

## Standpoints about Translation Training

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### Abstract:

The necessity of reconsidering the present graduate translator training in Algeria is dictated by developments in different fields. So it is important to prepare the future translator well enough to enter the translation profession and keep up with changing translation market needs. Through this paper, we try to expose some standpoints about the current translation training.

**Key words:** Translator; Translation; Training; Syllabus; Linguistics; Theory; Graduate; Cultural; Profession; Market.

### Languages in Translation

Incorporating languages into the translator training syllabus is a controversial subject. There are those who believe that languages teaching should not be included in translation syllabus. They are against making of languages a component of translation training syllabus. They criticize the existing translation training syllabuses because they tend to turn into languages syllabuses and this may do more harm than good. That's why students should master languages before registering into translation. A language test should be taken before enrolling into translation. Among the objectives of translation training syllabus is to improve the student's linguistic abilities, but this cannot be the main objective of the translation training syllabus. Translation teaching helps to learn language. Furthermore, regarding translation as a

linguistic activity encourages the learning of language through learning vocabulary, understanding syntax, idioms, and style. All these are to be captured from a close analysis of the source text. Nevertheless, language teaching remains an important component of translator training syllabus. Teaching goes in parallel with language teaching. Consequently, translation syllabus designers give much importance to language component in translation training syllabus.

Having a look at translation syllabus in Europe and America indicates that language teaching is fundamental in translation syllabus. From theoretical point of view, translation teachers and theorists believe that language teaching in the form of comparing structures is very useful to translation. Yet, Language teaching in translation must be different from language teaching for a language learner. In translation training, language teaching should have a certain specificity which lies in the fact that language should be taught in such a way to serve translation. This requires a particular methodology consisting in selecting the appropriate topics that contribute to the student's translation abilities. Whatever is taught in a language course should be invested in translation activity. For example, language courses may include textual analysis to improve the learner's reading abilities, language levels, language registers, paraphrase, etc. Unfortunately, it has been noticed in translation departments that teachers who have never practiced translation and who are monolingual are assigned to languages modules. In addition to that, students find themselves repeating the same language courses throughout the four years because of the lack of a well established graduate translation syllabus and coordination between language teachers of the different levels.

### Linguistics in Translation Training Syllabus

Some translation theorists are against incorporating linguistics into translation syllabus. They argue that students should have enough training acquiring translation skills. It is believed that students need to learn how to use languages rather than getting knowledge about language. It's like driving a car. You don't need to know how the engine works. Carrying out translation activity, entails the mastery of the use of the source and target languages without being able to describe the phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic systems. It is thought that students should acquire these systems implicitly to express themselves in these languages. Linguistic courses tend to be rejected by students because they are limited to theoretical description without getting any help to translation activity. Another argument against the legitimacy of linguistics in translation is that a speech act cannot be reduced to its linguistic, cognitive and contextual aspects; it refers to cultural dimension. If theory and explication seem to be important to translation, they ought to be done outside linguistics and serve as constituent elements of translation studies as separate discipline.

In spite of the fact that there is a strong reaction against linguistics in translation syllabus, most of translation theorists agree on the importance of linguistics to translation practice. Modern translation syllabuses include linguistics as an important component in translation syllabuses. If we are in favour of teaching linguistics in translation, this must be done properly, relating linguistic courses to translation. Teachers of linguistics should adapt their courses to the learner's needs as a future translator. It would important to them to be able to illustrate ideas through examples from different languages. Linguistic courses would enable translation students to

conduct theoretical reflections on translation activity. The lack of theoretical linguistic knowledge is behind the inability to write an account of translation problems that may be faced. Anyway, linguistic courses are related to theoretical competence acquisition which is the main object of translation studies. Well adapted and appropriate linguistic courses are of great help to translation students.

