

Learner's translation competence redistribution within the translation process – exploring a methodology

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ملخص: يعنى هذا المقال بدراسة المسائل المتعلقة بالمقاربات الحديثة والأدوات المستعملة في مجال منهجية الكفاءة الترجمية. ولبلوغ هذه الغاية، ارتأينا تقصي الرصيد النظري المنوط بتلك الكفاءة بغرض فهم ما قدمه التنظير. فضلا عن ذلك، سنخرج على توجهات بعض المدارس الغربية. وفي الختام، تم طرح بعض التوصيات لمساعدة المتعلمين على التعرف على كفاءتهم الترجمية وإعادة ترتيبها منهجيا على النحو الذي يراعي كل مرحلة من مراحل الترجمة وهي مرحلة التحليل ومرحلة التحويل أو النقل ثم مرحلة الحوصلة. فالمرحلة الأولى تتعلق بتحليل العناصر اللسانية لنص اللغة المنقول منها أما المرحلة الثانية و هي مرحلة النقل من خلال التعرف على مكونات الثقافة و المرحلة الأخيرة هي مرحلة الحوصلة التي يعكف المترجم فيها على استرداد محتوى نص اللغة المنقول منها استردادا لائقا بالمعايير المهنية شكلا و مضمونا بالاستعانة بالأدوات المساعدة على الترجمة بالموازاة مع تكنولوجيا الاعلام و الاتصال الحديثة و المناسبة لكل نمط نص.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكفاءة الترجمية، مراحل الترجمة، منهجية الترجمة، المعايير المهنية.

Abstract : This study aims at providing information on the issues of the current approaches and materials, employed in the field of methodology within translation competence. To do so, we investigated the history of translation competence so as to come to an understanding of the theoretical background. Furthermore, this study provides a review on the current western trends used by academic institutions. Finally, a number of recommendations were made to help learners in detecting their competences or potential competences, recognizing them and selecting the most useful during such a process. Then, learning about their translation process

by re-organizing a set of competences methodologically speaking according to each translation phase, i.e the analysis, the transfer and the synthesis phase. The first mainly pertaining to the source language analysis through a linguistic identification. The second one which is the transfer phase, through an intercultural identification and transfer, and the last one which is the synthesis phase where the translator have to adequately render a target language text in compliance with professional norms and standards in form and content by using the appropriate translation tools especially the information technology.

Keywords: translation competence, translation phases, translation methodology, professional standards.

The concept of translation competence :

The term " translation competence " began to be used more commonly in the 1980s by (TOURY) reflecting the Chomskyan competence/performance dichotomy , it was also used under the umbrella of other terms as translation abilities or skills (Lowe, 1987; Pym, 1992; Hatim and Mason, 1997) while others refer to translation performance (Wilss, 1989).

« It has been called transfer competence (Nord, 1991: 161), translational competence (Toury, 1995: 250-51; Hansen, 1997: 205; Chesterman, 1997: 147), translator competence (Király, 1995: 108), translation performance (Wilss 1989: 129), translation ability (Lowe, 1987: 57; Pym, 1993: 26; Stansfield, Scott y Kenyon 1992) and even translation skill (Lowe, 1987: 57). » (Hurato Albir, 2015, p. 2002 Meta, XLVII, 3).

The term « competence » is shared by many theorists as a didactic concept of knowledge to learners' training and practice concerning the relations established between the teacher and the learner, which is oriented to teaching and, therefore, learning, goes beyond the simplifying comprehension of teaching methods and techniques.

As we have advocated, translation competence has a knowledge of its own which derives from theorization about what is learnt and done in relation with the process of applying language via a certain transfer from a Source language text to a target language text going through different steps, procedures and methodologies.

Thus, the studies on translation competence have seemingly no strategic classification regarding the translation process, the learner needs to rearrange his competence « tools » in

mounting his translation project through the conscious awareness of his competences. In this concern, the precise hierarchization is a purpose that could be achieved through a general translation plan whether written or mental and where these competences could smoothly interact.

