



UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI  
BABEȘ-BOLYAI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM  
BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITÄT  
BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY  
TRADITIO ET EXCELLENTIA

# JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Volume VI Issue 2



Centrul Qualitas  
Qualitas Központ  
Qualitas Zentrum  
Qualitas Centre

# Journal of Research in Higher Education

• **Vol. VI, No. 2, 2022**

Published twice yearly by  
© Qualitas Centre, University Babeş-Bolyai

**ISSN 2559 - 6624**  
**ISSN-L 2559 - 6624**

<https://doi.org/10.24193/JRHE.2022.2>

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## ***Editor's Note***

While the present issue is envisaged as an appraisal of translation and interpretation studies in the academia, it does not set out to explore these subjects as academic disciplines per se. The nature, object, genealogies, epistemologies and specificities of TS and IS together with the underlying linguistic and literary theories, constitute the province of the various specialisms and sub-specialisms these practices have engendered since prehistory. Originally attached to theology, through the ages, translation praxis devolved into narrower and narrower disciplines, hence the hermeneutics, poetics, semiotics, philosophy of translation, and conversely, of translation as hermeneutics, poetics, semiotics, and philosophy.

The *raison d'être* of this volume is to work in the shadow of these established specialisms and take stock of the articulations between translation and interpretation practice and the Academia, in so doing, revisiting their role in the educational process. In their take on translation and interpretation our contributors delve into questions pertaining to interdisciplinarity and plurilingualism, shedding light on translation as an interactive process, fostering genuine dialogue and cultural interchange. Interrelated as they are, TS and IS, build on rhetoric and orality, linguistic and non-linguistic components, in order to set up a space of connection.

Our declared interest in HE, is in translation and interpretation as processes rather than products, as mediums and agencies bearing on academic literacies and in re-echoing the cognitive role they play within the broadly cultural system of global humanities. Surely, over some two millennia, both TS and IS have earned their right for a distinct place in the academy, as fields of enquiry in their own right. From translatability to translatorship, we hereby acknowledge the crucial part translation and interpretation play in yielding meaning and revealing knowledge itself as per force translational. The translational norms, conceptual frameworks, hierarchies as well as the canonization, appropriation, transposition, comparatism embedded in translation we deem as particularly significant for our endeavor here.

As we draft this note, we are fully aware that machine translation, artificial intelligence, specialized transcultural

communication, and translation methodologies can inform various disciplines in the digital humanities and social sciences, in fact, a whole array of subjects ranging from literature to history, text analysis, anthropology, ethnology and area studies, hence our concern with translation/translating as an instrument, deeply embedded in discursual activity. According to most age-long specialists, to translate is to interpret, valorising the axiological and ideological implications in the practice. But as we think most specialists in the area would agree, 'the day is still young', which may be exactly why reassessing the added value of translation and interpretation, of the source cultures and receiving cultures involved, requires a complex rethinking of an entire receiving system, whereby cultures depend on translation for their survival, and we identify ourselves as tourists rather than travelers, subject to the processes of globalization, to monolingual and monocultural practices still in place, in the hope of raising awareness of the dynamics of cultural exchange, biculturalism and the condition of moving between modes of language:

The translator and the interpreter, moving between disciplines, between the allusive language of general culture and the hermetic sublanguages of specialisms, are practitioners in a sense of the encyclopaedic culture of travel, of a third culture that is inclusive not only of the classic polarities of the humanities and science, but of many other areas of human enquiry. In an era of disciplinary parochialism, the third wo/man as translator or travel writer is valuable as a nomad bringing us the news from elsewhere. (Cronin, 2000, p. 150)

*Adriana Neagu*  
*Marcin Turski*

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# ***Student Translations of Korean Poetry: A Retrospective Study***

**Raja Lahiani**

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**Abstract:** In a collaboration between student translators and teachers, they worked to produce Arabic translations of the canonical poems by the Korean poet, Yoon Dong-Joo. In this retrospective study, the revisions to the student translations are classified, explained and justified. Both the translation process and translation product are scrutinized in order to assess the students' work and to provide an understanding of the translation journey, the aim of which was to produce a poetic work in Arabic that aspires to echo the original text.

**Keywords:** translation revision, translation quality assessment, pedagogical translation, collaborative translation, poetry translation, Korean poetry translation.



## ***Introduction***

The author of this article was actively involved in a translation project implemented by the student translation team at Arirang Club from the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU). The objective of the project was to translate poetry composed by the Korean poet Yoon Dong-Joo into Arabic. The students' work was supervised via three sources. First, their translation activity was directed by their Korean-language minor instructor. Their translations were then initially checked for accuracy by a professor of Arabic at Hankuk University in Korea, and finally by the author of this article, an expert in literary translation quality assessment, who implemented final revision and editing. The team may be considered as a "poettrio." According to Santos and Jones (2018, p. 282), "poettrios first consider non-creative options, then creative adjustments and, finally, creative transformations." The poettrio collaborated remotely due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions. The student translators make up the first component of the trio with the mission of providing a semantic translation of the Korean text. The project started in 2018 when the poet was introduced to the students within the Korean Language and Culture course, which stimulated them to start translating a few of his poems. They presented their translations at a poetry reading event that was organized in 2019 by the Korean Cultural Centre at Abu Dhabi (UAE). Later in the same year, the students joined the Seoul National University in summer for a three-week educational trip, which they concluded with starting the big translation project. These steps were important for the students to understand the poems and thus produce their draft translations. The Korean professor, a bilingual mediator, acted as an advisor, while the author of this article performed creative transformations. A total of 1,232 details were revised in the translations produced by the students; as the present retrospective study attempts to show, these revisions targeted diverse aspects. The ultimate goal of this article is to show the process of transformation from bare translations to literary translations that aspire to speak for their Korean originals:

creativity in poetry translating is an eminently cognitive activity in which creative solutions typically emerge through the incremental contributions of the complementary expertises of the individual poettrio members (Santos and Jones 2018, p. 282).

### ***Yoon Dong-Joo (1917-1945)***

Yoon Dong-Joo is considered as a key Korean poet whose poetry continues to resonate in Korea. Son of an exiled North-Korean family, he lived under Japanese colonialism and died in prison in suspicious circumstances (Richards and Richards 2003, p. xvi). Yoon Dong-Joo developed an interest in literature and poetry composition at a young age, and refined his knowledge and skills by choosing to major in Korean literature when he enrolled at university (Richards and Richards 2003, p. xiv). His poetry was compiled and published in 1948, three years after his death. It reflects his concern with the human world, his own intellectual distress during colonial times and an authentic awareness of self-reflection (Gina n.d.). In addition, Yoon Dong-Joo's poetry echoes his interest in culture and its preservation (Team 2019). Richards and Richards (2003, p. xvi) note that it is characterized by beauty and power, truthfulness and sincerity. Dong-Joo's poetry is reported to be so lyrical that it did not need to be made into songs when it was recited; instead, it was performed according to the poet's original composition in the musical show "Shooting at the Moon, Yun Dong-Ju" in 2012 (Team 2019). Regarding the poet's stylistic trait, Richards and Richards (2003, p. xvi) note the following: "Constructed of direct and simple language, his poems are free of rich symbolism and metaphor. But they are deep in meaning and evoke images of tranquility, tenderness, and soulful solitude."

The above information about the poet is important for defining how his poetry was composed and hence how it needs to be read and translated. The text's style specifies how it should be read. Style rests at the heart of the literary genre and is usually linked to the poet's choice of tools such as foregrounding, acoustic aspects, ambiguity, shape and word choice. The importance of style rests in the fact that it encodes the speaker's attitude towards what is said. Hence, this justifies why all possible steps were taken in the revision process to reflect the source text (ST) poet's stylistic traits. Literary stylistic choices are translation

challenges; another challenge lies in accurate understanding of the ST and the communicative clues extracted from its stylistic details. This explains the reviewer's attempt to understand the circumstances involved in the production of the student translations.

### ***Survey analysis of the student translators***

The author of this article administered an online survey to the student translators six weeks after they had finished their task. The aim was to obtain information on the students' background at the time they translated the poems. Nine of the ten translators completed the survey. The survey results show that a third of the student translators who contributed to this project were enrolled in scientific majors, and hence had little or no literary background. Seven revealed that they had never taken any course in Korean literature before working on the poems, which explains why five of them found ST prosodic features difficult to deal with. Note also that seven of the student translators said that they had taken at least one course in Korean culture before translating the poems. Information revealed by the Korean-language instructor shows that work on the project started with the Language and Culture course that all the students involved in this translation work took. In this course, she introduced them to the poet Yoon Dong-Joo, and to details relevant to Korean culture. This should have exposed them to details about clothing, food and habits. Strangely, however, five students found cultural details specifically difficult to handle in the translation process. Moreover, four of the student translators noted that lexical items and extracting meaning from the ST were less difficult to handle. Dictionaries in this case should have been used to explain what was found obscure in the original poems. The Korean-language instructor also initiated the students and encouraged them to use the website [Korean-literature.com](http://Korean-literature.com), which provides information about the poet and multiple aspects of his background. It is equally important to mention that most of the student translators ranked above intermediate in TOPIK, test of proficiency in Korean. One of them had advanced Korean language skills and was proficient in Korean culture.

When asked whether their Korean-language instructor had explained the poems to them before they started the translation process, their responses were diverse: Only one student answered in

the affirmative that the instructor had explained the whole poem to her, whereas five said that she had just explained a few details, meaning that they relied on themselves to understand the remainder of the poems. Two of the student translators declared that nothing was explained to them, and thus they relied on their own skills and competencies to interpret the poems that they handled. As Gibbons (2017, p. 82) notes, in his pedagogical experience of teaching literary translation and assessing students' work,

confirming possibilities of meaning in dictionaries and getting a sense of them in their historical and cultural context, parsing the sentences or fragments, and tracking down referents and allusions can in fact displace our sense of how poetic meaning is proliferated by extra-semantic aspects of language.

As will be detailed in the forthcoming sections, some student translations were literal and even shallow since they did not perceive the relationship between the poet's lexical choices and the structures and messages intended. Eight of the translators involved in this project had access to Richards and Richards' translation (2003), and were well informed about the original poet before starting their translations. This should have enhanced their understanding of the ST. Translation revision was also considered in this process. Five translators exchanged their translations with student colleagues for revision before submitting them to their instructor.

### ***Revision and editing tasks***

Translation revision is the third component in the triangular methodological framework of translation, the other two components being source-text (ST) comprehension and target-text (TT) production, respectively. The aim of a translation reviewer is to achieve translation quality. Revising is defined by Mossop (2014, p. 115) as

that function of professional translators in which they find features of the draft translation that fall short of what is acceptable, as determined by some concept of quality [...], and make any needed corrections and improvements.

A reviewer's task may be twofold: to correct and improve the translation; their work may be limited to one of these two tasks, depending on the details related to the ST genre and mode of discourse, and the translator's skills and proficiency. Both of the above-mentioned tasks were required in the student translation work. Mossop compares the translation reviewer to a "gatekeeper" who works to guarantee that the translation conforms to the target language (TL) rules. He also compares them to a "language therapist," who strives to "ensure ease of mental processing and suitability of the text for its future users" (2014, p. 18). When the ST is poetic and forms part of its community's repertoire and canon, Mossop claims that the reviewer's work is unable to achieve quality unless it targets another dimension: that of versification and prosody. Quality parameters are not universal, differing according to culture, language pair, genre and translator skills. As the reviewer targets translation quality, they are urged to be specifically attentive to accuracy and readability (Mossop 2014, p. 24). Ideally, a revision would go as far as achieving a translation that fits a given quality model.

Mossop (2014, p. 27) notes another issue of no less importance:

if the sentence structures are so influenced by the ST that the result is unreadable, and of course, if the translator has clearly misunderstood numerous passages of the original text, the solution is to retranslate, not revise.

This is not necessarily applicable in the case of a collaborative translation, in which the students performed the initial task of translating from the ST to the TL, a TL reviewer checked language accuracy, and then a translation reviewer checked the translation clarity and effectiveness. This translation project targeted accuracy at different levels, which is the most important feature that a translation is expected to fulfil. The student questionnaire revealed that the Korean-language instructor explained the poem texts to most of the student translators, though to different degrees. In doing this, she was attempting to avoid any problem related to the ST message. At a second level, the student translations were sent to a source-language (SL) native speaker, who is also proficient in the TL, to revise equivalence of meaning between the ST and TT. Since prosodic features contribute a

great deal to conveying the ST message, a second revision was required. This aligns with Mossop's argument (2014, p. 136) that a translation needs to be as accurate as necessary and not as accurate as possible.

