

Recibido / Received: 15/03/2018

Aceptado / Accepted: 05/06/2018

Para enlazar con este artículo / To link to this article:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.6035/MonTI.2019.11.3>

Para citar este artículo / To cite this article:

Cerezo Herrero, Enrique. (2019) "Systematization on competences in language B teaching for translation competence model." In: Tolosa Igualada, Miguel & Álvaro Echeverri (eds.) 2019. Porque algo tiene que cambiar. La formación de traductores e intérpretes: Presente & futuro / Because something should change: Present & Future Training of Translators and Interpreters. *MonTI 11trans*, pp. 77-107.

SYSTEMATIZATION OF COMPETENCES IN LANGUAGE B TEACHING FOR TRANSLATION STUDIES IN THE EHEA FROM A TRANSLATION COMPETENCE MODEL

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to offer a competence model for Language B teaching in Translation and Interpreting degrees within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). To date, foreign language modules have not received due attention in the field of research and the guidelines offered thus far in official documents have been very vague and general, not taking into account the training and professional needs of the students. With the aim of reverting this situation, it is necessary to establish a competence-based model in accordance with translation practice. For this purpose, in this work we will take as a reference the Translation Competence Model proposed by PACTE group. The systematization of competences proposed in this paper is expected to shed light on a fundamental subdiscipline in translation pedagogy and provide lecturers with a sound foundation regarding the nature of Language B subjects in Translation and Interpreting degrees.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es ofrecer un modelo de competencias para la enseñanza de la Lengua B en las titulaciones de Traducción e Interpretación dentro del Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (EEES). Hasta la fecha, las asignaturas de lengua extranjera no han recibido la atención suficiente en el ámbito de la investigación y las directrices ofrecidas en documentos oficiales han sido muy vagas y generales y no han tenido en cuenta las necesidades formativas y profesionales de los discentes. Con el objeto de revertir esta situación, resulta necesario establecer un modelo de

competencias basado en la propia actividad traductora. Para ello, en este trabajo se tomará como referencia el modelo de Competencia Traductora del grupo PACTE. Se espera que la sistematización de competencias que aquí se propone sirva para arrojar un rayo de luz en una subdisciplina fundamental en la pedagogía de la traducción y que proporcione a los docentes una base sólida sobre la naturaleza de las asignaturas de Lengua B en las titulaciones de Traducción e Interpretación.

Keywords: translation, language, translation competence, subcompetences, training

Palabras clave: traducción, lengua, competencia traductora, subcompetencias, formación

1. Introduction

Since 2010, Europe has been immersed in a process of convergence in educational matters as a result of the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The main objective of this process is the harmonization of university education in member states through the mobility of both students and lecturers. To this end, it has become necessary to redesign and adapt all university degrees with the objective of:

- Creating a system of easily understandable and comparable degrees that allows for the recognition of higher education studies in different institutions and countries.
- Facilitating access to the labor market in the eurozone countries.
- Establishing a university system fundamentally based on two stages (graduate and postgraduate studies).
- Establishing a credit transfer system ECTS (*European Credit Transfer System*) that encourages the mobility of students and lecturers.
- Driving educational cooperation within the EHEA and, in this manner, guaranteeing the standards of educational quality.

On a methodological level, this new conception of university teaching has brought about (Cano 2008):

- A profound revision of teaching.
- Leaving behind the teacher's role as a provider of information to become a facilitator of growth opportunities.
- Integrating *what* students are expected to learn with *how* and *for what*.
- Reducing the number of lectures in which conceptual knowledge predominates and promoting significant learning based on autonomous work.

This change has created a great opportunity for institutional renovation (De Miguel 2006; Bolívar 2008). It involves renewing, among others, teaching materials to promote effective learning under the new European guidelines

in educational matters. Initially, this transformation materialized through the White Books¹, which offered concrete guidelines regarding the implementation of new degrees. In the case of the White Book of the Degrees in T&I, the competences put forward related to foreign languages are too general, and it is up to the lecturer to interpret and apply them as a part of his or her own knowledge and experience in interlinguistic activities. However, on numerous occasions, language professors frequently come from a Philology degree and do not necessarily have specific translation-related knowledge. This is why it is necessary to rely upon a detailed list of specific competences that allow language professors to shape their teaching according to the linguistic needs and requirements imposed by the translation activity itself.

Despite the creation of the EHEA and the need for a methodological change of university degrees, it can be argued that the efforts geared to developing a specific model of competences applicable to the teaching of foreign languages within Translation Studies in Spain have been scarce to date. This is due, among other things, to the lack of research within this field, a fact already denounced by Hurtado (1999a) at the end of the 90s and, accordingly, a lack of interest within the scientific community towards the linguistic training of the translator and interpreter (Cerezo Herrero 2013). However, languages are the motor of all translation activities (Delisle 1980). Therefore, the teaching of foreign languages cannot be ignored in the training of translators (Pym 1992).

The studies on foreign language teaching in the training of translators and interpreters are very scarce. However, as pointed out by López Ropero and Tabuenca (2009: 124), “este estudio se hace todavía más necesario dado el modelo profesionalizador que fomenta el EEES”. The set of subcompetences translators-to-be need should be elaborated taking into consideration the reality and demands of the language within the labor market, thus contributing to the development of the translator’s general competence. Based on this, the main objective of this article is to design a model of specific competences for the linguistic training of prospective translators and interpreters drawing on a translation competence model. For this purpose, a conceptual and typological framework of competences will be established and a descriptive analysis will be carried out. The main bibliography published to date will be reviewed. In the

1. Project carried out by a network of Spanish universities, supported by the National Quality Assessment and Accreditation Agency of Spain (ANECA), with the objective of undertaking studies and useful case studies in order to design university degrees adapted to the EHEA.

next section, the translator competence model by the PACTE Group, which is the basis of the competence proposal in this work, will be presented. Finally, the competence model proposed will be put forward.