« Translation Studies scholars have mainly limited their exploration of translation competence to multi-componential models on which to base translator training. These range from traditional three-part competence models that distinguish a source-language processing component, a target-language processing component, and a strategic component of some kind, such as those of Bell (1991), Cao (1996), Hatim and Mason (1997) and Nord (2005), through to complex models involving 48 separate skills and knowledge types grouped into six “competences” (EMT 2009). The differing conceptualizations, definitions and levels of specification of these models, as well as their proliferation, have been commented on by Orozco and Hurtado Albir (2002), Pym (2003), Arango-Keeth and Koby (2003), Way (2008) and Angelleli (2009). The lack of empirical study devoted to these models has been noted by Waddington (2001) and bemoaned by PACTE (2008), who, together with Campbell (1991), have begun to make some inroads in this regard by producing hard data on the relations between certain components of their own models » Findings of a Survey of Translators and Revisers Working at Inter-governmental Organizations, Anne Lafeber (2012, p. 108–131) » (Susanne Göpferich)

For both Hönig (1991; 1995) in his model of an ideal translation process (Fig. 1) and Pym (2003) in his “minimalist approach” to defining translation competence, translation competence is composed of two main sub-competences: (1) associative competence and (2) the competence to develop a “macro-strategy” (Hönig 1991; 1995) and to employ it consistently.

[T]he training of translators involves the creation of the following two-fold functional competence (cf. Pym 1991): The ability to generate a series of more than one viable target text (TT1, TT2 ... TTn) for a pertinent source text (ST) [This corresponds to what Hönig calls associative competence.];

With regard to translation studies, translation competence could be associated and classified within applied studies as illustrated by (Gideon Toury, 1995, p10)

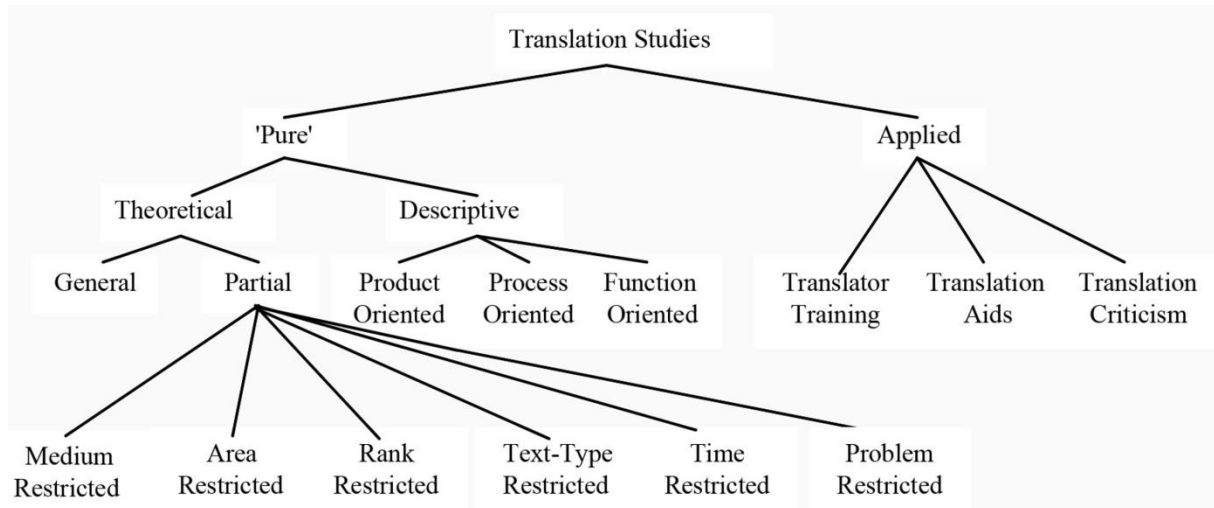


Figure 1 The Holmes-Toury map of translation studies (Toury, 1995, p. 10)

If we analyse this diagram and try to situate translation competence acquisition, we could select the applied translation studies pertaining to translator training. But as far as the tools are concerned, we could select the translation aids.

Furthermore, the current didactic trends focus on the learner as a core of the learning process « Instructors and curriculum designers today seem to be convinced that a more learner-centered, creative and flexible teaching system motivates students » (By Carol Ann Goff-Kfour, p1)

Advances that made it easier and quicker to complete international competence standards or at least European standards as for the PACT. « One of the main advantages of corpus-based translation studies is that it allows for an extension of the traditional and widely practiced comparison between source texts (ST) and target texts (TT) ». (Ralph Krüger, p.506)

Thus, the relationship between theory and practice, the source language text and target language text by highlighting the exact features of translation competence and exemplifying the extralinguistic knowledge that is intervening alongside with the linguistic competence.