Revision and editing were exercised at different levels in this project because the student translations did not all require the same degree of revising and editing. Some translations showed remarkable efforts to create sound patterns like epizeuxis, place, assonance, alliteration and rhyme scheme. These are reflected in the examples shown in Table 1:

**Table 1.** Sound patterns created

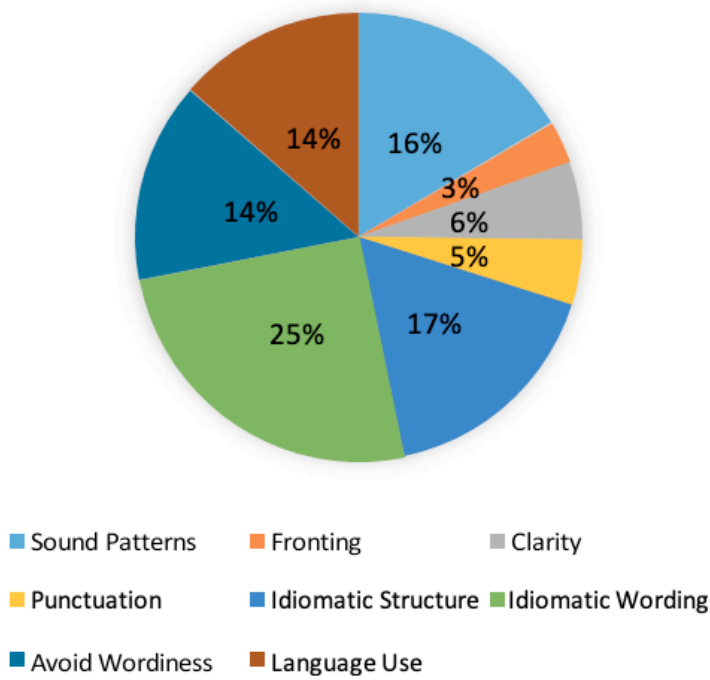
ST Title	Student's Translations
قلب 3 Heart 3	إنه طريقي، طريقي الجديد It is my way, my new way
حمام Doves	في صباح صاف من يوم أحد صاف أشعر فيه آخرها حتى السماء أرى وكأنني on a clear morning, on a clear Sunday morning when I feel that I see the sky to the edge
مذكرة اعتراف Memorandum Confession	وفي كل ليلة من الليالي دعني أمسح مرآتي براحة يدي وباطن قدمي Every night of those nights Let me swipe my mirror with the palm of my hand and the bottom of my foot
الشفق يصبح بحرا Sea becomes a The Twilight	سرب من السمك الأسود A school of black fish

In terms of meaning and message, most of the translations were not challenging to understand. The students had a good enough understanding of the poems. The revisions, as will be detailed below, targeted different features.

### ***Revision parameters***

After the work was done, the reviewer classified the revisions into nine categories: idiomatic wording, idiomatic structures,

wordiness, sound patterns, language use, clarity, fronting, punctuation and versification. Figure 1 details the proportion and weight of these revisions. Versification is not included in the figure, nor is it singled out in a separate heading, because it was central to the revision process for all the poems.



**Figure 1.** Revisions made by the reviser

*Idiomatic wording*

Of the revisions implemented, 25% were meant to recreate idiomatic wording. These revisions were applied when the students’ translations were clear but not idiomatic in relation to the TL. Rewording was exercised to achieve a degree of idiomatic usage in the titles as well as verse lines. Two titles were changed to achieve this effect: “(القمر ليلة) “The night of the moon) was edited to “(مرة مق ليلة) “a full-

moon night) and " (بسهولة مؤلفة قصيدة" a poem written easily) to "ظمتُ قصيدة" (بسهولة "a poem composed easily). Examples from the poems' verse lines are cited in Table 2 below:

**Table 2.** Idiomatic re-wording

ST Title	Student's Translations	Revisions
صباح بداية العالم The Morning of the World Beginning	في الليلة الماضية In the previous night	ليلة البارحة Last Night
قصيدة نظمت بسهولة Easily Composed Poem A	مظروف مغمور برائحة العرق والحب An envelope submerged with the smell of sweat and love	مظروف يعبق عرقا وحبا An envelope with the fragrance of sweat and love
وصية Testimony	وصيته كانت مجرد تحريك. شفتيه، بلا صوت his moving by just was testimony His lips, with no voice	وصيته رتلتها شفتاه الصامتة His testimony was recited by his silent lips
ماذا يقتاتون؟ Eat? they do What	على أي طعام يعيشون؟ What food do they eat?	ماذا يقتاتون؟ How do they survive?

In addition, advantage was taken of all opportunities in the revision process to convert lexical elements and structures into the archaic mode. The ST poet used archaic language in his poetry, and the reviewer saw the need to reflect this in the final Arabic product. Table 3 shows a few examples of such revisions:



**Table 3.** Archeologized translations

ST Title	Student's Translations	Revisions
طريق Road	حجر وحجر تلو الآخر بلا نهاية ويمتد الطريق على طول السور الحجري  Stone and stone and stone one after the other And the road extends along the stone fence	حجر وحجر، مع حجر فحجر ويمتد الطريق على طول سور الحجر.  Stone and stone, with stone then stone, And the road extends along the stone fence
المطر الغزير  The heavy rain	والرياح تدور كلعبة النحلة والأشجار لا تستطيع الحفاظ على رؤوسها  And the winds swirl like the bee game And the trees cannot preserve their heads	والرياح تطن كطنين النحل والأشجار تنكب على أذقانها بالوحل  And the winds buzz like the buzzing bees And the trees fall overhead in the mud
الوردة المريضة  The Sick Rose	ادفنها داخل قلبي  Bury it inside my heart	اقبرها داخل قلبي  Entomb it inside my heart
وقتٌ مرعب  Horrific Time	أنا، الذي لم يرفع يده يوماً أنا، الذي لا يملك سماءً أرفع يداي وأشير إليها  I, who never raised his hand I, who does not possess a sky I rise my hands and point at it	أنا، الذي لم يرفع يده يوماً أنا، الذي لا أملك من السماء قسماً حتى أرفع نحوها يدي وأشير إليها  I, who never raised his hand I, who does not possess a bit of a sky I rise towards it my hands and I point at it

### *Idiomatic structures*

Rearrangement of structures to make them sound more TL-idiomatic comprises 17% of the revisions made, including edits to ensure the spontaneous flow of wording, text smoothness, the degree to which the style suits the poetic genre, and the rearrangement of words and/or sentences. These revisions were made for the sake of readability, clarity, acceptability in the receiving language and/or prosody (to establish the rhyme scheme or other sound patterns).

**Table 4.** Structural rearrangements

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
الشارع المتدفق	<p>فلا مرفأ يرسون فيه  حاملين العديد من البؤساء  ...الشارع الذي غرق في الضباب  في زاوية الشارع أقف ممسكاً  بصندوق بريد أحمر  ووسط هذا الجريان المتدفق، ما الذي  يرمز إليه عدم انطفاء أضواء  الشارع الخافت؟</p>	<p>لا مرسى ولا مرفأ  حاملين العديد من البؤساء  ...غرق في الضباب الشارع  أقف ممسكاً بصندوق بريد أحمر في  زاوية الشارع  ومع هذا الجريان المتدفق، لم لا  تتطفئ أضواء الشارع الخافت؟</p>
The Running Road	<p>No harbor for them to  anchor in  Boarding many poor people  The road that sank in the  fog ...  In the road corner I stand  holding a red mailbox,  And in the midst of this  flow, what does the non-  extinction of the faint road  lights signify?</p>	<p>Neither harbor nor anchor,  Boarding many poor  people,  Sunk in the fog is the road  ...  I stand holding a red  mailbox in the road corner,  And with this flow, why  don't the faint streetlights  extinguish?</p>

In the example cited in Table 4, two relative pronouns were omitted (الذي) to accelerate the tempo of the verse lines and thus give them a more straightforward appeal. In addition, the structure of the first verse line was shifted by using double negations with two nouns

instead of the noun-verb-complement structure used in the students' translation. This aligns better with the mood of deprivation pervading the poem. At the end of this passage, the interrogative form was retained, but its phrasing was changed into a much more idiomatic and direct structure to guarantee clarity and smoothness.

**Table 5.** Idiomatised structures

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
ليلة أعدّ فيها النجوم  A Night where I count the Stars	سبب عدم تمكني الآن من عدّ كل النجوم المحفورة في قلبي واحدة ،تلو الأخرى ...هو أن الصباح يأتي بسرعة ...وأن ليلة الغد لا تزال باقية ...وأن شبابي لم ينقضي بعد  The reason for which I cannot count now All the stars that are engraved in my heart one by one, Is that the morning comes quickly ... And that tomorrow night will be lasting ... And that my youth is not yet past ...	لم لا أستطيع الآن عدّ النجوم؟ لأن كل النجوم محفورة في قلبي ... كلها ... لأن الصباح يأتي بسرعة ... ولأن ليلة الغد لا تزال باقية ... ولأن شبابي لم ينقض بعد  Why cannot I now count the stars? Because all the stars are engraved in my heart ... all Because the morning comes fast ... And because tomorrow night will be lasting ... And because my youth has not yet passed ...

The verse lines in Table 5 were not only made shorter but also more intense in terms of their content, which makes them sound more idiomatic. The first verse line is shifted from the declarative mode to the interrogative. The rhetorical question formulated by the reviewer is then answered in the next line, which creates a sense of suspense that is soon quenched. The creation of anaphora by repeating the conjunction “لأن” (because) clarifies the link between all verse lines of the passage: they all answer the question asked at the beginning. These revisions at the level of the structure of the students' translation not only convert

the verse lines into idiomatic structures, but also aim to contribute to musicality and clarity, thus helping to preserve the ST poet's appeal.

### Wordiness

Avoiding wordiness represents 14% of the revisions made, consisting of eliminating verbosity for the sake of maintaining the brevity usually associated with poetry. Another reason behind this type of revision is the creation of stylistic effects and avoidance of prose-like readings of the poems. Let us consider the two examples in Table 6:

**Table 6.** Avoiding wordiness, example 1

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
زوجا بيت القرميد  The pair of tiles	<p>في مساءٍ يومٍ ماطرٍ لا بد أن زوجا بيت القرميد يتذكرا المفقود ابنهما الوحيد يربت كل منهما على الظهر المنحني للاخر وينوحان عليه والدموع تنهمر</p> <p>On a rainy evening It is sure that the pair of tiles. Remember their lost son. They patted on each other's bending backs, They lament him with flowing tears.</p>	<p>لم لا أستطيع الآن عدّ النجوم؟ لأن كل النجوم محفورة في قلبي ... كلها ... لأن الصباح يأتي بسرعة ... ولأن ليلة الغد لا تزال باقية ... ولأن شبابي لم ينقض بعد</p> <p>Why cannot I now count the stars? Because all the stars are engraved in my heart ... all Because the morning comes fast ... And because tomorrow night will be lasting ... And because my youth has not yet passed ...</p>

The preposition (في) and conjunction (لا بد أن) are omitted to enable the creation of suspense. In the third verse line, the clause “يربت كل منهما على الظهر المنحني لآخر” is omitted. Instead, the reviewer took advantage of a morphological structure in the Arabic language that reflects sharing an action: the verb “يتعانقان.” This verb also assonates

with the other verbs in the same verse line by repeating the /a:/ sound, which echoes the prevalent sad mood of the poem.

**Table 7.** Avoiding wordiness, example 2

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
<p>ليلة أعدّ فيها النجوم</p> <p>A Night where I count the Stars</p>	<p>سبب عدم تمكّني الآن من عدّ كل النجوم المحفورة في قلبي واحدة ،تلو الأخرى ...هو قدوم أن الصباح يأتي بسرعة ...وأن ليلة الغد لا تزال باقية ...وأن أيام شبابي لم ينقضي بعد</p> <p>The reason for which I cannot count now All the stars that are engraved in my heart one after the other, Is that the morning comes quickly ... And that tomorrow night will be lasting ... And that my youth is not yet past ...</p>	<p>لم لا أستطيع الآن عدّ النجوم؟ لأن كل النجوم محفورة في قلبي ... كلها ... لأن الصباح يأتي بسرعة ... ولأن ليلة الغد لا تزال باقية ... ولأن شبابي لم ينقض بعد</p> <p>Why cannot I now count the stars? Because all the stars are engraved in my heart ... all Because the morning comes fast ... And because tomorrow night will be lasting ... And because my youth is not yet past ...</p>

In the second verse line of this passage, the student translator uses a common expression in Arabic, “واحدة تلو الأخرى” (“one after the other”), to render the idea that all the stars are engraved in the speaker’s heart. However, the idea of consecutiveness is not important here since the chief appeal is that the speaker’s heart includes all the stars. Thus, not only does this translation shift the focus of the verse line, but it also results in wordiness. In the revised version, a polyptoton is created by repeating the words “كل” and “كلها,” meaning “all.” Three dots are also inserted before the second occurrence to arouse a sense of suspense and reflection. In addition, in the third verse line the phrase “هو قدوم أن” is omitted and replaced by “لأن.” This revision corrects a structural mistake in the students’ translation and also helps avoid

wordiness. It is undeniable, though, that this contributes to the anaphora implemented by the reviewer in four successive lines.