2. Toward a competence framework: definition and typology

According to Royal Decree 1393/2007, which establishes the Organization of Official University Education in Spain, the curriculum conducive to the achievement of a university degree should “have at the center of its objectives the acquisition of competences by the students²”. This new regulation is not only intended to put emphasis on the learning outcomes of the student body, but also guarantee their access to a type of contextualized and functional teaching that does not respond solely to the mere acquisition of disciplinary knowledge (Pérez Gómez 2007). Therefore, the organization of the teaching process should lead to a desired student-centered learning that responds to the professional and academic needs of a previously defined profile (Yániz 2006: 20, Bolívar 2007).

The need to define higher education through competences responds to a process of social reconstruction, which is motivated by the process of globalization, information technologies, and the growth of multiculturalism (Bolívar 2008). López Ruiz (2011: 291) refers to this change as “un genuino giro copernicano y de paradigma en la Educación Superior”. The change is intended to respond to current needs and, as far as possible, future needs that enable students to develop extensive learning and unlearning skills throughout their lives and, in this way, adapt to changing scenarios (Cano 2008). To this end, it will be necessary to put aside super-specialization and give way to integrated knowledge. *Learning* and *doing* are conceived as inseparable actions through a methodology based on problem solving that allows us to emulate authentic or close-to-reality situations (Bolívar 2007: 81). As the author notes, this is the challenge that European universities have faced, that is, the transition from a traditional teaching model to another based on the autonomous learning of the students.

University teaching through competences was born from the Socrates-Erasmus project under the name *Tuning Educational Structures in Europe*, whose purpose is the harmonization and definition of university degrees in the Bologna convergence process. In this project, the concept of competence

2. My translation.

is defined as “a combination of attributes that describe the level or degree of adequacy with which a person is capable of performing them” (González & Wagenaar 2003: 80). For Cano (2008), a competence implies: (a) integrating knowledge; (b) performing actions linked to practice; (c) acting in a contextual way; (d) constant learning; and (e) acting autonomously and professionally. Therefore, it is a new way to understand education where the role of the teacher is to help students acquire a series of skills linked to their professional future and allow them to continue their learning process throughout their lives. The *Tuning* project suggests that the European credits, or ECTS, that make up the structure of any university degree are formulated in the form of competences that determine learning achievements. Le Boterf (2000), on the other hand, refers to a competence as a combinatorial knowledge that the learner constructs through a sequence of training activities. A competence is thus characterized by the application of usable knowledge and a series of skills in specific contexts in a practical and effective way (Bolívar 2008).

In university teaching, two types of competences can be distinguished. On the one hand, *general competences*, which are transversal and applicable to any degree (communicative competence, leadership capacity and autonomous work capacity, etc.). These constitute a set of capacities and skills that students can apply to any area of their life. And, on the other hand, *specific competences*, which are specific to each degree and area of study and have a professional purpose. In this work we will focus on this second type of competences and, more specifically, on those applicable to Language B courses. As previously stated, the competences described in official documents referring to the teaching of foreign languages for translator and interpreter trainees continue to be very general. Hence the need to put forward reference models that allow language professors to adjust their teaching and shape it according to the new educational scenario.

3. Previous studies: in search of defining traits

To date, no matrix of specific competences applicable to language courses within Translation Studies has been proposed. There are, however, proposals of objectives presented by other authors. Just as Bolívar notes (2008: 17), “el enfoque por competencias aboca a una planificación por objetivos de aprendizaje”. In this section, the proposals presented by different scholars will be analyzed. Because of the lack of research, the studies of both B and C languages applied to English and German will be looked into.

Regarding the communicative skills, Berenguer (1997), pioneer in this field of research, stresses the need to avoid mechanical reading of texts, since these are part of a global entity that takes on sense and meaning from the sum of all its elements. As Hurtado points out (2017: 3), “translation is not situated on the level of language but rather the level of parole”. Emphasis should be placed on the development of the reading comprehension skill and textual analysis from a translation viewpoint, for which it will be necessary to focus on the development of a discursive competence. The students must have the capacity to recognize different textual typologies, their functions, structure, and textual markers.

Brehm & Hurtado (1999), in their proposal of objectives for Language B English, distinguish between reading comprehension, written expression and oral expression skills. In the case of reading comprehension, they argue that students must acquire different reading strategies, namely, *skimming* and *scanning* strategies and intensive and extensive reading strategies. Furthermore, the students should be able to identify, understand and distinguish the mechanisms that contribute to the coherence and cohesion of the text, the functioning of different text types and genres, register and dialectal variations in the texts, the pragmatic and semiotic traits, the linguistic variations related to use and user, and the enhancement of a critical mind around texts. As for written expression, these authors emphasize the use of textual planning strategies such as note taking, paragraph planning, production of different text types and genres of varying fields of expertise, modes, and tones. Finally, as regards oral expression, they underscore the capacity to discern different accents (both regional and social), distinct oral discourse types and genres, pronunciation and intonation and the development of communicative strategies.