The PACT translation competence model was developed in (2000) and revisited in (2003) as stated by (Hurato Albir, 2015) :

- Bilingual sub-competence: predominantly procedural knowledge required to be able to communicate between two languages;
- Extralinguistic sub-competence: predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit, about the world in general, and field-specific;
- Knowledge of Translation sub-competence: predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit, about translation and aspects of the profession;
- Instrumental sub-competence: predominantly procedural knowledge related to the use of documentation resources and information and communication technologies applied to translation;
- Strategic sub-competence: procedural knowledge required to ensure the efficacy of the translation process and to solve problems arising. Strategic competence is an essential component of TC as it controls the translation process by activating and creating links between all other sub-competences as they are required;
- Psycho-physiological components: different types of cognitive and attitudinal components and psycho-motor mechanisms.

Another model was developed by the EMT expert **European Master's in Translation (EMT) explained**, a group set up by the Directorate General for Translation of the European Commission with the goal of improving the quality of translator training by implementing a European reference framework for a Master's programme in translation in the whole European Union.

EMT has also developed a model, a translator competence profile. According to this model, there are six competences:

- The **translation service provision competence**; Knowledge about market requirements, time planning and management, translation strategies, the identification of translation problems, etc ; while dealing with norms, « Chesterman (1993)

organizes these various aspects by distinguishing between “**professional norms**,” which would cover everything related to the translation process, from “**expectancy norms**,” which are what people expect of the translation product. If translators in a given society usually add numerous explanatory footnotes, that might be a professional norm. If readers are frustrated when such notes do not appear, or if the notes are in an unusual place (perhaps at the beginning of the text rather than at the bottom of each page), then that frustration will be in relation to expectancy norms. » (Anthony Pym, 2014, p.71)

« Learners are to learn how to be interactive with other translators, and also with writers, managers and clients. They do not only deal with technical linguistic information; they are to be trained how to place and assess information for their own work. Likewise, they are not to just deal with professional standards as they see their translations being corrected; they should also gain the skill to find out about the standards and ethical principles, basically in the course of working on authentic professional projects. » (N. Nasrollahi Shahri et al., 2016, p.100)

- The **Language Competence** ; different aspects of language proficiency are mentioned, the focus is on the knowledge of (grammatical, lexical and idiomatic) structures, and the ability to use and understand them ; «A practically helpful distinction made is the one stated by Kiraly (2000) between ‘translation competence’ versus ‘translator competence’, actually Kiraly (2003) as a broad difference between translator training and translator education. Training is accordingly coupled with linguistic skills and the requirement to generate an acceptable translation, which is translation competence in essence. The acquisition of this can be a mixture of both the given instruction and practice, which is the kind of training is the one that professional translators are to undergo. Translator education, in contrast, identifies the need for would-be translators to learn a variety of interpersonal skills and expertise, besides the required theoretical base » (N. Nasrollahi Shahri et al., 2016, p.100)
- **The intercultural competence** the sociolinguistic :interaction in a specific culture and , how to select the appropriate register, style, language variations, etc. This competence could also be regarded as related to some extralinguistic phenomena as culture, politics, society where the knowledge of these domains is necessary to achieve

a certain degree of equivalence. The translator needs a certain cultural language in the source and target language with some degree of adaptability while shifting from both combination back-and-forth embracing the role of the mediator “The role of translators as cultural mediators, capable of looking through the double perspectives of ST and TT and choosing how to translate challenging passages makes their IC essential for successful mediation during the communication process between the cultures involved. How to make this process happen in an effective way is underlined by Yarosh and Muies who point out the importance of ‘making students “see behind words”’ and suggest that to achieve this in the classroom practicing skills as those of ‘comparing and relating cultures or verbalising cultural models’ becomes crucial (2011, 45) » (Daniel Tomozeiu & al, 2016, p.225). in this concern, the « embedded competence » is not sufficient and needs reinforcement viz the teaching process where the teacher enhances such capacities through raising awareness among students of the cultural acquisition via different didactic methods The awareness component is an element that Kelly (2005) also deems as crucial in the Intercultural Communication process. This process starts from cultural elements in the source-culture that can be represented in texts, but stress is also placed on the importance of students getting more acquainted with their own culture, an element often overlooked and implicit in translator training curricula. The importance of stressing the need for experts in the language sector to be competent in their own culture has often been highlighted by scholars training students in B Language classes, but we might expand this observation even more emphatically to the translation class where trainees are getting prepared to be intercultural mediators between a B language and culture and their own A language and culture » (Daniel Tomozeiu & al, 2016, p.254)

