l'alumne amb un tipus de terminologia específica i amb uns registres i unes formes de comunicació adequades a la seva professió o als seus estudis. (Berenguer 1997: 30)

This approach will thus allow us to answer some basic questions which will be pivotal when designing the syllabi: what does the student need to learn? Who is going to be involved in the process? Where is the learning to take place? How will the learning be achieved? (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 22). This approach will distinguish these courses from what Almagro (2001) has labeled as TENOR (Teaching English for No Obvious Reason).

## 6. Conclusion

This article has addressed the importance of teaching foreign languages, in particular English as a language B, in Translation programs. As Vienne (1998: 111) so aptly puts it: «Linguistic competence is only one element, albeit a *sine qua non* for translators, of the total translation skill». If translators do not command their working languages, translation cannot exist. In spite of this, the literature regarding foreign language teaching for translation students is still scant. Hence, GRELT research group propose the creation of a network to establish links with other colleagues and conduct an updated and holistic research (Andreu *et al.* 2003: 21).<sup>4</sup>

As regards our analysis, we can conclude that our first hypothesis (the objectives of Language B English subjects will be better defined in the universities with a longer tradition in translation) has been disconfirmed. At the UAB and ULPGC, the objectives are more translation-oriented, whilst at the UGR these are more general. The answer to this could also be found in our second hypothesis (the objectives will be translation-oriented when translation departments are responsible for this training), which has been validated. At the UGR, as well as the UMU and UV, the English Philology departments are responsible for teaching the English subjects in Translation programs and, as a result, the focus that these subjects receive is more linguistic-oriented. At the UJI, UAB and ULPGC (at this last university the translation and philology degrees belong to the Modern Philology department) the English language subjects are inscribed in the Translation department and the objectives pursued are more in line with the students' needs as translation students and their future needs as translation professionals. In the light of these results, one might argue that only Translation departments should teach these subjects. However, we are of the opinion that this is not a question of deciding which department should be responsible for this teaching, rather a question of cooperation. While the Philology departments can establish the salient features of this teaching from a linguistic viewpoint, the Translation departments can contribute by pinpointing the professional needs in linguistic terms.

4. GRELT (Grup de Recerca per a l'Ensenyament de Llengües Estrangeres per a Traductors) (UAB).

In addition, there is also a clear need to develop materials that reflect more accurately the linguistic needs of the students. The use of coursebooks for more general purposes, although possible, is not recommendable. These textbooks do not promote the teaching of the language from a contrastive viewpoint and do not prepare students properly for their translation and interpretation subjects. What's more, rarely do these textbooks cover domain-specific vocabulary in different fields of expertise. In fact, as we have seen, most of the textbooks employed just seek to prepare the students for the English as a Foreign Language Cambridge Certificates.

With all this in mind, we would like to conclude by saying that in a moment of European convergence in educational matter, the time is ripe for this subdiscipline to be subjected to close scrutiny and its specific objectives redefined with accurate precision and in accordance with the principles that govern this profession.

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