Möller (2001), in her proposal regarding Language C German, differentiates between the development of the reading comprehension skill and other skills. The reading comprehension skill should be prized over the others, she argues, at least during the first years the language is taught in a translation program. Along with other authors, this scholar advocates different ways of approaching written texts, where both authentic and analytical methods should be employed. In the former, the use of inductive strategies that allow for a more global analysis of the text should be encouraged, whereas in the latter, as its name suggests, a more thorough analysis of the text should be carried out. Likewise, text analysis should address both contextual and intertextual issues. Finally, this author suggests that the rest of skills be worked

autonomously due to the short time available in the teaching of Language C³. The oral comprehension skill is deemed best to be worked from audiovisual materials and the oral expression skill through communicative exchanges with another interlocutor.

Clouet (2010) includes seven communicative skills in the case of Language B English, namely, oral expression, written expression, oral comprehension, reading comprehension, audiovisual comprehension, oral interaction and written interaction. As the previous proposals, these abilities aim to develop the discursive and textual competences from different oral and written genres, including both analytical and production procedures. All of these should stimulate reflection with regard to the functioning of the English language on its morphosyntactic, lexical and phonological levels, as well as its communicative implications in general, semi-specialized and specialized fields of knowledge.

3.1. Linguistic contrastivity as a central element

The research carried out to date coincides with the need to study languages bearing in mind the contrastivity principle (Berenguer 1997; Brehm & Hurtado 1999; Möller 2001; Clouet 2010; Cerezo 2013, 2015). Due to the fact that a translator works with two linguistic codes in parallel, it is essential to study both languages in contact from a contrastive perspective. Berenguer (1997) brings to the fore that this contrastive analysis should be addressed in a dynamic way taking the text as a central element. Therefore, it should not be regarded as a static comparison of rules and grammatical systems or, in other words, it should not be limited to comparing two linguistic systems. Rather, it should be based on the contrast of both languages in specific communicative situations. Brehm & Hurtado (1999) apply this contrastive focus, on the one hand, to the lexical level: false friends, puns, idiomatic expressions, common abbreviations and acronyms, terminology of specialized fields, synonyms and the treatment of inequivalences in the native language and, on the other hand, to the grammatical level: calques, non-equivalent structures in the native language, mechanisms of coherence and cohesion and knowledge of the conventions of the specialized languages.

3. It must be born in mind that, in Spain, no previous knowledge of the C language is usually required. Yet, students are expected to acquire a sufficient competence in the course of two years so as to carry out direct translation tasks from this language.

Möller (2001) states that linguistic contrastivity should actually be understood as a teaching approach rather than an objective. Following the Saussurean distinction, this contrastivity approach should occur at the level of the *parole* rather than *langue*. Furthermore, this author goes on to explain that the use of the native language should not be at odds with the teaching of the foreign language, since translation is the end that foreign language courses in translation programs pursue. That said, this use of the L1 should not determine the methodology of the course, nor should it downplay the active use of the foreign language in the classroom.

Unlike earlier proposals, Clouet (2010) suggests an intermittent use of the contrastive approach. The contrastive competence should raise students' awareness that each language has its own structures. Contrastive analysis should thus stem from the analysis of difficulties and differences that have a clear influence on the mediation tasks. For this scholar, in addition to the lexical level that Brehm and Hurtado (1999) allude to, contrastivity should also be applied to the morphosyntactic level: modal verbs, the use of prepositions, verb tenses, adjectives, etc., and the textual level: link words, textual markers, coherence mechanisms, coherence and cohesive textual mechanisms, etc.

3.2. Focus: Teaching languages for specific purposes

Language training in translation programs must have at its core the teaching of foreign languages for specific purposes, thereby seeking a curricular design based on the analysis the students' specific needs. As noted by Berenguer (1997: 30), this approach “prioritza l'aspecte comunicatiu de la llengua [...] i diferencia els objectius d'aprenentatge en funció de l'ús que en farà en el món professional”. Almagro (2001) also argues that, unlike general foreign language teaching, this approach awakens the students' motivation, since the training responds to their professional needs. The student can grasp the relationship between their training and their future profession (Oster, 2008). Likewise, teaching can focus on one or several linguistic skills, which makes it possible to sequence the treatment these skills receive throughout the different language courses that make up the Translation curriculum (firstly, the written skills and, subsequently, the oral skills). In general, in foreign language teaching, all four language skills are more often than not present in the classroom from basic through advanced levels and all of them are developed on an equal basis.

Besides, this approach enables the introduction of authentic materials in the classroom to a greater extent, namely journalistic and specialized texts,

talks, etc., and delimits the training according to the text types that are likely to be translated by the students in their professional career. Cruz & Mulligan (2004) stress that the students need to be exposed to a wide range of textual typologies from the beginning, which will allow them to tackle their subsequent translation and interpreting courses and access the labor market in a faster and more effective manner (Cerezo 2015).

3.3. *Other key elements*

Cultural knowledge is another key element that characterizes foreign language education. Language and culture are tied together, so one cannot be disassociated from the other. In this respect, Clouet (2010) concedes that cultural knowledge involves the development of linguistic conventions which include: different registers, dialects, interpretation of cultural references, connotative analysis, as well as the analysis of the cultural load of semiotic entities, certain lexical units, morphosyntactic aspects and textual genres.

Another common aspect in the different proposals is the use of documentation sources. Training and developing the documentation skill prior to doing translation tasks is essential (Soriano 2004). To this end, students must become acquainted not only with bilingual dictionaries (Möller 2001), but also monolingual dictionaries, grammar reference books, encyclopedias, style manuals, specialized dictionaries, dictionaries of synonyms and antonyms, dictionaries of idioms, etymological dictionaries, jargon dictionaries, etc. (Berenguer 1997). Students must additionally develop the ability to choose the correct definition for a given context, extrapolating relevant information from it and learning about the different kinds of reference sources that can be turned to (Brehm & Hurtado 1999).