### *Clarity*

Clarity and readability are very important aspects to consider in translation revision. Clarity relates to the meaning of a text, while readability involves the wording in terms of ensuring it flows smoothly and fits the reader's linguistic expectations (Mossop, 2014, p. 72). A translation is considered smooth when the reader receives its meaning "on first reading at normal reading speed" (Mossop, 2014, pp. 142–143). The revisions made to the students' translations are basically stylistic. A few parts required deep revisions to achieve clarity. The author defines clarity as the TT transferring the ST's intended meaning, with no unintelligible wording or contradiction in the translations. The target here is accuracy of meaning and message. Table 8 shows a few examples that illustrate this type of intervention in the students' translations:

**Table 8.** Clarity-oriented revisions

ST Title	Student's Translations	Revisions
البقعة المشمسة  The Sunny Spot	<p>طفلان لا يدريان لمن الأرض "بسبب لعبهم" أعدت رسم الخريطة حتى المسافة القصيرة التي تصل إليها أصابعهم.</p> <p>Two kids do not know whose the earth is Because of their playing "I retraced the map" Even the short distance that their fingers reach.</p>	<p>الطفلان لا يدريان لمن الأرض التي يقفان عليها "بينما يلعبان" أعد رسم الخريطة أناملهما القصيرة لا تصل إلى مبتغاهما.</p> <p>The two kids do not know whose is the earth that they stand on As they play "retrace the map" Their fingertips do not reach their target.</p>
وصية	<p>مصير الأب الوحيد طيلة حياته يغيم الحزن على عينيه المغلقتين</p>	<p>الأنفاس الأخيرة لأب عاش حياته وحيدا</p>

ST Title	Student's Translations	Revisions
A Testimony	The sole destiny of the father all along his life Sadness pervades his shut eyes	غيمة الحزن تضلل عينيه المغلقتين The last breaths of a father who lived alone
ذكريات جميلة Beautiful Memories	ذات صباح يحل فيه الربيع، في محطة صغيرة في سيول One morning in spring time, in a small station in Seoul	ذات صباح مع حلول الربيع، في محطة صغيرة بمدينة سيول One spring morning, in a small station in Seoul City

In the first example in Table 8, the student translator mistakenly links verse lines 2 and 3 with causality (“بسبب”), which results in a nonsensical statement. A revision was thus needed to change the link between the two verse lines into a temporal one (“بينما”). This revision, in addition to the insertion of a relative clause that explains what is meant by “earth,” makes the passage smooth and clear. In the second example quoted in Table 8, the student’s translation is so ambiguous and ambivalent that it does not reveal the message intended; destiny does not necessarily imply death. Consequently, it is not possible for the reader to understand why the father is sad and why his eyes are closed. The revision uses the idiomatic expression “الأنفاس الأخيرة” (“the last breaths”) to make the message explicit. The original mood and tone are preserved by means of the idiomatic metaphor “غيمة الحزن” (“the cloud of grief”). Imagery is created here by claiming that the father’s eyes are shut as the cloud spreads its shade over them. This revision achieves more than its initial target, which is clarity: it creates a poetic idiomatic image that fits the ST tone. In the third example in Table 8, the student translator mistakenly states that the flood itself drowns, which is illogical; this is edited in the revision. The fourth example refers to Seoul. In Arabic, the word “سيول” (/suyül/) means the Korean city, but it also means floods. Thus, the student translator’s use of this word with no interpolated explanatory term creates ambiguity, as the reader would find it rather challenging to decide whether the railway station was in Seoul or by the flooded region. To avoid ambiguity, the revised edition uses the term “مدينة” (“city”) to clarify what /suyül/ refers to.

In a few cases, the student translations were so unclear and inaccurate that the English translation was consulted to check the ST's intended meaning. Reconciliation was attempted between this work and the students' translations so that the revision guaranteed a maximum approximation of the message of the original text. This was kept to the most minimal level possible to avoid the influence of the English translation. The following is an example of a student translation that could not be revised without checking the message in the English translation:

**Table 9.** Sample of clarity-free translation

ST Title	Student's Translations	Revisions
<p>في مثل هذا اليوم</p> <p>On a Day Like This</p>	<p>في نهاية عموديّ الحجر المتألفين في البوابة الأمامية</p> <p>في اليوم الذي يرقص فيه علم الخمسة ألوان وعلم الشمس</p> <p>أطفال المنطقة الذين رسموا الخط يستمتعون</p> <p>وبينما يدرس الأطفال مواد اليوم</p> <p>الجافة</p> <p>يحل عليهم ملل هائل</p> <p>لا بد وأن عقولهم كانت أبسط من أن تفهم</p> <p>"ما تعنيه كلمة "التناقض</p> <p>في مثل هذا اليوم</p> <p>أريد أن أنادي</p> <p>أخي الكبير العنيد الذي فقدته</p> <p>At the end of the two harmonious stone poles at the front gate</p> <p>On the day the flag of the five colours and the sun fag dance</p> <p>The children of the neighbourhood who drew</p>	<p>في اليوم الذي يرقص فيه علم الألوان الخمس وعلم الشمس الساطعة</p> <p>فوق عموديّ الحجر المتألفين في البوابة الأمامية</p> <p>يستمتع الأطفال بالمنطقة الحدودية</p> <p>ملل على ملل يحسه الأطفال</p> <p>حينما يدرسون المواد المملة اليومية</p> <p>أذهانهم أبسط من أن تدرك</p> <p>"دلالة كلمة "التناقض</p> <p>في مثل هذا اليوم</p> <p>أتوق أن أنادي</p> <p>أخي الكبير والعنيد الذي فقدته</p> <p>On the day when the flag of the five colors and the flag of the sun dance.</p> <p>On the two harmonious stone poles at the front gate,</p> <p>The children in the border region have fun.</p>



ST Title	Student's Translations	Revisions
	<p>the line are having fun</p> <p>While the children are sitting for the daily dry courses, An enormous boredom surrounds them I am sure that their minds are too simple to understand the meaning of the word "contradiction"</p> <p>On a day like this I want to call My elder stubborn brother whom I lost.</p>	<p>Boredom and more boredom do the children feel When they study the daily boring courses Their minds are too simple to understand The significance of the word "contradiction."</p> <p>On a day like this I want to call My elder stubborn brother whom I lost.</p>

Ten revisions were made to support the student's translation of this poem. These range between changing the order of the verse lines, avoiding wordiness, using idiomatic phrases, using idiomatic wording and shifting phrases. The revisions made in this case were deep revisions.

### *Language use*

The rules of Arabic grammar, spelling, punctuation and usage were not always observed in the students' translations; 14% of the revisions targeted language correction. Table 10 shows an example:

**Table 10.** Language use

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
<p>صباح بداية العالم</p> <p>The Morning of</p>	<p>ذات صباح ليس هو صباح ربيعي ولا صيفي ولا خريفي أو حتى شتوي</p>	<p>ذات صباح ليس ربيعياً ولا صيفياً ولا خريفياً ولا حتى شتوياً</p>

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
the World Beginning	On a morning It is not a spring morning Nor summer nor fall nor even winter	On a morning Neither spring Nor summer nor fall nor even winter

### *Fronting*

Fronting is usually done by foregrounding a word, segment or even a verse line to place more emphasis on it. Its effect is the creation of a feeling of defamiliarization in the context, and thus attracts attention to the element that is foregrounded. Fronting also entails backgrounding because some elements of the verse line(s) would take a secondary, less felt, position. As shown in Figure 1, fronting was rarely implemented in the revision process. Its use aimed at creating vivacity and emphasis in the student translations that lacked this element, and whenever the theme and the tone of the poem reflected subjectivity and tension but the style used in the student translation did not reflect this. Table 11 shows an example of fronting:

**Table 11.** Fronting

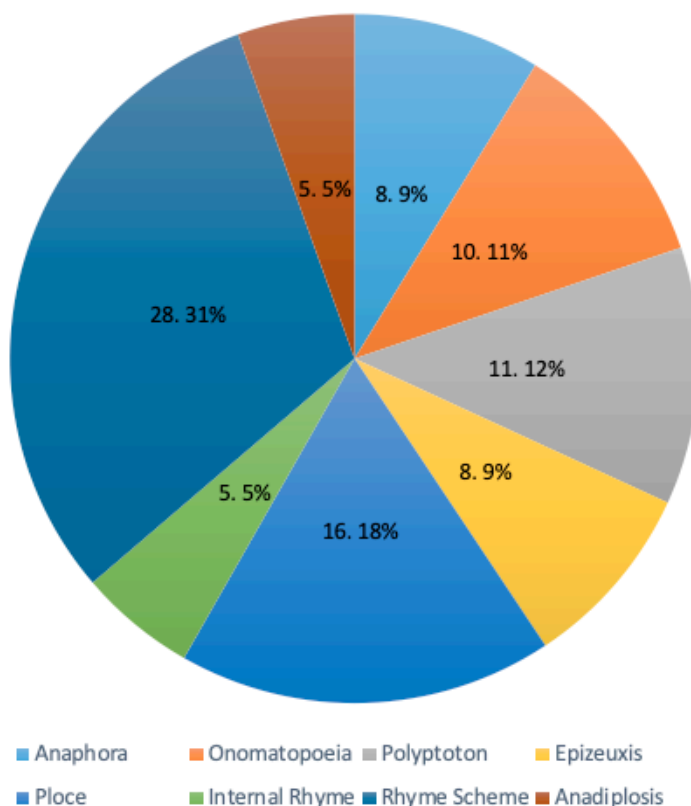
ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
في مثل هذا اليوم  On a day like this	وبينما يدرس الأطفال مواد اليوم ،الجافة يحل عليهم ملل هائل While the children are sitting for the daily dry courses, An enormous boredom surrounds them	ملل على ملل يحسه الأطفال حينما يدرسون المواد المملة اليومية Boredom upon boredom do the children feel When they study the daily boring courses

Fronting is implemented in this example at two levels: the word level and verse-line level. The word “ملل” (“boredom”) is foregrounded at the beginning of the passage and is repeated twice (ploce). In addition, the verse line order is subverted in such a way as to highlight the speaker’s main concern: the children’s feelings are more important than their actions. Consequently, the idea that comes with the word that

is fronted, and the verse line foregrounded, represents the kernel of not only the passage but the whole poem; this justifies the use of foregrounding in the revision process.

### *Sound-patterns*

In the revision process, 16% of the work done targeted the creation and/or intensification of sound patterns. As highlighted in the section on Yoon Dong-Joo above, the ST poet worked a great deal on the lyrics to produce musical poetry that would be sung when recited. Numerous sound patterns were implemented; their frequencies in the revision process are classified in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2.** Sound patterns implemented

The first step in the sound-pattern-oriented revisions was the creation of a rhyme scheme. In the example in Table 12, the student's lexical and phrasal rendering is preserved. A revision was applied, however, to the order of the verse lines to intensify the effect of the rhyme scheme. This is turned into the abab pattern to echo the binary relationship evoked in the passage:

**Table 12.** Rhyme scheme

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
كالقمر Like the	مثلما تنمو حلقات الشجرة المعمرة في ليلة ينمو فيها القمر حبٌ وحيدٌ كالقمر	مثلما تنمو حلقات الشجرة المعمرة في ليلة ينمو فيها القمر ينمو كتلك الحلقات المعمرة

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
Moon	<p>ينمو كتلك الحلقات المعمرة ...ويتفتح مالئاً قلبي</p> <p>As the rings of the perennial trees grow On a maturing moon night A love that is as lonely as the moon Grows like those perennial rings And it embracingly fills my heart</p>	<p>حبٌ وحيدٌ كالقمر ...ويتفتح مالئاً قلبي</p> <p>As the rings of the perennial trees grow On a maturing moon night Grows like those perennial rings A love that is as lonely as the moon And it embracingly fills my heart</p>

Internal rhyme is another sound pattern that is important not only to create musicality, but also to consolidate the relationships between parts of verse lines. In Table 13, the internal rhyme highlights the cause–effect relationship between two clauses.

**Table 13.** Internal rhyme

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
الفرق The Farewell	<p>إن الفرق سريعٌ... وهذا أمر مؤسفٌ...</p> <p>Farewell is fast ... and this is a saddening issue</p>	<p>...إن الفرق سريعٌ... وهذا أمر مريع</p> <p>Farewell is fast ... and this is nefast</p>

Advantage was taken of all opportunities available to create anaphora while revising the students' translations. This is important not only for creating musical effects but also rhetorical ones, as in the example in Table 14:

**Table 14.** Anaphora

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
ليلة أعدّ فيها النجوم A Night	<p>سبب عدم تمكني الآن من عدّ كل النجوم المحفورة في قلبي واحدة ،تلو الأخرى</p>	<p>لم لا أستطيع الآن عدّ النجوم؟ لأن كل النجوم محفورة في قلبي ... كلها،</p>

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
where I Count the Stars	<p>...هو أن الصباح يأتي بسرعة ...وأن ليلة الغد لا تزال باقية ...وأن شبابي لم ينقض بعد</p> <p>The reason why I cannot now count All the stars that are engraved in my heart one by one Is that the morning comes fast ... And tomorrow night is still there... And my youth is not yet past ...</p>	<p>... لأن الصباح يأتي بسرعة ... ولأن ليلة الغد لا تزال باقية ... ولأن شبابي لم ينقض بعد</p> <p>Why cannot I count the stars? Because all the stars are engraved in my heart ... all of them, Because the morning comes fast ... And because tomorrow night is still there... And because my youth is not yet past ...</p>

As the first line above asks a question, the succeeding lines attempt to provide answers. Anaphora is thus implemented in the revision to highlight the rhetorical aspect of the question asked since it has many possible answers. In addition, the anaphora highlights the contextual link between the four lines. Around 9% of the sound-pattern revisions aimed to create anaphora for this same purpose.

Not unlike anaphora, onomatopoeia is one of the tools implemented in the revisions to combine the musical, rhetorical and affective aspects of the text. It facilitates empathy between the speaker and receiver in the poem. By means of this scheme, the reader would pronounce a word, the sound of which mimics its meaning, and hence they would feel involved in the experience related.