- **The information mining competence**, pertaining to documentary research, evaluates the reliability of documentary sources Knowing how to describe and evaluate one's problems, extract, summarise ideas. The learner has to fix some specific information either problematic pertaining to terminological difficulty, a phraseological pattern equivalence research, or for a specialized domain requiring a precise jargon, the first attempt starts from the source language linguistic identification by a conceptual research. The documentary research « Under the influence of Even-Zohar's (1979) polysystem theory and Toury's (1980, 1995) descriptive translation studies — Baker

argued that the time was ripe for corpora to be pressed into service in translation studies. Large corpora of translated and original texts would help translation theorists further define and account for their object of inquiry, by providing them “with a unique opportunity to observe the object of their study and to explore what it is that makes it different from other objects of study, such as language in general or indeed any other kind of cultural interaction” (Dorothy Kenny, 2006).

- **The thematic competence** is composed of attitudes and abilities. ‘Developing a spirit of curiosity’ could be seen as an attitude, while ‘knowing about the subject field and searching the relevant contextual problematics’ if the learner is about translating a medical text with some specialized terminology specific to a new disease, this raises his curiosity for « inquiring minds are desperate to know ». The research quest lies on multiple tools depending on the degree of difficulty as well as on the allotted time but the main procedures are corpus-based study and parallel texts, the research focus is on similar texts in the target language ; the text-type, subject matter similarity « One of the benefits of parallel texts, when the translation is as faithful as possible to the text, is exactly that the co-occurrence, side by side, of the target language and the first language version on the same page facilitates ‘noticing’. What’s more, such noticing, occurs in an ‘authentic’ linguistic context (not on the board through teacher-led examples), under lighter cognitive load (as the translation facilitates information processing) and in a safe ‘environment’ (as the translation takes away the risk-taking that inference-making involves). It is advisable, obviously, when using parallel texts, to encourage and scaffold ‘noticing’ by asking, for example, metalinguistic questions on the text, which can become the springboard for an inductive or explicit grammar session on a specific grammar / lexical structure. » (Gianfranco Conti, 2015) “so strong are the cooccurrence tendencies of words, word classes, meanings and attitudes that we must widen our horizons and expect the units of meaning to be much more extensive and varied than is seen in a single word” (Sinclair 1996: 94).
- **The technological competence.** Translation Technology incorporates all the existing and innovative solutions for the Translation. Translation learners have to know how to make use of information technologies, computer translation, softwares etc,. In this concern when talking about the technological competence most learners think about

machine translation and ignore or omit the other existing technologies such as Translation memories « Translation memories (TMs) are programs that create databases of source-text and target-text segments in such a way that the paired segments can be re-used. These tools are invaluable aids for the translation of any text that has a high degree of repeated terms and phrases, as is the case with user manuals, computer products and versions of the same document (website updates). » (José Ramón Biau-Gil and Anthony Pym, 2002, p.8). It is clear that this competence extends from the thematic competence and the information mining one as a practical tool attaining the learner's thematic objectives and digging deeper in the subject field ;

The concept of translation methodology is inextricably linked to the concept of translation process. In this stance, numerous theorsits dealt about such field without citing the proper term « methodology »

« The transformational — generative model for translation was first introduced by Nida and Taber (1969) to deal with ambiguities with special reference to Bible translation. The model consists of three stages, namely : analysis, transfer, and restructuring. The process of translation, according to this model, involves a transformational analysis and synthesis, that is, a reconstruction of a deep structure representation from a surface structure through an analysis into kernels (basic sentences), a transfer of the elements resulting from the analysis, and finally a restructuring of these elements in the target language » (Aissi Layachi, 1987, p.47) . The following is my attempt to structure a methodological scale of the translation competence :