Another common point is the development of the students' autonomy (Möller 2001; Soriano 2004; Clouet 2010; Cerezo 2013). The current labor market is characterized by its volatility and the university cannot equip students with all existing knowledge. This leads us to incorporating, just like in the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), the *learning to learn* competence as a fundamental pillar of this teaching. In this line, Clouet (2010) also refers to the strategic competence as a macro-competence which orchestrates the others: the meta-cognitive, cognitive, affective and social strategies that shape the communicative skills. Soriano (2004) also deems the following aspects especially relevant: group work, consultation to specialists, training the critical spirit, self-confidence, active participation in

the learning process, organizational capacity, problem solving, assessment, self-assessment, and decision making.

Finally, some proposals also aim to sensitize students with the act of translating. This teaching outcome is geared to generating discussion about the translation process and presenting the students with various theoretical models, translation problems, translation criticism, and aspects derived from translation studies and professional practice. It also sets out to recreate real and professional situations in the classroom (Berenguer 1997). Möller (2001) stresses that the student is not expected to learn how to translate in the language class. Rather, he or she is expected to understand the foreign language from his or her own language by focusing on cultural, linguistic phenomena, etc.

4. A model of translation competence

Our view is based on the fundamental idea that any proposal of competences for the teaching of a foreign language in a translation program should be developed having in mind the final objective sought after in this degree, that is, the development of the translation competence (hereafter, TC). The PACTE Group (2011: 318) defines TC as “the underlying system of knowledge required to translate”. Just as Oster (2008: 4) notes, “la didáctica de las lenguas para traductores necesita el referente de la traducción como actividad profesional para poder determinar sus objetivos y también su metodología”. In a similar vein, Stalmach (2009: 95) highlights that the contents, objectives and teaching standards should be based on: (a) translation studies and its didactics; (b) the contents of translation classes; and (c) the labor market.

Following these prior considerations, our proposal will be based on the holistic model of TC put forward by the PACTE Group. Unlike other models, this one has been subjected to empirical-experimental investigation. Consequently, an updated model following the results obtained in their investigation is presented. Notwithstanding this, it is worth mentioning that even before the birth of Translation studies as a discipline in the 80s, the proposals of TC models were plenty (See Wilss 1976; Delisle 1980; Roberts 1984; Hewson and Martin 1991; Neubert 1994; Kiraly 1995; Hansen 1997; Risku 1998; Kelly 2002).

PACTE (2017) incorporates the following five sub-competences in its TC model:

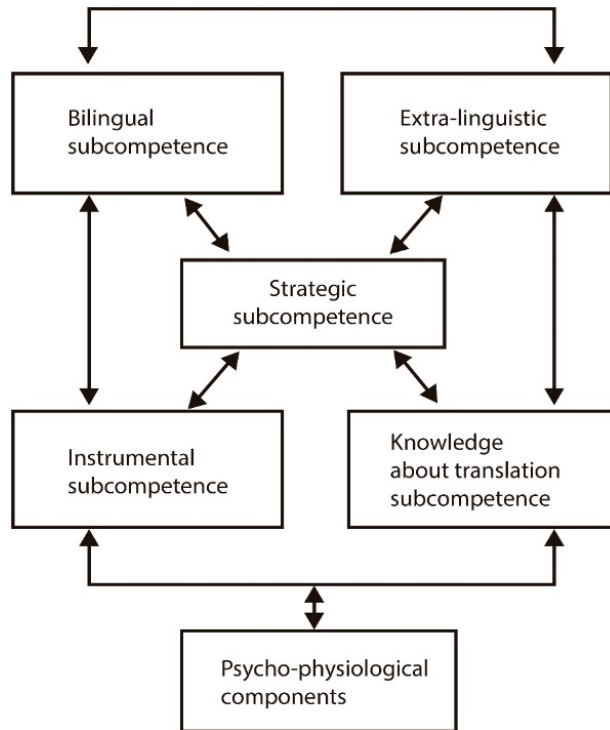


Fig. 1. Model of Translation Competence (PACTE 2017)

- Bilingual sub-competence: mostly procedural knowledge necessary for communication in two languages. This knowledge includes pragmatic, sociolinguistic, textual, grammatical and lexical elements.
- Extralinguistic sub-competence: mostly declarative, implicit and explicit knowledge about the world in general, as well as specialized knowledge. It includes bi-cultural, encyclopedic and thematic knowledge.
- Knowledge about translation sub-competence: mostly declarative, implicit and explicit knowledge about translation and its professional aspects.
- Instrumental sub-competence: mostly procedural knowledge related to the use of documentation, information and technological sources of communication applied to translation.

- Strategic sub-competence: procedural knowledge that guarantees the efficiency of the translation process. It is an essential competence that affects all the rest. This sub-competence makes it possible to make up for possible deficiencies, identify translation problems and apply solutions. Furthermore, its role will vary depending on the directionality of the translation (direct or inverse translation), the pair of languages, the specialization (technical, legal or audiovisual texts, etc.), the translator's experience and the context where the translation takes place.

In addition to these five sub-competences, the PACTE Group also takes into account a series of psycho-physiological components, that is, differing types of cognitive and attitudinal components that determine the translation process, namely memory, attention, intellectual curiosity, perseverance, etc. Psychomotor mechanisms are also included among these components.