### **Translation Syllabus Cultural Component**

The integration of cultural component into translation syllabus aims at improving the students' cultural competence as far as translation is concerned. Unfortunately, translation students seem to get no profit from this module. The reason is that it is not related to translation. There is no focus on sensitizing students to translation cultural dimension. The content of the module of civilization includes topics that are just part of the students' general culture which is supposed to be part of the learner's own knowledge that is acquired through one's own personal effort. The translation student needs to be trained to identify manifestations of culture. Students need to be aware of cultural differences and how they may have an influence on translation like idioms and proverbs. They also need to be aware of the relationship between language and culture. Teachers of the module are supposed to draw their students' attention to cultural gaps existing between languages. It is essential to train students to handle these cultural gaps. The cultural component may include such topics:

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis  
Translatability and untranslatability  
Kinship terms  
Idioms and proverbs

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It remains useful to refer to two or more whatever the teaching material.

### Usefulness of Translation Theory to Translation

In spite of the belief that translation can be practiced without any translation theory knowledge, the theoretical component in translation training syllabus enables the student translator to reflect on what he does, how he does it, and why he does it in one way rather than another. Even if translation is a matter of practice, “practice makes perfect”, translation theory contributes to the development of the student translator’s skills. Translation practice and translation theory consolidate each other. Translation theory teaching remains inefficient if it is not put into practice. Students need to have the maximum of practical work to apply the different translation theories they learn. Translation theory may guide the student in his translation. It is an aid to the translator. It helps him capture the sense and the spirit of the text. Any attempt to teach translation without resorting to translation theory would fail to produce certain elements, which are essential to the effectiveness and efficiency of a text. Therefore, a good translator is one who can link between translation theory and translation practice.

Translation theory enriches the translator's knowledge of the text. It provides insights into cross-cultural semantics. Above all, it equips the translator with adequate knowledge and understanding theoretical foundations that legitimate procedures and techniques of translation and ways of approaching a text. Translation students will definitely benefit from being aware of the principles and rules of translation theory. Being equipped with knowledge related to the translation process, the student will be more efficient doing

translation. The student's theoretical competence improves through translation criticism like comparing the original text to the translated text to understand the translator's procedures and strategies. Translation practice and translation theory are complementary and two sides of the same coin. When the student is practicing translation he keeps in mind a number of principles that constitute a theoretical framework and enable him to cope with different translation problems he may face. Translation theory supplies the learner with a number of options and it's up to him to choose the most appropriate. Any translation theory remains dead without any practice, and practice will fail if it is not guided by translation theory.

### **Translation Syllabuses**

If it is felt that we need to raise translation graduate's level of knowledge and competence, translation syllabuses are to be reviewed. There will be no progress in qualifying translators without well designed translation syllabuses. The current graduate translator training syllabuses do not accommodate the shifting needs of the translation market. There is a strong need to re-think the contents of the syllabuses and the teaching methods. New modules should be introduced like contrastive linguistics because of their importance to translation training and some others may be suppressed. Also, more time should be allotted to modules of translation practice. The qualification of translation teachers remains a key element in the whole translation teaching-learning process. It is impossible to provide a good translation training with a teaching staff being less qualified from scientific, methodological and pedagogical point of view. Most translation departments, if not all of them, employ part-time teachers who sometimes lack experience in teaching. Besides, there will be no change into translation syllabuses for better

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training results as translation teachers are not seriously engaged in translation studies and researches. If translation syllabuses content is supposed to be related to the real world, i.e., the translation market, it is not easy to achieve this objective. The main task of translation department lies in the fact of supplying the translator student with the translation knowledge, skills and abilities that enable him to enter the translation market. A translation department cannot adapt its translation teaching to the market needs which require a constant updating. University translation courses cannot cover all the market demands. But it is very useful to provide students with enough translation training periods related to the reality of the translation market to familiarise them with their future working conditions

### Conclusion

The improvement of the quality of the quality of translation education at the graduate level requires well designed translation syllabuses based on research and development of translation teaching theories and qualified translation teachers who are supposed to have knowledge related to different domains like linguistics, literature, etc. Investigations into the present state of the translator training in Algeria should be encouraged in order to bring solution to problems that may be a hindrance to achieving a well translation training.

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