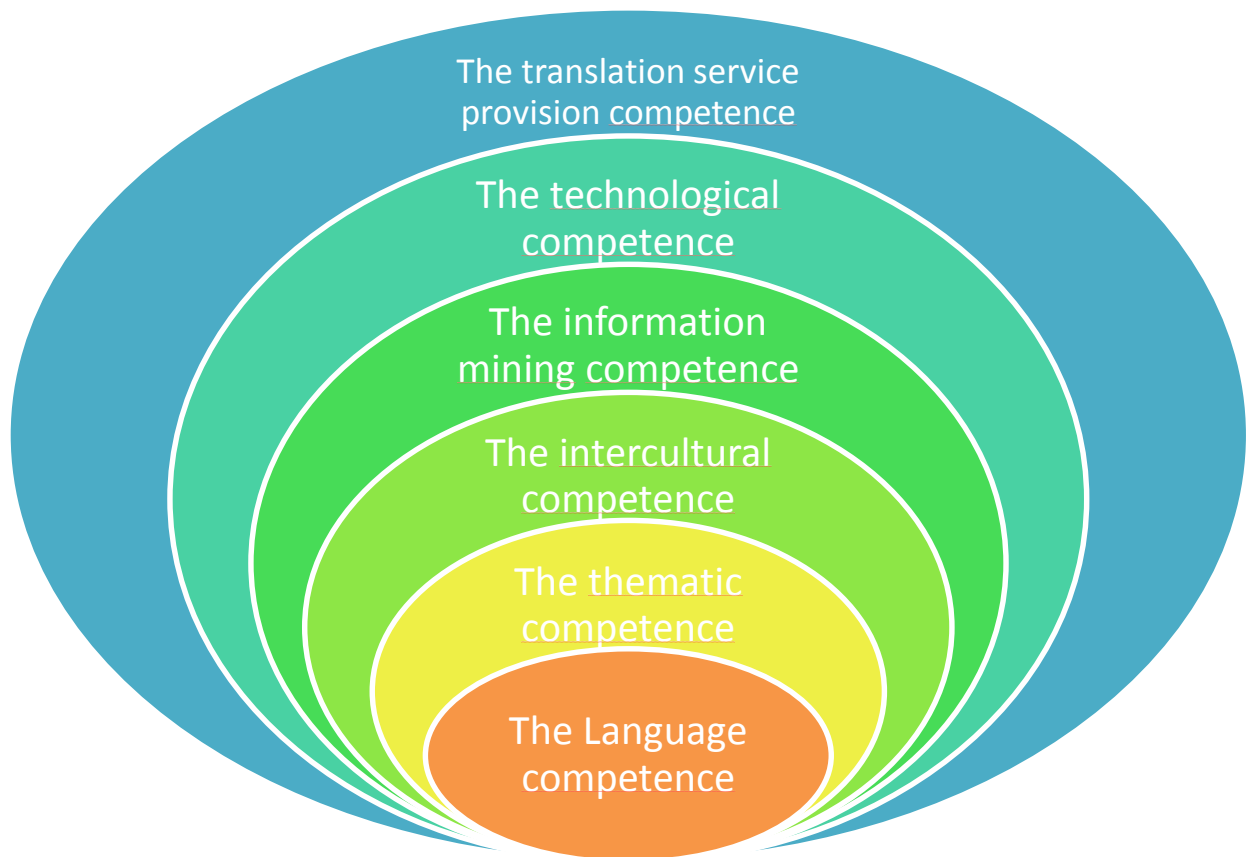


Figure 2 : translation competence hierarchisation

As set forth the translation competence has been conceptualised within a theoretical background belonging to the translation process and we view the redistribution as follows :