4.1. Previous considerations

The TC model presented by the PACTE Group will be used in this work as a basis for the construction of a model of competences that define Language B courses in agreement with the new European guidelines in higher education. Nevertheless, keeping in mind the nature of the teaching that concerns us here, we deem it necessary to redesign the current model, since the role that these different competences play in language courses is qualitatively different than that of translation courses. In language courses, the main objective is to linguistically prepare the student to face the different translation and interpreting courses that a translation program comprises, whereas translation and interpreting courses seek to provide the students with strategies that allow them to mediate textual materials from one language to another. Therefore, we propose the following redistribution of the TC model of competences by the PACTE Group:

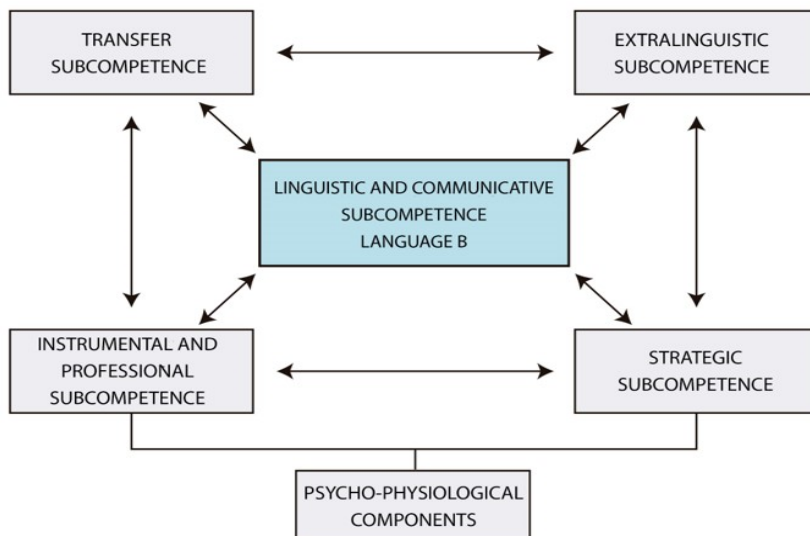


Fig. 2. Reorganization of the TC model for Language B

Even though a thorough analysis of the TC model presented by the PACTE Group would go beyond the scope of this paper, it is remarkable that it includes a bilingual sub-competence, which constitutes a change with respect to the name this sub-competence received in its initial model in 1998. Bilingualism, despite being desirable for professional translation, is not a *sine qua non* condition. As Hurtado (1999b) stresses, the bilingual condition is not a guarantee of professional success for the translator because TC is qualitatively different than a bilingual competence (PACTE 2017). In this regard, Presas (2003) points to a problem of conceptual definition. Although there are studies that have traditionally attributed the bilingual label to those subjects with a native or near-native competence in two languages (Bloomfield 1933), as times goes by research has pointed to a definition based on the capacity to use two linguistic codes alternatively (Mackey 1970; Titone 1972; Lam 2001; Grosjean 2010). That is why, in this line of work, this sub-competence will be labeled as linguistic and communicative sub-competence and placed at the core of the whole process.

Furthermore, we also deem it necessary to include a transfer sub-competence. Hurtado (1999a: 44) emphasizes that “la competencia de transferencia es crucial, ya que en ella se integran todas las demás”. Colina (2002) asserts that many translation students, despite having a comprehensive competence

in the foreign language, encounter problems when it comes to doing translation tasks due to a lack of transfer control. As a matter of fact, Neubert (1994, 2000) defends that this competence is what characterizes and distinguishes a translator from, say, writers or speakers in their mother tongue, foreign or second language students, experts in different fields of expertise, etc. Wilss (1982) refers to this transfer capacity as a *super-competence* that enables mediation between two languages. Ultimately, the ability of a translator lies in not confusing and mixing two languages in contact. Following Duff (1981), a clear example in English would be *hard eggs* (translated directly from Spanish) instead of *boiled eggs*. This capacity is, in fact, an indicator of linguistic competence in two languages and their professional application (Delisle 1988: 21). In the initial PACTE model, the transfer competence took center stage, and was replaced by the strategic sub-competence in their current model.

Having said that, it is worth noting that PACTE's empirical research was carried out with a group of professional translators who, by the nature of their profession, had previously developed a transfer competence. There was also a group of foreign language teachers who had in an indirect manner developed a natural translation ability (PACTE 2017) or innate capacity (Harris & Sherwood 1978) as a result of the inevitable comparison of L1 and L2 during the foreign language learning process. PACTE differentiates between the study of translator competence *per se* and the acquisition of TC for translation students. This justifies our need to adapt this TC model to the reality of the classroom, especially in the first courses taught in the degree, which is when students take their language courses and haven't had any previous academic experience yet with the translation activity itself.

Finally, we have decided to merge the instrumental and knowledge about translation sub-competences since both of them are sub-competences developed in translation modules more in-depth.

5. A proposal of competences for Language B courses

In this section we aim to present our proposal of sub-competences bearing in mind the development of a core competence, the translator competence. We start from the position that translation students possess a certain linguistic level in their first foreign language when they access university. For this reason, in line with Brehm and Hurtado (1999), the competences proposed will have, as their main objective, to consolidate the knowledge that the students already possess and build on that knowledge at a more advanced level.

➔ SC1: Linguistic and communicative subcompetence (Language B)

Promotion of the four communicative skills, namely oral and written comprehension and oral and written expression in accordance with the linguistic requirements imposed by the translation activity itself

Broadly speaking, the linguistic sub-competence must be at the service of the communicative sub-competence (Clouet 2010), since language is not an end in itself, as is the case in Philology degrees, but rather a means to achieve a further goal, that is, to translate the textual material from one language to another (Berenguer 1997). Hence, the students must have the ability to perfectly understand different types of both specialized and non-specialized texts, as well as to write up both general and semi-specialized texts, with the help of parallel texts in the latter case. Additionally, they must develop their ability to speak in public spontaneously about general topics and specific topics with prior preparation.