**Table 15.** Onomatopoeia, example 1

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
المطر الغزير The Heavy Rain	<p>برق، ثم صعقة رعد، صعقت بصوت هائل لابد وأن صاعقة قد ضربت مدينة بعيدة.</p>	<p>برق، ثم صعقة رعد جلجلت أهذه مدينة بعيدة قد أصعقت؟ Lightning, then a thunder</p>

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
	Lightening, then a thunder strike, stroke loudly It is most likely that a lightening strike hit a far away city	strike thundered Is it a far away city that is struck?

The verbs “جلجت” and “أصعقت” are onomatopoeic. The former uses syllable entwining; i.e., the same syllable is repeated twice, which makes it even more musical and impactful. The same applies to the word “وشوشة” in the example in Table 16. One cannot read it without whispering with the speaker. Arabic language provides two alternatives: “تهمس” and “وشوشة.” The latter is adopted by the reviewer because it is onomatopoeic:

**Table 16.** Onomatopoeia, example 2

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
قصيدة نظمت بسهولة  A Poem Composed Easily	أمطار ليلية تهمس خارج النافذة  Nightly rains whisper outside the window.	وشوشة أمطار ليلية خارج نافذة غرفتي  Nightly rains whisper outside the window of my room.

Lexical repetition represents 39% of the revisions relating to the creation of sound patterns in the student translations. This includes ploc, which is the intermittent repetition of a lexical element; polyptoton, a scheme whereby the same root is used with different grammatical inflections; and epizeuxis, which is the immediate repetition of a word or a phrase. These schemes are respectively exemplified in Table 17:

**Table 17.** Lexical repetitions

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
أشعة شمس ورياح  Sun Rays and Winds	لعلقت إصبعي لأحدث ثقباً، ثانياً فثالثاً  I licked my finger To make a hole, a second, a third	لعلقت إصبعي لأحدث ثقباً، وثقباً وثقب  I licked my finger To make a hole, a hole, and a hole
ليلة ممطرة  A Rainy Night	أشعر بوحدة تفوق حنيني الى البحر  I feel a solitude that transcends my longing to the sea	تغمرنني الوحدة أكثر مما يغمرنني حنيني للبحر  Solitude submerges me more than my longing to the sea does
الصباح  The Morning	ورقة أعشاب، فوق كل ورقة تتكتل قطرات عرق  A grass leave, on every leave drops of sweat accumulate	ورقة، وفوق كل ورقة تتناثر قطرات عرق  A leave and a leave, on every leave drops of sweat spread

The lexical repetitions shown in the examples quoted in Table 17 are important for creating musical effects. In addition, they help reinforce the poet's ideas and highlight his appeal. Though used much less frequently than plocé, polyptoton and epizeuxis, anadiplosis is another scheme based on lexical repetition that the revision targeted. As shown in the example in Table 18, anadiplosis directs the reader's attention toward the key idea of the text:



**Table 18.** Sample of anadiplosis

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
قصيدة نظمت بسهولة  A Poem Composed Easily	أمطار ليلية تهمس خارج النافذة الغرفة ذات أرضية حصائر التاتامي الست هي بلاد الغربة  Nightly rains whisper outside the window The room with the six tatami mats Is a foreign country to me	وشوشة أمطار ليلية خارج نافذة غرفتي غرفتي بأرضيتها المكسوة بحصائر التاتامي الست، تقع ببلاد الغربة  Nightly rains whisper outside the window of my room. My room with its ground covered by the six tatami mats is in a foreign country

Though the poem opens by talking about the weather conditions, the speaker makes it clear that the main concern is his room, which is his unique closed space. This justifies the creation of anadiplosis here.

### *Stylistic tools created*

The revisions detailed above reflect attempts to improve the students' translations. Another facet of the revisions lies in the reviewer's attempts to implement stylistic tools. The following is an example where a simile is turned into a metaphor for the sake of creating intensity of expression and hence a more poetic tone:

**Table 19.** Simile-into-metaphor sample

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
المطر الغزير  The Heavy Rain	السماء التي انقلبت عادتتها رأساً على عقب ينهمر منها مطرٌ كالسهام  The sky, whose habit is subverted upside down, Rain like arrows is pouring from it	هي السماء قد تحولت رأساً على عقب سهام مطرها الثاقبة تنهمر  The sky is subverted upside down The arrows of its piercing rain are pouring down

In the example quoted in Table 20, “قلبي المصاحب للوحدة” (“my heart that is accompanied by solitude”) is translated into “روحي الملازمة للوحدة” (“my soul that entwines solitude”), hence substituting the heart for the soul, and accompanying for intertwining:

**Table 20.** Modulated imagery

ST Title	Student's translation	Revision
ليلة مُقْمَرَة A Full Moon Night	خطواتي باتجاه جبل "بوك مانغ" ثقيلة وقلبي المصاحب للوحدة حزين أيضاً. لا أحد في المقبرة التي تمنيت أن يكون فيها أحدهم فقط الصمت من انغمر عميقاً بالموج الأبيض هنا وهناك.	خطواتي باتجاه جبل "بوك مانغ" ثقيلة وروحي الملازمة للوحدة حزينة تمنيت أن يكون في المقبرة أحدهم، ولكن هيهات ... لا أحد فقط الصمت قُبر بالموج الأبيض هنا وهناك.
	My steps towards Mount “Puck Mang” are heavy And my heart that is accompanied by solitude is sad, too	My steps towards Mount “Puck Mang” are heavy And my soul that entwines solitude is sad
	No one is in the graveyard whereas I wished to see someone there It is only the silence that is submerged deeply by the white waves here and there	I wished that someone were in the graveyard but alas ... None Only the silence was engraved by the white waves here and there.

The outcome is that the personification in the student's translation is turned into a hyperbolic metaphor that conveys more intensely the speaker's feeling of solitude. This is consolidated by the alliterating ح (/ħa/) consonant that spreads a feeling of pain and woe. In addition, the interjection “هيهات” and the caesura that comes after it arouse suspense in the third line. The suspense is made more intense by backgrounding the phrase “لا أحد” (“no one”). Finally, the idiomatic word “قُبر” (“was buried”) collocates with the reference to the graveyard

in verse line three, which reinforces the coherence between the appeal of the passage and its mood.

## ***Conclusions***

The work done in this project does not support Mossop's claim (2014, p. 27; original emphasis) that "Quality is best ensured by preventive action: using properly trained translators." The student translators took an important step in translating the poetry of Yoon Dong-Joo into Arabic. They were helped in their task by the fact that they knew Korean and that the original poems had been explained to most of them. The questionnaire reveals that only one student translator did not have anyone to explain the meanings of the poems to her. The students were much more engaged in rendering the semantic aspects of the ST poems than in the tools that created those aspects, namely, the prosodic devices like sound effects, rhythm, register, diction, figures of speech and structures. As already detailed in this article, the problems faced by the students mainly related to their skills at literary composition, prosody and language. Remember that seven out of the nine student translators answered negatively when asked whether they had taken any Korean literature course before translating the poems. Such a course could have developed their sensitivity to literary and stylistic tools. In addition, five of the students involved in this project were not translation studies students, and thus were unlikely to be trained in translation practice, and even less so in literary translation. It is thus presumed that these students translated the poems rather instinctively. Santos and Jones provide another interpretation that appears relevant to the case study undertaken here: "translators' ethical stance of 'communicative loyalty' to the SourcePoet gives rise to appropriacy-based boundaries for novelty" (2018, p. 285; original spelling). The student translators are the element most responsible for semanticity in the poettrio, which explains this "resistance to unmotivated creativity" (ibid.).

The following was exactly the task undertaken by the reviewer who has written this retrospective article: "Just as editing is not rewriting, so revising is not retranslating" (Mossop 2014, p. 27). Throughout the revision process, the reviewer attempted to limit her task to making the student translations idiomatic at the lexical and

structural levels, and also so that it felt like poetry rather than only looking like poetry. She used creative strategies whose suggested solutions departed from the students' poetics, but adhered to the original text semantics. It is most probable that she managed to leap creatively beyond the original text boundaries because she engaged "only indirectly with source-poem content, unlike SoucePoets, Advisors, and solo translators" (Santos and Jones 2018, p. 300; original spelling). The ultimate aim was to make Korean poetry a welcome guest in Arab circles, to be sung and recited by Arabic speakers who do not necessarily speak Korean, but who would like to read and learn about the poetry of Korea and accept it as a beautiful poetry that breathes culture, feelings and music. As Team (2019) put it while referring to Yoon Dong-Joo's poetry: "No matter where you're from in the world, there will be a piece of his writings that you can relate to." When asked whether they think that their translations would be "enthusiastically read in the UAE" once published, none of the students were negative: 55.6% were very positive, whereas the rest answered "maybe."

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# ***Repetitive or Innovative? Children's Literature in Translation as the Main Focus of B.A. And M.A. Theses***

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**Abstract:** The first two decades of the twenty-first century may be rightly described as a blooming period of Children's Literature Translation Studies (CLTS). This is true for the situation in many countries, including Poland. The steadily growing interest in this subdiscipline is also visible in the teaching offer of many universities, and in the choice of thesis topics chosen by B.A. and M.A. students of modern philology or linguistics. The goal of this paper is to analyse those B.A. and M.A. theses which focused on translated children's literature within the last ten years at the University of Warsaw. The basis for the study is an analysis of the Graduate Theses Archives (APD), including thesis titles, keywords, and abstracts. In the analysis, the following aspects are examined: the research profile chosen by the students, the interdisciplinary character of the theses, their range of topics, as well as source and target languages considered. The paper will try to answer the questions as to how B.A. and M.A. students perceive the potential of analysing translated children's literature within the broader field of translation studies, to what extent the issues they spotlighted reflect more advanced forms of academic work in CLTS, and how the topics relate to James Holmes' "map" of Translation Studies and Göte Klingberg's classification of research areas in the more specific field of translated children's literature.

**Keywords:** Children's Literature Translation Studies, B.A. theses, M.A. theses, James Holmes, Göte Klingberg.

Ever since the first monographs devoted to translated children's literature were written in the 1980s, this interdisciplinary research area has been attracting an ever-increasing number of scholars. The first decades of the twenty-first century may be rightly called its blooming period, as shown by the publication of a dedicated reader providing introduction into the field (Lathey 2006), a growing number of edited volumes presenting multiple theoretical approaches to translating texts for children (for example, Kérchy & Sundmark 2020; Van Coillie & Verschueren 2006), and special panels focusing on this research area (most recently, at the 10th EST Congress: Advancing Translation Studies, 22–25 June 2022, Oslo). The emancipation of translated children's literature as a separate subdiscipline may be confirmed also by the fact that different names have been proposed to label it. The one I will use in this paper is Children's Literature Translation Studies (CLTS), suggested by Michał Borodo (2006, p.12).

As regards the institutional context, the steadily growing interest in CLTS is also visible in the teaching offer of many universities, including the University of Warsaw. At present, it encompasses single thematic seminars (not full degree courses yet) at the Institute of English Studies and the Institute of Applied Linguistics<sup>1</sup>. Children's literature is often mentioned during lectures, and a number of academic sources recommended for reading in translation courses syllabi include extensive references to children's literature (Hejwowski 2004, 2015; Barańczak 2004), which is thought to be more suitable than other literary types for discussing certain translational issues.

The problems of translated children's literature are also present in a number of B.A. and M.A. theses. A closer examination of these dissertations might be useful for determining how the emerging subdiscipline of CLTS is perceived by university students, what they find most interesting in the field and whether they are aware of the diverse approaches the topic may be studied from. To this end, bachelor's and master's theses on translated children's literature, written within the last ten years (from 2012 to 2022) at Poland's largest university, the University of Warsaw, will be compared with James Holmes' "map" of Translation Studies (Holmes 1972) and Göte Klingberg's list of five potential research areas delineated specifically

<sup>1</sup> Some classes offered by the Institute of Polish Literature also include translations.

for the field of translated children's literature (Klingberg 1978, p. 198). In this way, it will be possible to determine which areas of the subdiscipline received attention and which were neglected. The identification of gaps in research could be useful for thesis advisors and teachers of subjects connected with the sub-discipline, as well as for students selecting the topic of their master's or bachelor's dissertations. Also, it may be hypothesized that a wide range of topics covered at the lowest research level, that of bachelor's and master's theses, is further proof of the emancipation of the subdiscipline.

The basis for the study was an analysis of the Graduate Theses Archives (APD) at the University of Warsaw. From the available data, the following were selected for examination: thesis titles, affiliation of the author (which faculty they studied at), keywords, language of the thesis, language(s) of material under analysis, abstracts.

At first, it seemed that the easiest and most reliable searching method would be to use keywords ("translation" and "children's literature"), which, however, did not prove to be the case. The search rendered only 56 results, which appeared to be insufficient. This is why a more in-depth search method was used: searching the catalogue for the title words "tłumaczenie" and "przekład" (both equivalents of "translation" in Polish), which gave 689 results in the former and 1563 in the latter case, and then reading the titles and choosing those theses which referred to children's literature. This approach turned out to be more fruitful, and rendered 152 results for the years 2012-2022. To this number, the records from the first search were added. After deleting repetitions, the total amounted to 172. The search, although more time-consuming than the initial one, had an added value as it revealed that a substantial number of theses focused on audio-visual translation for children. Considering the data obtained in the search (72 theses) and the fact that animated films are an important part of children's culture, it was decided to include them in the present analysis.