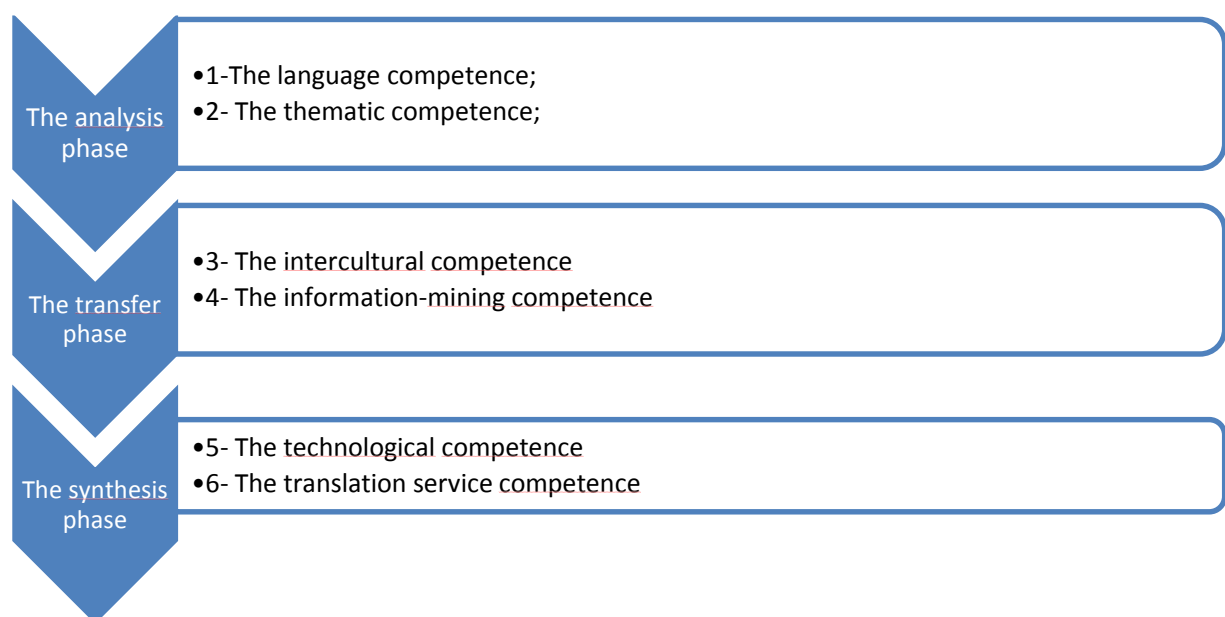


Figure 3 : the translation competence redistribution within the translation process

- **The language competence and the thematic competence** are situated within the analysis phase where the translator needs to explore the source language text elements from the morpheme to the whole text; i.e. a linguistic analysis.

The intercultural competence as well as **the information-mining competence** could be situated in the transfer phase through a mental process; the translator needs to assimilate, understand, compare, conclude, summarize all that he has learned from the SLT. In this phase the extralinguistic components are major and play an important role. « In understanding the source text, not only are language problems at stake, but also cultural ones. In texts that deal with specialized subjects it is necessary to get acquainted with the domain. An expert in the domain can help the translator understand it, but it is not always possible to have an expert at hand, and here corpora can play an important role. » (Natalie Kübler, 2015, p.14)

- **The technological competence and the translation service competence** could be found in the synthesis phase where they are gathered as practical tools during the translation process within an extralinguistic knowledge pertaining to problem-solving/decision-making process. After identifying the linguistic components in the analysis phase, searching the relevant information and shifting to the decision-making process during the transfer phase, the translator proceeds to a translation by using some translation tools and information technology.

Conclusion and recommendations :

Both learners and teachers have to consider the ever-increasing challenges of globalisation process through which cultural concepts tend to mingle in a « salad bowl » rather than a « melting pot » i.e. some cultural notions are awkwardly calqued yielding some problematic translation situations where the learner needs to render a « correct » translation in compliance to the « norms ». Besides, technologies

Translation competence has mainly been regarded as student or teacher-centered approach and since it is a multifaceted and multicomponential concept, many a strategic methodology

is a must using various translations tools and strategies depending on text type and skopos. In this respect since our research is student-centered one translation learners need to:

- Learn different categories of translation competences along with their classification ;
- Prospect their own translation competences ;
- know the importance of translation competence;
- Acquire and develop any missing competences or drawbacks ;
- know how to make use of their translation competences; to learn them adequately;
- To structure them in a methodological scale useful to their translation process and strategies.

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