Written comprehension should be characterized by the capacity to *deverbalize* texts and understand both their implicit and explicit meanings⁴, making use of different reading strategies. In order to develop this deverbalization ability, language should be studied from a descriptive viewpoint, and more particularly at a lexico-semantic level, and will foster the ability to deduce unknown words from context. Additionally, textual and discursive analysis strategies applied to translation should be implemented (Berenguer 1997), as well as pedagogical pre-translation activities of contextualized sentences and short excerpts. On the other hand, emphasis should be placed on oral comprehension through pedagogical exercises that develop the students' active listening capacity (Bowen & Bowen 1984: 6) and guarantee a high level of concentration and a thorough understanding of the message conveyed (Cerezo 2013, 2017). To this end, both intralinguistic and interlinguistic activities should be carried out in order to allow the pre-development of the cognitive abilities that underlie the interpretation process such as attention sharing, simultaneous handling of two linguistic codes, discursive analysis, use of short-term memory, etc. These capacities will be gradually developed. In this regard, López Ropero & Tabuenca (2009) propose to focus first on developing the short-term memory capacity and subsequently the note taking capacity, since

4. Deverbalization: term coined by Seleskovitch and Lederer (1984).

the goal of the notes is to complement the memory of an interpreter, and not vice versa.

As regards written expression, different text typologies will be addressed, taking into account the trends of the labor market and the disciplines most likely to be translated inversely (Mayoral 2001). In the case of oral comprehension, the focus should, on the one hand, be placed on phonetic enhancement exercises and, on the other hand, exercises that develop communicative oral competence. Therefore, both fluency and accuracy will be honed and attention will be drawn toward aspects that are linguistically more challenging for the students. In addition, in order to promote a continuous and autonomous type of learning, the reading of phonetic transcriptions will be introduced.

In general terms, following Kiraly's socio-constructivist approach (2000), the development of the different language skills should help the students learn the foreign language effectively as a previous step for translation. Oster (2008), taking the dichotomy acquisition-learning established by Krashen (1982) as a benchmark, points out that emphasis should be placed on language acquisition, as this process involves strong somatic components. What should mainly be sought after is the development of the communicative competence based on communicative confidence. In addition to this, Stalmach (2008: 100) advocates a whole language approach through which the different skills are studied in connection with the others.

Development of the main linguistic elements in the translation and interpretation process

A translator must have the ability to understand the relationship between the different macro textual and micro textual elements that make up a text. To do this, special attention will be paid, on the one hand, to textual conventions and, on the other hand, to textual organization mechanisms that contribute to an understanding of the text as a global entity (Berenguer 1997).

Among the main linguistic levels to be considered, it is worth highlighting the following:

- *Coherence and cohesion mechanisms* that shape the thematic progression of a text.
- *Accents, geographical and social dialects and idiolects*. These are fundamental aspects for those students wishing to undertake a career as interpreters, be it liaison or conference interpreting. Dialectology should perhaps be the most important aspect within this category given

the wide variety of accents that can greatly hinder the understanding of a speech.

- *Different linguistic registers.* Broadly speaking, the register will depend upon the type of text being translated. In a scientific article, the language will be scholarly, with a great number of subordinate sentences, latinisms, etc. However, in an audiovisual text, the register will be more colloquial and oral-based. Thus, both types will be addressed.
- *Grammatical structures* that shape the text.
- *Pragmatic and semiotic features of texts*, especially those aspects that may have an effect on meaning, namely, intertextual and connotative elements, implicatures, etc.
- *Textual and register variations* in relation to the field, mode and tone of a speech.

Knowledge of the most recurring written and oral text genres and their respective conventions

A translator works with texts. A vast knowledge of text typology and textual conventions can help speed up the translation process and adopt translation solutions. In this regard, Cruz and Mulligan (2004) advocate the introduction of an ample variety of textual genres since the beginning of their education, namely in their foreign language courses. Emphasis should be placed on textual typologies pertaining to the disciplines in greater demand of translation such as legal or sworn translation, scientific and technical translation, etc. Through this approach based on textual genres, the student is also expected to understand that translation is a textual operation (Hurtado 2011). Each and every one of the elements that comprise a text takes on meaning when integrated into the text as a whole. Hence the need to develop a deep knowledge of the different text typologies and their conventions. Aside from being able to recognize and apply them, students should also be able to anticipate textual aspects such as possible subtypes within a text and discursive organization.

Acquisition of broad general vocabulary and specialized terminology

Words give meaning to a text. That is why a translator must possess a profound lexical knowledge. Emphasis must fall on the semantic study of words, especially connotation and register. It is also important to familiarize students with certain linguistic routines that attend to different communicative situations (Hatim & Mason 1998: 48). With regard to specialized language, language

courses should include legal, economic, scientific, and technical language. This knowledge will offer students a higher level of fluency in the process of translation and will allow them to offload their cognitive capacity, which must attend to the different cognitive processes that underlie the translation process.

→ SC2: Transfer subcompetence

Development of the ability of recognition of structures and lexical units

As has already been argued, a translator, unlike a person who is competent in two languages, must have the ability to distinguish and separate languages in contact (PACTE 2017). Given that a translator contrasts two linguistic systems that differ from each other in their daily work, it is relevant that in foreign language courses the main differences between them are highlighted. In this way, we contribute to diminishing the errors caused by contact between the two systems in subsequent translation and interpretation subjects. Similarly, this competence is also intended to help the translator gain fluency in the translation process. Berenguer (1997) and Oster (2008) underscore the need to make the most of this sub-competence. To this effect, its application cannot be limited to a mere comparison of linguistic systems. Rather, this contrastive analysis should encompass aspects ranging from the phonological level to the textual level and style. Further, it is also suitable to make the most of the similarities between languages to facilitate learning.