The decision on whether a certain title referred to children's literature (or films) was not always self-evident. When discussing children's literature as an area of potential interest for students doing research in Translation Studies, Jenny Williams and Andrew Chesterman (2011, p. 12) ask: "Are you dealing with literature (designed to be) read by children or to children? What age group(s) do you mean? Does 'literature' include only books or could it also include



TV programmes, films and software?" An attempt at providing answers to these questions is the following definition, suggested by Short et al. (2014, p. 14):

More specifically, children's literature is good-quality trade books for children from birth to early adolescence, covering topics of relevance and interest to children through prose and poetry, fiction and nonfiction.

This definition will be applied in the analysis of thesis titles investigated in this paper, and it will also include TV programmes and films (with audiovisual translation discussed in a separate section). Still, the decisions on what constitutes children's literature and what does not may be biased. In borderline cases, which referred predominantly to young adult literature, the decision was made on the basis of other data, such as keywords and summaries of the given thesis: if its author explicitly referred to the work in question as children's or young adult literature or film, the thesis was accounted for in the present paper, if not, it was disregarded (for example, Tolkien's works were studied as fantasy rather than children's or young-adult literature and thus were excluded from the analysis). On the other hand, fairy tales and fables were taken into account, as they are usually included in taxonomies of genres of children's literature (cf. for example Short et al. 2014, p. 107-114).

The corpus of data gathered for the present analysis includes 130 master's and 114 bachelor's theses, one third of which was written with a focus on audiovisual translation. As regards the institutional background of the authors of the theses, 150 were affiliated with the Faculty of Applied Linguistics, 80 – the Faculty of Modern Languages, 9 – the Faculty of Polish Studies, 3 – the Faculty of Oriental Studies, 1 – the Faculty of Culture and Arts (discipline: library studies), 1 at the College of Inter-area Individual Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences. As can be seen, the dominant perspective is that of translation, literary and language studies, with bibliology explicitly represented in only one case.

As regards the language of theses, English was the dominant one (with 143 records), followed by Spanish (28 examples), Polish (20), Russian (20), German (11), French (8), Italian (5), Portuguese (3), and

Belarusian (2). In several cases, the information on the language was missing.

The language of the thesis was usually the same as the language of the source-language material analyzed by the student. A small number of exceptions included examples of Polish works translated into a foreign language (in such cases, the theses were usually written in the target language in question) and examinations of translations into less popular languages, such as Croatian, Danish, Finnish, Ukrainian or Chinese (these theses were written in Polish). In 70% of all dissertations, English-Polish translations were analyzed, while translations from Polish into other languages were examined by 7% of students.

It is interesting to note that the clear dominance of English over other languages seems to mirror both the situation on the Polish book publishing market and the unique character of English children's literature. According to the data provided by Ruch wydawniczy w liczbach [Publishing in figures; Dawidowicz-Chymkowska 2020], in 2019 literature for children and young adults constituted 21% of the total number of published translations (1462 works)<sup>2</sup>. Of this number, 65% were translated from English, followed by 9% translated from French and 5% from Italian, while for the remaining 21% the source languages were German, Swedish, Spanish, Japanese, Norwegian, Russian, Japanese and others (Dawidowicz-Chymkowska 2020, Table 13). Translations from Polish accounted for only 13 books (8 of which were translated into English). The special position of English(-language) children's literature on the publishing market is connected not only with the phenomena of globalisation, internationalization and commercialization of children's literature, but also with its unique character. For example, Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska, one of the pioneers of research into translated children's literature in Poland, suggested that English children's literature, due to its exceptional features, may be seen as a separate genre (Adamczyk-Garbowska 1984, p. 17).

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<sup>2</sup> Literary translations amount to 27% of the total publishing output, translations for young audiences occupy the highest share and are followed by translations of novels of manners and romance – 12%. These numbers can be compared, for example, with translated academic works of fantasy literature which amounted to 7% and 4% respectively (Dawidowicz-Chymkowska 2020, p. 44).

I will now move on to the main part of the analysis, that is, to the areas of (children's literature) translation studies the theses focused on. At first, the topics will be examined against the background of Holmes' map, and after that they will be discussed within the framework of the five research areas outlined by Klingberg.

James Holmes' paper "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies" (1972) was a milestone in the evolution of Translation Studies as an autonomous discipline (cf. Heydel 2009, p. 24). The scholar presented a general overview of the field in the form of a map indicating the main branches of studies within the discipline. Holmes' map still serves as a reference point for research in contemporary Translation Studies (for example, in a paper from 2009, Andrew Chesterman employs it to describe the dynamically developing branch of Translator Studies), despite the fact that the discipline has been changing over the decades, becoming a more and more interdisciplinary field. In this paper, the map will be seen as a reference point for present-day studies on translated children's literature, to determine whether new topics appeared over the years and which branches are reluctantly approached by students interested in CLTS.

Holmes (1972, p. 71) insists that Translation Studies is an empirical discipline with two main objectives: describing translating and translation and examining general principles governing these phenomena (branches which address these objectives are, respectively, descriptive translation studies and theoretical translation studies). The former consist of product-oriented (with a focus on texts), function-oriented (with a focus on social-cultural contexts) and process-oriented research (with a focus on the very process/act of translation). The latter encompass general translation theory and partial translation theories: medium-restricted (machine or human translation, written or spoken), area-restricted (to specific languages or cultures), rank-restricted (to the word/word group/sentence), text-type restricted (to specific genres of discourse types), time-restricted (to contemporary or older texts), and problem-restricted (to specific problems of general translation theory, such as equivalence or the translation of proper names). Apart from the branches and sub-branches of pure research briefly outlined above, Holmes distinguishes applied translation studies and its four sub-fields: translator training (teaching methods, curriculum planning etc.), translation aids (for example, lexicological

and terminological aids, contrastive grammars), translation policy (defining the relationship between the translator/translation and the society, for instance, describing the social and economic position of the translator), and translation criticism. Obviously, the three main branches are closely related with one another, as Holmes himself put it, “each of the three branches suppl[ies] materials for the other two, and mak[es] use of the findings which they in turn provide it” (Holmes 1972, p. 78).

A framework which might be more specific, as it was composed with children’s literature in mind, was outlined by Klingberg (1978, p. 84). It encompasses five areas in the study of translated children’s literature, which may also serve as a kind of map for the subdiscipline. The Swedish researcher’s work may be rightly said to have laid the foundations for serious academic study of translations for children. His name is mentioned as (chronologically) the first in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* entry on the development of academic studies on children’s literature (Lathey 2011, p. 31–34). A book he co-edited (Klingberg & Ørvig 1978) has been indicated as the first important “document” for the field of CLTS (Borodo 2006, p. 13), and the areas he drew attention to are mentioned by Williams and Chesterman (2011, p. 12) as “a good starting point for the researcher” in their handbook for writing theses in Translation Studies (nota bene, bearing a title “The Map”).

These areas, which require scholarly attention in Klingberg’s opinion, are: empirical statistical studies of translation flows/streams (distribution), economic and technical problems in the production of translations (production), ways of selecting books for translation (selection), how children’s books are actually translated, translation problems and possible solutions (translation), reception and influence of translations in the target language area (reception).

The analysis to follow starts with an overview and general characteristics of the theses. Afterwords, they will be examined within the framework of the categories outlined by Holmes and Klingberg to indicate which branches or areas of CLTS were most frequently represented and which less so.

In the corpus of the 172 theses which focused on translated children’s literature (works devoted to audiovisual translation are examined below in a separate subsection), the vast majority were case

studies based on comparative analysis of the original and the translation, or two (or more) synchronic or diachronic translations of a given work. Although students are customarily advised against choosing repetitive topics, many focused on the *Harry Potter* series (25 instances). Other, less popular works included those by Lucy Maud Montgomery, Polish poets Tuwim and Brzechwa, Roald Dahl, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, C.S. Lewis' *Narnia* series, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, Elivra Lindo's *Manolito Gafotas* and Francesca Simon's *Horrid Henry* books. What is striking in this overview of works selected for analysis is an underrepresentation of genres other than fantasy and realistic fiction; although traditional literature, such as fairy tales, was present (in as many as 16 theses), poetry, picture books and graphic novels, biographies and informational books received hardly any attention (poetry and picture books were analysed by a few students, informational books – by one, biographies and graphic novels were totally absent).

As regards the research paradigm, one thesis represented the area of book studies. It analyzed the Polish market of translations of young-adult literature: the main genres, the most important publishing houses, popular book series and authors.

It was mentioned in the beginning that the theses usually referred to the English-language area. However, there was a small number of analyses of translations into minority languages (Silesian and Kashubian, Scots) and those written on intralingual translation (for example, the British and American edition of the *Harry Potter* series).

The problems addressed by the students were culture-specific items (analyzed in more than one-third of theses), general translation strategies and techniques (16% of the students' works), specific linguistic issues (such as neologisms, dialect, colloquial language, present in 15% of the theses). Less frequent were the analyses of the translation of humour, intersemiotic aspects of translation, analyses of individual translators' work, child-adult dichotomy in the context of literary communication, translatorial paratext.

It might be surprising that in the era of the Internet, only one dissertation investigated the use of digital technologies (in a comparative study of *Winnie-the-Pooh*'s translation created by Google Translate and a canonical Polish version of Milne's work); another

addressed the influence of Web 2.0 on changing the traditional model of literary translation critique.

Theses which were not comparative analyses followed the “translation with commentary” model, undertaken by six students. The translation was accompanied by a commentary on theoretical issues relevant to the translation process. An interesting variant of this type of dissertation was producing a critical edition of one of Hans Christian Andersen’s fairy tales based on a 1900s manuscript, or creating an annotated version of Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, in which “politically incorrect” fragments were censored by the student.

Two dissertations focused on empirical research into the actual reception of the translations of Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *The Secret Garden* and different versions of proper names in twenty-first century translations of Beatrix Potter’s works.

When seen from the perspective of Holmes’ map, the vast majority of theses (162, or 93%) could be classified as pure, descriptive, product-oriented studies, with elements of translation criticism and function-oriented contributions, which were conspicuous in the examinations of translations into minority languages, and related to the problems of identity or cultural memory. A thesis explicitly related to the latter issue focused on the translation of one of *Harry Potter*’s books into Scots. Its author described a broader socio-cultural context, in which translation is considered as a political act, in the translator’s intention aimed at raising the status of the Scots language. The only bibliography thesis mentioned before also fits well in this sub-branch.

Two theses were assigned to the translation criticism category, a sub-branch of applied Translation Studies. As regards the theses which followed the “translation with commentary” model, they seem to elude the categorization (although the “commentary” component belongs to product-oriented studies, with elements of process- or function-oriented research). The classification of the two theses based on empirical studies may not be quite obvious (as Holmes did not address the issue of reception in his paper, Holmes 1972). It seems that they could be described either as translation criticism based on empirical data or function-oriented descriptive studies, since they focus on the functioning of translations in a given (reader’s age-determined) context. Taking Klingberg’s classification into account, one can say that the dominant area explored in the theses under discussion was (perhaps

unsurprisingly) the actual translation. Reception was investigated by two students, distribution – by one, while the fields of production and selection remained untouched.

In the area of audiovisual translation, the 72 theses taken into consideration usually focused on case studies (mainly of one, sometimes two or three films). The most frequently analyzed cinematographic works included the *Shrek*, *Zootopy*, and *Madagascar* productions (8, 6, and 5 theses respectively). Lesser-known releases were also examined in individual cases (for example, the Japanese animation *The Tale of The Princess Kaguya*). Only rarely (in four cases) did the students focus on larger material or try to formulate more general conclusions, for example, a 2014 MA thesis provides a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the dominant foreignizing strategy employed by the translators of twenty-first century animations, showing a change in the traditional approach employed in English-Polish translations for children, and another from 2013 examines parallelisms between the translations of children's literature and films for children. Theses addressing issues other than comparative analyses of the source- and target-language text (or two/several target-language texts) enriched with elements of translation criticism and suggestions to improve the existing translation were scarcely present in the corpus: two empirical studies undertaken in 2020 and 2016 referred to, respectively, the reception of subtitled neologisms among the deaf and the hard of hearing viewers and the ageing of translations in the context of cultural references in dubbing. One thesis explored the influence of the visual communication codes on dubbing, and one was the student's own attempt at translating a film. The problems under analysis were culture-specific items (analyzed in almost one-third of theses), humour (in every fourth dissertation), translation strategies in general (every fifth work), melic translation (14% of the whole). Moreover, the students focused on specific linguistic problems (the translation of metaphors of love, archaisms, Japanese honorifics, non-binary language), and analyses of strategies and techniques chosen by individual translators.

When one overlays the topics onto Holmes' map, one can see that almost all can be categorized as pure, descriptive, product-oriented studies (perhaps interspersed with function-oriented explorations, in which much attention is given to the context) with elements of applied,

translation criticism (translation evaluation) research. One may wonder whether the four exceptions mentioned above, analyzing animations in a broader context, could be put into the category of pure, theoretical, partial research, but it is impossible to decide on the basis of the data available (close reading the theses would be essential). A single thesis which did not fit into the framework was a practical translation project (accompanied by a discussion of theoretical framework and commentary). Also, classifying the two theses on the reception of translations might be problematic: would they need a separate category or do they belong with the branch of translation criticism based on empirical data?