Keeping in mind all of the above, within this category the following points can be included:

- Deep knowledge of grammatical aspects of the language, especially those aspects that differ greatly from the students' L1. Both grammatical systems must be contrasted so that the student can see and understand the differences between them. This knowledge of the grammatical system should also serve to create mechanisms of anticipation through deduction processes based on syntactic structures, especially for interpreting.
- Deep knowledge of false cognates.
- Recognition of irony, puns and lexical inequivalence regarding the students' L1.
- Proper and appropriate use of punctuation marks.
- Knowledge and appreciation for the stylistic differences between both languages.

- Correct and intelligible pronunciation of sounds, especially those that do not exist in the students' language, for instance certain vowel sounds in English for a Spanish speaker, which can become a real communication barrier.

This sub-competence must not introduce translation as a learning methodology, since the teaching approach would lose its communicative goal. Rather, the objective is to draw attention towards specific aspects that may be important for the students' professional future.

➔ SC3: Extralinguistic subcompetence

Acquisition of cultural knowledge of the main countries where the language under study is official

The study of the language must not be by any means disassociated from the cultural knowledge of the countries where it is official. Languages express inherent realities of the context where they take place, so learning cannot be regarded as authentic if this cultural reality is disregarded (Peterson & Coltrane 2003). In fact, research derived from Translation studies goes along the same line. Snell Hornby (1988) considers translation as a “cultural act”, an idea that is also shared by Hewson and Martin (1991) when referring to it as a “cultural equation” and the translator as a “cultural operator”. Reiss and Vermeer (1991) prefer to talk about “cultural translation”, rather than “linguistic translation”. Hatim and Mason (1990) also understand translation as a communication act that takes place in a specific place.

Due to the time constraints of the language courses, this subcompetence should focus on the “elementos que plantean problemas al alumno que no puede solucionar ni con una gramática ni con un simple diccionario” (Clouet & Wood 2007: 107). Bearing this in mind, aspects that mainly shape the current societal structure, like its political and legal system, the education system, beliefs, geographical aspects, traditions, festivities, leisure, press, television, customs, music, religion, art, etc., should be approached. Likewise, the historical aspects that determine current patterns of social conduct should also be addressed. All of these should contribute to the appreciation of diversity and interculturality.

This subcompetence should also include knowledge of set expressions, proverbs, collocations, and stylistics (Berenguer 1997), which are considered elements deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of each language. This

knowledge will result in greater self-confidence and fluency in the use of the language. It will also allow students with an advanced level to come closer to the competence of a native speaker.

Acquisition of an encyclopedic knowledge relative to different areas and specialties, especially those that are more likely to require translation

Berenguer (1997) refers to the thematic heterogeneity that characterizes translation. Language B courses must constitute a learning space that is not limited to linguistic knowledge, but also encyclopedic knowledge acquired through projects and group work. Mackenzie (1998) also insists on the need to combine linguistic knowledge with general knowledge, since a translator must be prepared to encounter texts that include diverse subject matters with different communicative needs. Encyclopedic knowledge frequently allows for an understanding of the content beyond the meaning of words, which is fundamental so that a translator can perform their work with a guarantee of success. That is why reading specialized texts should be encouraged since they do not only provide students with knowledge of the language, but can also make up for possible lacunae in their general knowledge.

➔ SC4: Strategic subcompetence

Capacity to confront linguistic issues and offset communicative skills

As previously explained, this subcompetence is key to the current final competence model put forward by the PACTE Group. It is the fundamental subcompetence that controls the rest. In our adaptation of the PACTE model to the type of learning that concerns us here, this subcompetence has lost its central position to make way for the linguistic and communicative subcompetence. However, its role within foreign language education for translators-to-be cannot be downplayed either.

By means of this subcompetence, individual techniques are honed so that students come to grips with issues that are presented to them in different texts and that directly derive from the linguistic material. Furthermore, students should also develop compensation mechanisms in their language skills appropriate for either translation or interpreting tasks, and the directionality of the translation (direct or inverse translation) (Hurtado 2017). The translation and interpretation labor market increasingly demands that its professionals are versatile and that they can confront any type of text and subject matter.

There are as many types of translation variants as translation professionals (Fuentes 2001). What is more, the labor market does not distinguish between languages (A, B, or C). In the eyes of society, translators are professionals with a symmetric capacity in all their languages (Beeby 1996). Consequently, they are not expected to have directionality problems when it comes to translating (Clouet 2008). Likewise, translators are expected to deal with any discipline, no matter how specialized it may be. In view of such a demanding labor market, this subcompetence acquires special significance. Students should be able to balance all subcompetences when a knowledge deficit exists in a linguistic skill. They should be equipped with the necessary resources to face situations in which there is a gap in their linguistic knowledge.

➔ SC5: Instrumental and professional subcompetence

Capacity to learn how to handle diverse reference materials

This subcompetence must ensure the students' access to reference materials of a diverse nature and allow for a balance with the rest of subcompetences. It is important to make future translators aware that documentation in the foreign language must take up a large part of their translation process. For obvious reasons, dictionaries accompany translators most of the time (Vinay & Darbelnet 1970). However, following Delisle (1993) and Brehm (2007), the exclusive use of bilingual dictionaries must be avoided due to the limitations that they present for translation. The use of monolingual dictionaries, synonyms and antonyms dictionaries, grammar reference books, etc., must also be encouraged. In this respect, teaching how to prepare dossiers will be especially relevant in order to archive the vocabulary studied in the classroom and so that it may serve as reference material in the future.