Considering Klingberg's division, the most recurrent area was, as before, the actual translation. Production (technical problems of dubbing/subtitles) were occasionally mentioned in the abstracts, but never constituted the subject of the whole thesis. Distribution and selection were not represented at all, while reception was explored in two theses.

Looking from the perspective of Holmes' map, although one would not expect B.A. or M.A. students to conduct comprehensive theoretical research for their dissertations, it may be concluded that more process- or function-oriented studies should be encouraged. The same would apply to the areas mentioned in the branch of applied translation studies: translator training, translator aids, translation policy and translation criticism. Hardly any theses could have been ascribed to these categories, although the dominant product-oriented model often included elements of, for example, function-oriented or evaluation sub-themes. When analyzing the theses from the perspective of Klingberg's categories, one can see a similar disproportion between the areas he distinguished, in which selection, distribution, and production were to a large extent neglected.

In conclusion, the students were relatively conservative in their choices. They usually undertook research on descriptive and critical aspects of translation, focusing on specific case studies. The most popular dissertation model encompassed an analysis of translation strategies in terms of the classic dichotomy which may be traced back to Friedrich Schleiermacher's terms: alienating (foreignization) or naturalizing (domestication), addressing the problem of culture-specific items in translation. This, undoubtedly, reflects the influence of the



cultural turn, which is often referred to as the most important of the “turns” in Translation Studies (cf. Heydel 2009, p. 21; Paprocka 2018, p. 26). Several theses focused on the translators themselves – their role, visibility, preferred translation strategies. These dissertations represent the dynamically developing sub-discipline of Translator Studies or anthropocentric translation studies (cf. Chesterman 2009; Płużyczka 2021). A number of works focused on relatively new topics, such as, for example, intersemiotic aspects of translation, fan translation, the use of digital technologies, technical issues of audiovisual translation for children, empirical research into the reception of literature. In particular, this last area of research would be vital for contemporary CLTS. As Gillian Lathey highlights in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*: “children’s responses to translations are still a matter of speculation and a greater emphasis on empirical research is required to discover just how much ‘foreignness’ young readers are able to tolerate” (2009: 34). Similarly, more attention could be given to the professional and didactic aspects of translation, and to the under-represented genres, such as graphic novels or informational books (non-fiction).

As regards the issue of interdisciplinarity, most dissertations were linguistically-, literary- and culture-oriented, a few theses referring to bibliology, politics, information technology, and others.

To sum up, it may be said that student research reflects the contemporary tendencies in the development of the subdiscipline to some extent. Although a significant number of students focused on general, “traditional” problems (describing the rendition of culture-specific items in terms of selected translation strategies), many reached for original, sometimes very specific subjects, demonstrating their good orientation in the field and using innovative methods, presenting the topic from interdisciplinary perspectives. In the future, one can probably expect a further diversification of topics and approaches, and an increased interest from students with a background in other disciplines, such as education, media studies, digital humanities or visual arts, as is the case with more advanced forms of research.

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# ***The Conference Interpreter Trainee: A Successful Start-up?***

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**Abstract:** In 2010, Chris Durban and Eugene Seidel published the volume *The Prosperous Translator: Advice from Fire Ant and Worker Bee*. Doubtless, since translation is at least partly akin to conference interpreting, one might think that the interpreter should also be able to lead a prosperous life. But the reality around us shows that not everyone succeeds in their professional life. Starting from the idea that a company's recipe for success could be applied to the training process of a successful interpreter, in this article we aim to examine to what extent the skills of the conference interpreting master could be strengthened, sharpened and expanded if the personal as well as the teaching approach followed the entrepreneurial model of success and how much effectiveness and efficiency matters in the training process. To this effect, we consider here in parallel conference interpreting pedagogy and proven marketing techniques.

**Keywords:** Start-up, entrepreneurial model, conference interpreting, effectiveness, *kaizen*-type approach.

More often than not the nouns 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness' as well as the adjectives derived from them are used interchangeably, even if they do not actually designate the same thing. The phenomenon is not uniquely present in the Romanian language. Effectiveness has to do with reaching the objectives that you have set for yourself or which others have set for you, and requires the development and exercising of advanced, cognitive, linguistic and communicative skills. Efficiency, on the other hand, has to do with reaching a high level of performance while carrying out a task, through the optimal use of available resources. In other words, it means reaching a satisfactory result with minimum effort. As well as approaching the issues of efficiency and effectiveness in the context of the postgraduate training of future successful conference interpreters, this paper analyses a number of concepts deemed essential for the success of a company, in so doing, trying to see how these could be applied to the training of interpreters.

In communist Romania, the need for interpretation was practically non-existent. Still, on the rare occasions the service was needed, it was mainly used to assist with the visits abroad conducted by high representatives of power or high-level reunions with delegations from various foreign countries, for the larger part, developing countries. From the few testimonials and materials published on conference interpreting during the period – memoirs of interpreters for the presidential family or interviews given by them after the change of the regime – we learn that interpreters were generally recruited upon the request of "representatives of the Protocol of the Grand National Assembly, the Council of State or other such institutions" (Năstăsescu 2010, p. 14) or that the activity was the responsibility of certain diplomats, both at home and abroad: "As it happened, the diplomat who regularly served as an interpreter for the President was missing from the country at that time and someone thought I should take his place..." (Năstăsescu 2010, p. 16) In general, when it was not the diplomats themselves, the people called upon were academics at Bucharest University, who, coincidentally or not, had contacts in the world of diplomacy. In *Life Passes Like a Bullet: Memoirs of a BBC Reporter*, Dorian Galbinski confirms this practice in his account of an episode in which he was asked by Romanian guests visiting London to allow for a

Romanian Embassy counsellor to translate. Sergiu Celac, Nicolae Ceausescu's personal interpreter, was a career diplomat, and Violeta Năstăsescu, Elena Ceausescu's personal interpreter, was a lecturer at the University of Bucharest, and the wife of a diplomat.

With the collapse of the political regime, the training of professional interpreters became imperative, given the sudden flurry of international conferences, workshops and cultural events with international participation. The Department of Applied Modern Languages at Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj was a pioneer in this field. Established in 1991, in 2002 the DAML was the first in Romania to provide a team of highly trained staff and thus offer a Master's degree in conference interpreting at national level. To this day, it has remained the only master's degree course at national level admitted in the EMCI, the European Consortium since 2007, which confirms the standards of excellence that trainers here have managed to maintain all along. Due to these high standards, not all candidates accepted in the programme succeed in graduating, graduation rates being rather low, and even the small percentage of those who do succeed, achieve accreditation as freelance interpreters or staff interpreters with the European institutions. It can be argued that success and failure are characteristic of any profession and any field. Whereas this is self-evident, we believe, however that an entrepreneurial approach to minimising failure in the field of conference interpreting would be useful, one in which objectives are clearly set from the outset and results can be quantified at each stage of training. In other words, we propose to consider here the conference interpreting trainee by analogy with a start-up and, focusing on the key elements that ensure success in the entrepreneurial setting, formulate a set of proposed solutions that could boost performance and ensure success in the interpreting field. We will proceed to do so with recourse to the literature in the field of entrepreneurship.

In order to become stable and autonomous, newly-created companies can rely on what specialists call a *business accelerator*. We will consider the definition proposed by Cohen et al (2019, p. 20), according to which:

Accelerator programs, which are also referred to as seed accelerators, startup accelerators or business accelerators [...] are limited-duration

programs, lasting roughly three to six months that helps cohorts of startup venture with their entrepreneurial process and aspirations.

They provide access to mentorship in order to draw on the positive experience of those with an established presence on the market – to investors and/or to other forms of support (clients and/or potential partners, media). Elements such as communication, voice coaching, marketing and professional advice play a major part. Furthermore, the business accelerator gives the companies in question access to various logistical and technical resources and mediates their contact with other similar businesses, whose expertise could prove instrumental in the process. General, specialised or corporate, the accelerators are in fact a sort of intensive training programs, generally requiring 30 hours a week over a period of two to six months. At the end of the program, the new company is deemed strong enough to operate autonomously.

For all intents and purposes, the MA degree course in conference interpreting will be seen as embodying the role of an accelerator for the relevant companies. The thesis is grounded in the fact in the final year of their undergraduate studies, future MA trainees are introduced to the techniques of conference interpreting, with a focus on consecutive interpretation. If we compare the maximum number of intensive training months required for companies with the number of training hours clocked during the four semesters of the MA course, we realize that the total number of hours is inferior in the latter case (12 per semester in the first year, 14 per semester in the second year), but this is compensated for by an additional month of classes for the first postgraduate year and of two additional weeks of classes for the second year.

It is important to note from the outset that ours being a professionalising programme, our approach differs significantly from that of research programmes in that it is the practical, ‘hands-on’ experience that we target, one intent on delivering immediate results, which we monitor closely. Consequently, one of the earliest skills we seek to inculcate in our students is the ability to evaluate themselves and their peers accurately and objectively, give diagnostic feedback and take remedial action toward best practice. These faculties need to be accompanied by self-control, self-efficiency and stress management, which places us more in the position of personal trainers rather than in

that of teachers. Indeed, one of the recurrent correspondences traced in the literature is the similar role interpreter trainers share with personal trainers of high performing athletes. As well as the acquisition of the skills in question, as in athletics, actual performativity in interpreting depends on the mastery of an effective, constantly perfectible technique that allows for a steady performance, regardless of the varying levels of difficulty involved in the job. Since conventional coursework alone cannot ensure the building of these techniques, in the pedagogical practice we rely on the interpreter embarking upon an intensive training regimen, which consists of a hard-core, complex mix of interpreting and non-interpreting exercises, to be conducted on a daily basis. This, too is not unlike the high-level workout programs built by PTs for competitive athletes. It is exactly why sports psychology is extremely relevant to interpreting pedagogy:

The link between sport and interpreting might seem at first sight far-fetched or at least surprising, but we shall see in what follows that they are closely related with respect to stress and stress management. Sports psychology has a lot of potential for interpreting and interpreter training as stress seems to be one of the major psychological factors influencing an interpreter's professional behavior. A competitive sports situation is similar to an interpreting assignment since they are both characterized by the achievement need of the performers, the athlete or the interpreter. They cannot escape from the situation, and they need to achieve what they have undertaken to do. Their performance on the day depends on external and internal factors that they need to control efficiently. (Horváth 2012, p. 149)

Like athletes before an important competition, in adopting the technique of consecutive without notes, for instance, interpreters are asked to listen actively, visualize the speech, picture themselves in the position of the speaker, indeed to become the speaker, voice his/her views, emulate the tone of voice and attitude with as much fidelity and credibility as possible. The multiple tasks to hand – interpreting is a notoriously multimodal, multitasking activity, second only to air flight controlling in the degree of attention and visual alertness, situational awareness and interleaving operations – presuppose a tremendously arduous and crucial process of mental training and imagination. As part



of the coaching process, situational and self-awareness in the programme are built through the interpreter's diary, a meticulous record the trainees are asked to keep in order to monitor their progress scrupulously and design a realistic action plan for improvement. Subjective though this may be, to a certain extent, the diary is hardly a 'travelogue', the more analytical the account, the more beneficial to the trainee. Furthermore, to ensure they themselves stay in optimal shape, interpreter trainers need to attend regular ToTs, i.e. trainings of trainers, that offer an ample range of refreshing exercises, including modelling role-playing, mock exams, assessing, et al.

The support and mentoring available to trainees consist therefore of both theoretical and practical courses, and of intensive self-study and groupwork, which lay the necessary foundations and assist them with developing the relevant key skills, in consecutive interpreting with and without notes in the first year and then in simultaneous interpreting, with or without a written text, in the second year. The interpreting classes proper are accompanied by ancillary disciplines such as Romanian language (typically the A language), International Relations, Language and Cultural Studies (in both the B and the C language/s) in the first year, Communication and Information Technology, European Institutions and European Policies in the second year. Intensive practice represents obviously the prerequisite for the enhancement of general knowledge and for the development of the highly specialised skills required by the various types and modes of interpreting: span of attention, active listening, information processing, memory, a strong and efficient note-taking system, breathing techniques, the management of the information flow, stress management, intonation, empathy and fidelity in properly conveying the message of the speaker.

The trainers at Cluj are professionals, with a great deal of experience on the national market, most of them freelancing for the European institutions. Thus, they can embody the double-barrelled role of teachers and trainers, general and specialised business accelerators. As well as this, the function of specialised accelerators and of the somewhat corporate version thereof is fulfilled by the virtual classes held in cooperation with the European Parliament and the European Commission, and by various webinars devoted to note-taking or to court interpreting taught in cooperation with interpreters accredited

with the European Court of Justice, as well as the pedagogical assistance visits by staff interpreters from the European institutions. Representing the Romanian booth or the booths corresponding to the languages in the trainees' combination, the staff interpreters assist as well with the entrance admission tests and the final exams, as part of the external jury of assessors. Typically, the trainees interpret speeches tailored for each stage of the training process and are provided with competent and detailed feedback throughout the process. The 'interpreting/interpreter accelerator', to coin a phrase, thus increases the effectiveness and (especially) the efficiency of the training of the future true professionals.