Having said that, Brehm and Hurtado (1999) underscore the need not to depend upon dictionaries and employ techniques to infer meaning. This subcompetence should be geared to the development of research abilities with a view to enriching the students' production in the foreign language. For that, Andreu et al. (2002) suggest a method based on assignments that require a process of previous documentation.

➔ SC6: Psycho-physiological components

Development of personal capacities that prove to be useful for the professional exercise of translation and interpretation

Within the framework of language learning for translation, the goal of this subcompetence should lie in the development of the students' empathetic competence; that is, exercising certain attitudes and cognitive abilities that favor the understanding and interpretation of a text from the translation point of view (Andreu et al. 2002). Among them, the following ones should be pointed out:

- Cognitive abilities: practical application of knowledge, adaptation to new situations, reflexes, creativity, criticism and self-criticism, autonomous work and research.
- Capacity to analyze and synthesize.
- Logical, deductive and inductive reasoning.
- Capacity to take initiative, self-confidence, and decision making.

Certain transversal competences will also be introduced, namely interpersonal skills, leadership, teamwork, and interdisciplinarity work. In accordance with the European guidelines in educational matters, the *learning to learn* competence will also be promoted in order to guarantee the continuity of knowledge acquisition after university and an error-based type of learning.

6. Conclusions

Competence planning for the teaching of foreign languages in the training of translators and interpreters requires urgent attention and research. We endorse the proposal by GRELT⁵ Group regarding the creation of a network of professors that would permit the correct and adequate implementation of the teaching approach that concerns us here. This collaboration network should focus on the optimal development of competences in order to comply with European education guidelines. As noted by Bolívar (2007, 2008), this would prevent this new scenario of competences from becoming empty words that do not grant students access to a functional type of learning modeled according to their prospective professional activity. To this end, it will be necessary that, on the one hand, students leave behind their passive role and adopt an active

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attitude in their learning process (Imbernon & Medina 2005; Bolívar 2007; Prieto 2008) and, on the other hand, that professors avoid their role as instructors through lectures and adopt the role of learning facilitator (Cano 2008).

The competence proposal put forward in this work is built on two fundamental pillars: on the one hand, the improvement of the linguistic training process of translation and interpreting students based on the EHEA guidelines and, on the other hand, equipping the students with all the necessary linguistic and cultural elements that contribute to their professional success. Cano (2008) insists that this methodological change in university teaching is not something revolutionarily new, as competences have always been a part of the curriculum. Rather, it is a “new look”, a new way of understanding education in which we move from a fragmentation of disciplinary knowledge to a holistic model in which all knowledge converges. This will require coordination between current and prospective language professors (Marimón et al. 2009). Furthermore, competences should be reviewed every certain number of years to ensure a more flexible academic system and greater adaptability to new emerging realities. However, this review should always start from the basis that the linguistic competence alone is not enough. It is necessary for it to be integrated with the other skills and knowledge that underlie the translation competence. The set of competences that make up this model must thus be interpreted from a global perspective and not as separate chunks.

López Ropero and Tabuenca (2009) assert that one of the main challenges that Translation and Interpreting degrees face is the low linguistic competence students possess when they start their studies. Hence the need for research and the establishment of a solid competence system that helps provide methodological answers for this teaching. Translators need to have a unique identity that makes them stand out from other language users, and TC is at the heart of that identity. For this reason, in the present work the systematization of linguistic competences has been devised from a TC model. Foreign language courses, as well as the rest of courses that make up the curriculum of the degree, must contribute to the development of this core competence, even though the scope of applicability of each subcompetence will vary slightly depending upon the subject in question.

In line with the arguments presented at the beginning of this work, it should be noted that the model put forward here has been faithfully adapted to the competence principles established in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). In addition to the conventional oral and written comprehension and expression skills, the CEFR establishes for the

first time a mediation competence that allows language users to communicate with speakers of other languages when they are unable to do so in the same language. It is a skill that the first linguistic paradigms echoed in their methods, but with the introduction of other more communicative methods, it was pushed right into the background. This skill, however, is the matrix upon which our model is based, as it is aimed at translator and interpreter trainees. Also, our proposal advocates an integration of the different competences, which also responds to the basic competence principles set out in the CEFR.

In addition to this, our proposal frames this subdiscipline within the branch of languages for specific purposes, since its objective is to provide the students with the necessary linguistic resources for translation. In the linguistic and communicative subcompetences the use of both general and specialized texts, as well as parallel texts, is encouraged. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on the knowledge of textual genres and specialized terminology, along with the use of a number of reference materials. It also comprises the transfer subcompetence as a methodological element that differentiates this type of teaching from other teachings with general purposes.

Last but not least, it is noteworthy that the main limitation of this work is the lack of empirical studies to date that would help contrast the set of competences proposed from a scientific perspective. The vast majority of existing studies are descriptive and are based on general methodological tenets deriving from the pedagogy of translation. However, no quantitative or qualitative data can be drawn to help build the methodological principles that must govern the teaching of foreign languages within Translation Studies. The present study, however, is rooted in a TC model which has been subjected to empirical analysis. The results of the analysis conducted by PACTE bring to the fore the expertise that characterizes a translator. The set of subcompetences described in the paper are built on this TC model, which has been scientifically scrutinized. Notwithstanding this, in our study the TC model proposed has undergone certain changes with the objective of adapting it to the training stage of students. As a result, it will be necessary to conduct prospective studies in order to validate the competences proposed for the linguistic teaching of would-be translators and interpreters and adapt the proposal in accordance with the results obtained.

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