Finally, most programs can end with a grand event, usually called a "demo day" (short for "demonstration day"), orchestrating a chance for participating teams to pitch their ventures to a large audience of qualified investors (Cohen, 2013; Cohen and Hochberg, 2014). Cohen (2013, p. 17), points to the fixed-term and cohort-based aspects of these programs as being the primary distinguishing features separating the accelerator from other intermediaries such as incubators.

In what concerns the *resources*, whereas the trainees are equipped with the high-tech resources necessary for online activity and rehearsing, it is the conventional conference interpreting lab that actually gives them full access to the tools required by their profession: the booth equipped with an interpreting console, a microphone and a headset. To this adds the invaluable experience of feedback from trainers and peers, which is instrumental to their progress.

Just as in the case of professional interpreters, the pandemic posed a major challenge to the postgraduate students in interpreting. While platforms such as Zoom, KUDO, Cisco Webex or Interprefy can create virtual boots, they provide little or no direct visual contact with trainers and peers, and the trainers cannot check on listening volumes, nor can they make any adjustments to these virtual booths. Accustomed to working from the comfort of their home, without anyone beside them, without being part of a team, some students found it hard to adapt or return to the pre-pandemic class formats, to the real voices of their peers and trainers, to the presence of the latter in the classroom or in the next booth.

For the Cluj students in conference interpreting, *coming into contact with other similar “businesses”* is made possible by the fact that their school is part of a European consortium (EMCI – European Masters in Conference Interpreting), which ensures the contact with students and trainers from the partner universities. At the end of the programme, the trainee resembles a company that is strong and able to operate autonomously, at least in theory, yet not necessarily as a conference interpreter. Of the 122 graduates of the European Masters in Conference Interpreting for the period 2008-2021, only a small percentage managed to get their accreditation with the European institutions. Many, however, turned towards the national interpreting market and work as well as translators, the annual number of events being insufficient for them to secure enough revenue exclusively from interpreting. Others use the skills acquired during the interpreter training programme and work for multinational companies, occupying positions such as project manager, business development manager, conceptual creator and the like.

A profitable company is a company that manages to achieve a perfect balance between its *current and long-term assets*, which it smartly employs in order to increase sales, reduce costs and generate profit. According to the definition introduced by the Ministry of Finance through Order no. 3103/2017, “an asset is a resource controlled by the entity as a result of past events, which is expected to generate future economic benefits for the entity.”

The question arises, what are the current assets held by the company called interpreting student upon entering the MA programme? A staple is general knowledge, constantly in need of consolidation and expansion, in order for it to become a long-term asset, with a focus on sound specialist knowledge of the various fields in which conferences requiring interpretation are commonly held. Just like a real company, which invests in high technology, including computer-based systems, because the use of the latest models of computers or of specialised software can increase productivity and cut down the time needed to complete daily tasks, the interpreter trainee understands that the purchase of high-performance computer devices, with enough memory space (for hundreds of terminological glossaries and other useful working documents) and with a very short response time (for more efficient access to information), is most definitely an

advantage. They are also encouraged to invest in high-performance headsets, with noise-cancelling capabilities and covering the whole ear, as over time these will protect their auditory system, seriously put to the test during simultaneous interpreting.

Companies place a lot on emphasis on *supply*, which means finding and purchasing the goods (raw materials) and services that would allow them to attract potential customers, at the right time and with a minimum of expenses, the products and the services they require and for which they will pay a price that, according to the seller or provider, will generate maximum profit. If the future interpreter were to follow in the footsteps of a company employee that seeks to ensure the optimal management of its supply activities, his or her success would be guaranteed. The first step is preparation, which entails planning and estimating the future needs of the company. In the case of interpreting trainees, this means identifying their weaknesses in terms of general knowledge and devising a plan for strengthening the existing ones and acquiring new data, from various fields. The lexical challenges a future professional interpreter is likely to encounter are merely hinted at by the speeches delivered by their trainers. The speeches are an important exercising material at start, yet they cannot fully cover the whole lexical spectrum for the weekly topics chosen during the training programme. Consequently, each trainee should devise weekly topics adjacent or identical to the ones proposed by the programme. This can make a real difference for the quality of the trainee's performance, as a rich, diverse and refined vocabulary is likely to speed up the identification of the necessary equivalent in the target language and allow for more resources to be diverted towards other aspects of the original speech, such as logical coherence, rhetorical devices, or intonation. As well as this, apart from getting familiar with the announced topic of the training speech, students should later revisit their performance, analyse it objectively and apply, *post factum*, the techniques of synonymy, antonymy and paraphrase, to speed up the identification of solutions that are not only functional in the given context, but actually ideal, in preparation for the future speeches pertaining to the same field. (Blank and Dorf 2020, p. 44). Provided the trainees have invested in a top computer or phone, with enough memory space, they will be able to access at any time the recordings of those performances they are unhappy with, in order to improve their

*decalage*, lexical choices, intonation, or the overall quality of the conveyed message, in terms of both form and content.

The second stage of the supply process has to do with receiving, maintaining and storing the supplies or the raw materials. The future interpreter should follow suit: objectively receive the feedback provided by their trainers for each of their performances, analyse the shortcomings, draw on the terminological glossaries or on the interpreting techniques they acquired in order to maintain and permanently enrich their vocabulary, storing new data in the medium- and long-term memory so that they could be accessed in the proverbial split second whenever needed.

A significant component of supply involves task management. This involves the measures necessary for each employee to carry out their duties within the company fully. Practically, at this stage the interpreter trainers have the same obligations as the manager of a private company. They formulate the study tasks, create the setting and design the solutions for the development of the interpreting skills, present or future, and then, during the practical courses, they check how the trainees have carried out the tasks. Customized feedback, delivered in the presence of all the trainees, has short-, medium- and long-term uses, as the mistakes identified and the solutions proposed could be turned to good account by all during a different speech, and similar challenges will be thus more readily identified by the trainees.

The last stage of supply is related to the monitoring of activities carried out in pursuit of the stated objectives and of the desired outcomes. The personal training log or interpreter's diary, in which the trainee records the feedback received from the trainers and the solutions recommended for the improvement of interpreting techniques, is a useful tool allowing trainees to monitor their progress (or lack thereof) and their thoroughness in following the suggested recommendations. If students can objectively assess their own performance, the observations they write down can help them devise new strategies for improvement.

All the elements that offer a company an advantage over its competitors, allowing it to expand its customer base and market share, account for what Michael Porter called the *competitive advantage*, in turn falling into two categories: lower costs and differentiation. For a company, it is efficiency that makes it possible to offer a high-quality

product at a lower cost than that of one's competitors. Unfortunately, on the national conference interpreting market, a lower price usually means lower quality rather than higher efficiency. In order to put an end to the widespread practice of dumping prices, students must be taught how to educate their potential customers and make them understand that interpreting is not limited to whatever happens on the day of the conference, but rather comprises an important albeit time-consuming component which involves preparation and the active assimilation of the specialized vocabulary and which should be factored in the price of interpreting services.

The competitive advantage represented by differentiation has to do with the offer of a product that is ahead of those of the competitors by virtue of its higher quality, of certain special features that are likely to broadly increase customer appreciation and/or by virtue of the after-sale service. From the very outset, the graduates of the European Masters in Conference Interpreting at Cluj can be seen as belonging to the category of high-quality products, as holders of a degree that certifies a level of training at the standards set by the European consortium of universities. The special characteristics of these MA graduates involve their training within a framework set by the specialist consortium, by trainers who themselves work as freelance conference interpreters for the European institutions or have accumulated a wealth of experience on the national and international market. Furthermore, the jury for the final exams includes staff interpreters from the European institutions, as an additional guarantee for a competent and objective evaluation.

When it comes to the after-sale service, it is well-known that conference organisers sometimes require a transcript and/or a translation of the various speeches. Even when it comes to this type of service, the Cluj MA graduates are high-quality products, as in their second postgraduate year they have the possibility to take the elective course in Specialized Translations offered by the European Masters in Translation-Terminology, which allows them to hone their translations skills in fields such as law, business, medicine, science or technology.

In the business world, only those companies that have a long and uninterrupted history of quality and high-performance can maintain their competitive advantages over a long period of time. For all the other players, competitiveness remains an ever-present objective. A

SWOT analysis, objectively carried out, will highlight for the future interpreters those elements that are insufficiently under their control, allowing them to take the necessary corrective steps and thus develop a set of skills applicable not only throughout their interpreting career, but also in all walks of life. Among them, mention should be made to extensive general knowledge, a rich vocabulary, flawless diction, proper intonation and expressive communication. Just as one's voice can be trained to acquire seemingly improbable characteristics, one's way of communicating a convincing and appealing message can be improved with the help of reading out loud exercises, which develop that flexibility of speaking likely to highlight the keywords or the logical and psychological pauses of the message that needs to be conveyed to listeners by way of interpretation.

Although for a company speed is a decisive factor whenever *flexibility* is required, the latter remains an important element of competitive adaptation, as employees can be granted more autonomy, teamwork can be encouraged, external partnerships expanded or innovation integrated at all levels. How would these successful corporate strategies apply to the training of professional interpreters? Trainees should be encouraged to resort to independent practice, on a permanent basis, following the recommendations of their trainers, in teams of at least two people, in order to improve the rapid reaction skills required whenever a booth partner encounters a terminological or any other type of difficulty. In this regard, the cooperation within the interuniversity consortium makes it possible to have joint A or B-language interpreting exercises. Also, the technological innovations in the field of conference interpreting need to be considered for integration in the practice.

*Equity*, meaning the net worth of a company, shows the level of the investment, financial or otherwise, made by the shareholders, and it consists of a common stock, a preferred stock and an unallocated stock. Doubtless, the net value of an interpreter is given by the sum total of his/her interpreting skills, the level of their general knowledge and their mastery of interpretation techniques, the equivalent of common or preferred stock. Whatever preference an interpreter may have for one field or another, their performance should be at the same level of quality even when working in less appealing fields. It is of the essence that trainees understand that possessing a specialised vocabulary from

unrelated fields requires a constant endeavour to identify the necessary terms and use them in a variety of contexts, so that conveying a metaphoric message based on medical terminology in order to describe a country's level of economic development does not pose problems. In other words, what is needed is a *kaizen*-type approach involving constant improvement, small yet/albeit important changes in the competitive long-term strategy of companies and organizations in order to achieve operational efficacy and customer satisfaction. In the field of conference interpreting, if the conference organisers are happy with the services provided by a team of interpreters and hire them for other conferences, they are deemed to have paid the due dividends for the investments made by trainees in the improvement of their interpreting techniques and strategies as well as of their communication skills, in their flexibility and adaptability to the circumstances that can occur during a conference without being provided for in the contract for the provision of services.

Strategic objectives represent one of the key elements of the potential success of a company. Students in interpreting also need such objectives. If smartly set, these could be achieved in shorter period of time and with less effort, in keeping with the investment that students wish to make in their professional future. The plan including these objectives should be monitored during training so that, if necessary, appropriate corrective action can be taken. In addition, as in the case of companies, "On the basis of the results obtained, comparisons between the objectives set and those achieved, the current plan is evaluated, forecasts are made and the next plan is drawn up." (Petrescu 2002, p. 20)

The *kaizen* practice tells us that one should not simply set activity-oriented objectives, but also design the methods for the assessment of the achieved results. Also, as in the case of companies, the objectives thus set can be either concrete and measurable, abstract and difficult, or downright impossible to measure. Thus, if graduates become freelance interpreters on the national and the international market, increasing the customer portfolio by a set annual percentage or securing the loyalty of the existing clients are two of the concrete objectives of a successful company also applicable to interpreting. Of the abstract objectives, those that may fit the conference interpreters are also two in number: ethical behaviour and the respect for the client,



on the one hand, and the provision of exceptional services likely to determine conference organisers to recommend the team to other potential customers, on the other. Such objectives, sometimes referred to as a *strategic position*, are important because they accurately map out what a company needs to do in order to become or remain competitive on the targeted commercial market or markets. They underpin a company's priorities and allow for a determination of the volume of resources to be allocated and of the objectives likely to streamline employee efforts, as well as of the indicators needed for a comparison between expected and actual outcomes. The conference interpreter, trainee or fresh graduate, needs such a strategic position as well as a set of values guiding their professional conduct, similar to those that shape organizational *behaviour* in a company: how it would like to be seen by customers, suppliers and partners, how it should act in order to achieve the objectives. Also to be taken into account are the quality of the products and services, reliability and an ethical conduct in regard to customers without forgetting the implementation and recourse to the innovations in a company's field of activity. Not to be neglected is the ethics of the relations between a company and its customers, suppliers and partners. Respect and mutual trust are the main elements of a long-term cooperation between the three stakeholders. The interpreters who understand the importance of this organisational behaviour and abide by it in their relations with conference organisers will be able to count on a long-term cooperation, profitable for themselves, for those who have already benefitted from their interpreting services, and even for some of those who hear them interpret for the first time.

Education in the spirit of both individual and team *responsibility* – as interpreters only seldom work alone – are two other fundamental elements that could be taken up from the playbook of a successful company. Since our purpose was to analyse the possibilities of development available to an interpreting trainee or fresh graduate, a most useful endeavour would be to transpose the concept of business plan or model in the context of the training for this highly appealing but also highly demanding profession. In a company, the business plan describes its functioning at a given moment in time, in keeping with the products they offer and their customer base. Based on the assessment of a specific context, the business plan makes possible the best

decisions regarding the future development of the company, taking into account the opinions of the various teams of employees in regard to the planned activities. This highlights as well the weaknesses of the company at the fundamental levels of its activity: productivity and profitability, the capacity to achieve the stated objectives, communication within its various working teams, their cohesion and level of responsibility.

Published in the year 2012, the book *Business Model Generation* by Alex Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur presents the Canvas business model, adopted by many of the leading corporations in the world because, as the authors contend, it is “a shared language for describing, visualizing, assessing and changing business models”. (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010, p. 18) This model is based on identifying a set of data regarding nine items that are fundamental for the development of a company: the product or service they offer; the potential customers; customer expectations to be met by the company; the qualities of the product or service likely to meet said customer expectations; the added value brought by the company; the product going to be delivered or the service provided; the expected expenditures; the best possible cost at which the product/service can be provided; profit guarantee. By adapting the above to the interpreting profession and the services provided by it and by objectively drawing up this business model, an interpreter could focus on the aspects that need improvement and set up a timetable for the achievement of the stated goals. Every week, month or semester, according to the number of improved items and to the efforts deemed necessary in order to achieve these objectives, the interpreter will then redo the business model in order to see to what extent s/he have been successful in achieving the stated goals and in abiding by the planned timetable. Naturally, from one assessment to the next, the focus can shift towards other items, but the important thing is that a skill acquired with considerable effort should not be lost over the course of the training programme. Thus, all the techniques related to active listening, to the concise and faithful rendering of the source message, the management of both voice and stress, as well as effective note-taking strategies required for consecutive interpreting must be maintained by way of constant practice, once the focus of the training programme shifts to simultaneous interpretation.

Taking into account the aforementioned aspects, we can say that the whole training process in conference interpreting must be based not only on the motivation to succeed, but also on the conviction that the efforts made will contribute to achieving the set objectives. The more passion the interpreting student puts into learning the various interpreting techniques, into strengthening the expressive communication of a message, regardless of the field to which it belongs or to which it relates, into enriching his or her general knowledge, the faster and more confident he or she will become the interpreter whose services will please any audience. Setting clear and measurable objectives and including them in his or her personal development plan will enable him or her to know when, where and how to take action to improve his or her interpreting performance.

In other words, just as a successful company is one that understands the fact that flexibility and adaptability to market requirements and changes are the key elements that could ensure its long and active presence on this market, a fully accomplished, successful interpreter is one who efficiently and effectively adopts the strategies of such a company in order to gain a maximum of competences in a profession that can be many things, but never boring.

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# ***Corpus-Assisted Exercises in Conference Interpreter Training***

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**Abstract:** The article discusses the role of exercises for beginners in conference interpreting classes, introduces possible ways to create such exercises by means of speech corpora available online, and advocates for a combination of research-informed and technology-assisted approach to interpreter training. First, the state of research in interpreting pedagogy, and in particular the concept of part-task training are briefly described. The goal of decreasing cognitive effort during interpreting, and during the learning process, underlines the usefulness of part-task exercises for automatization of interpreting sub-skills. Based on this theoretic rationale, available handbooks for interpreter trainers are critically assessed. It is argued that interpreting programs could benefit from collections of exercises, or from methods to create them. In interpreter training, especially corpora of political speeches allow the creation of multiple exercises for automatization of certain sub-skills, which is illustrated by several examples.

**Keywords:** interpreter training, cognitive interpreting studies, part-task training, exercises, corpus studies.

## ***Introduction<sup>1</sup>***

Pedagogy of conference interpreting was one of the first sources of interpreting studies, and training issues continue to play a significant role in translatology (cf. Gile, 2001; Pöchhacker, 2016; Yan et. al, 2018). A recent general overview of research and practice of teaching conference interpreting was provided by Kalina and Barranco-Droege (2021); for a review on the development of interpreter education and programs in Europe see Niska (2005) or Šveda (2021), in Russia – Alekseeva (2011, 2013), and in China – Zhan (2014). For a comprehensive account of the institutional framework and curriculum, see the introduction to Sawyer et al. (2019). As for more practice-oriented contributions, Andres and Behr (2015) offer a collection of articles on methodological topics by experienced interpreter trainers. Another significant publication in this field are two coursebooks, one for students and one for instructors, by Setton and Dawrant (2016).

For further discussion, it is relevant to note that research in interpreting pedagogy is characterized by a lack of empirical studies. This issue was criticized by Dillinger as early as in 1989: “it is not clear how to treat information experts provide in the absence of a body of experimentally-based theory” (Dillinger, 1989, as cited in Sawyer, 2004, p. 22). Later, Kalina expressed still the same concern as she wrote that empirical studies regarding the use and success of different teaching methods are missing in interpreting studies (Kalina, 2000a, p. 169), and stressed the need for a „broad basis of scientific findings from which it will be possible to develop a scientifically-based teaching methodology” (Kalina 2000b, p. 11).

In 2001, Gile partly, explained the situation at the earlier stage of interpreter education research with the following observation:

[...] training is clearly the most popular theme in the literature from the very beginning. This is probably due not only to its importance for a community essentially composed of interpretation instructors, but also to the fact that texts on training can be descriptive, analytical and/or prescriptive, and be written by authors without any training or

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<sup>1</sup> The author would like to thank Prof. Mellinger and Prof. Tiselius for their comments on the first draft of this Introduction provided at the Summer School on Cognitive Translation Studies (Forlì, 2021).

skills in research on the sole basis of their experience. (Gile, 2001, p. 231)

The same focus on own experience in designing instruction materials has also been noted by other scholars (e.g., Kalina, 2000; Andres & Behr, 2015).

Nevertheless, as demonstrated in the recent publication by Yan et al. (2018), empirical studies in interpreter training are possible, even if they are particularly difficult to conduct. Challenges begin with a relatively low number of trainees in interpreting programs at the universities, hence limited numbers of potential study participants, and less significant results. Other problems are language specifics and transferability of study results to other language pairs; assessment of interpreting quality (as one of the most obvious markers of the quality of training); and even ethical questions that arise whenever educational research is conducted by means of experimental studies. A comprehensive account on other methodological challenges in interpreting studies was provided by Bendazzoli and Monacelli (2016). This partly explains why there is still no satisfactory empirical grounding for any set of exercises for simultaneous interpreting.

Thus, training methods in interpreter education are justified in a number of ways. First, there is the experience-based approach. Second, attempts of empirical studies in pedagogy of interpreting, combined with the above-mentioned difficulties. And the third possibility is to borrow insights from neighbor disciplines, first of all cognitive science and psychology of learning, where empirical research can be conducted with more reliable outcomes.

Such research-informed approach appears to be a feasible way to advance interpreter training, and the corresponding goals are being set in latest publications: for example, “to describe how basic insights into fundamental cognitive processes underlying SI [simultaneous interpreting] can be operationalized in an attempt to develop a training approach” (Seeber & Arbona, 2020, p. 370). In line with this claim, Seeber and Arbona (2020) propose a multimodal educational setting within the framework of “cognitive ergonomics”, others report on successful introduction of such pedagogical models as situated learning (González-Davies & Enríquez-Raído, 2016), flipped classroom (Kim, 2017), or interprofessional education (Hlavac et al., 2022).



Among many important areas in interpreter education research, like aptitude, feedback, and assessment, there is also a debate about the role of exercises. This issue has a lot of aspects: what kind of exercises shall be introduced in the beginning of the training, what combination of class activities is the most appropriate, what training materials shall be used, etc. The above questions apply to the organization of practice in all types of activities that interpreter trainees have to master, including for example, note-taking for consecutive interpreting. The following article discusses only the exercises that involve actual interpreting, after preparatory exercises (Andres et. al, 2015) have been introduced and mastered.

### ***Exercises and part-task training***

The prevailing position regarding the exercises depends on the view of a particular trainer on interpreting pedagogy in general. As described by Seeber and Arbona (2020), instructors with a more holistic approach would probably put more emphasis on letting the trainees to interpret whole speeches, whereas those who favor a more atomistic approach would try to propose more exercises for specific sub-components of interpreting. At the same time, a rather heterogenous combination of class activities is reported: proponents of the holistic approach also recommend drills out of context, and proponents of an atomistic approach also include full-fledged interpreting exercises, and many of the differences between the two approaches can be “reduced to a question of degree” (Seeber & Arbona, 2020, p. 373).

Keeping in mind this “question of degree”, the present article will address the topic of interpreting exercises from the more atomistic point of view, and explore how simultaneous interpreting skills may be acquired by novices through part-task training. This can be analyzed by asking what skills should be trained in the first place, and how to practice them within the framework of contemporary MA programs. Crucial for both issues is human working memory which has been a popular area of inquiry per se, and is “probably the single most often researched isolated cognitive component in interpreting studies” (Timarová, 2012, p. 44).

On the one hand, working memory is extremely loaded during simultaneous interpreting (cf. Hodzik & Williams, 2021). On the other hand, working memory also plays a decisive role in the acquisition of interpreting skills, as it does in learning every other new secondary knowledge (cf. Geary, 2007). This can be described as two types of demands that are placed on working memory resources, namely:

- (1) demands during simultaneous interpreting; and
- (2) demands during the learning process of such complex task as simultaneous interpreting.

The former demands (1) are met with the cognitive effort, described as the “amount of resources the interpreter uses in order to carry out the interpreting task” (Tiselius & Sneed, 2020, p. 2). Desired reduction of the cognitive effort may be achieved if some portions of the task are carried out with a certain degree of automaticity. Such automatization of a specific cognitive process is often divided into three stages (cf. Kellogg, 2003; Anderson, 2010), from controlled processing to “autonomous, procedural, automatic processing” which “requires practice and repetition to develop” (Chmiel, 2006, p. 50). Hence, the first of the above questions (i.e., what skills should be trained) may be answered as follows: we should practice, first of all, those skills that are likely to reduce cognitive effort if they reach a certain degree of automaticity, so that less cognitive resources are needed to use this skill. This means, that it makes sense to practice especially those skills that can be assumed to reach automatic processing stage within a relatively short MA course.

The latter demands (2) that are placed on working memory during skill acquisition, may be reduced by breaking the skill into sub-skills and by partly automating their processing one by one. To answer the second questions (i.e., how to practice): skills should be practiced in a way that does not unnecessarily increase demands placed on the working memory during the exercise: “Learning tasks should be designed in such a way that the available WM [working memory] capacity is efficiently used to achieve the highest return on mental effort investment” (Paas & Merriënboer, 2020, p. 395)

The above conclusions shall be now applied to the subject of interpreting exercises, and discussed below in more detail.

### ***What to practice?***

The concept of part-task training has already been used in interpreting pedagogy research (e.g., de Groot, 2000; Han, 2013; Chmiel, 2010), and many sources unambiguously point out on automatization as one of the teaching goals in interpreter education (Komissarov, 1997; Moser-Mercer et al., 2000; Riccardi, 2005; Setton & Dawrant, 2016). However, despite the general agreement on the theory, it has been hard to find a consensus on the role and the implementation of the part-task exercises in interpreting curriculum (Setton & Dawrant, 2016, p. 61).

Different authors come up with different sets of interpreter sub-skills or competences to be taught (Kalina, 2000b; Sawyer, 2004; Kutz, 2010; Han, 2013). A recent attempt of decomposition of interpreting task shows that there are “semi- or almost fully automatable procedures (transcoding one-to-one lexical equivalents, set phrases, perhaps even some structural patterns), for which isolated task drills are necessary” (Setton & Dawrant 2016, p. 66).

While a typology of language structures for the interpreting exercises deserves more attention and should be discussed separately, it is clear that the above “structural patterns” subject to studying will depend on a specific language combination. They may be taken from available interpreting studies literature, or suggested by trainers on basis of their own experience. Other possible sources are: contrastive linguistic research, extraction of word lists and collocations from speech corpora, research into translation difficulties.

### ***How to practice?***

As was established above, the process of learning a complex task places high demands on the working memory of a trainee. It is therefore advisable not to increase this load with additional difficulties in the beginning of skill acquisition. This approach is being implemented in teaching written translation in form of contrastive exercises, when sentences are translated without context in order to highlight specific language phenomena:

[...] students translate sentences out of context, so that attention is focused on the contrastive problems themselves – problems that, in context, are often blurred by questions of style or genre. This does not mean that context is less important than we have insisted, but that learning to make strategic decisions implies developing a contrastive awareness of available translation options; this awareness is sharpened by taking sentences out of context. (Margaret et al. 2020, p. 168)

Applied to simultaneous interpreting, this would mean to interpret isolated sentences or phrases with examples of “structural patterns” without the context of the whole speech. While such training may not be considered widespread, it was indeed practiced at some conference interpreting programs and is applied by individual interpreter trainers as reported in Alexeeva (2021).

To be able to repeat such exercises in form of a short interpreting activity multiple times and develop a skill of interpreting the given element of speech, a sufficient amount of training materials is needed. At the same time, it should be emphasized that we are discussing interpreter training within the framework of university MA programs which normally last two years or less. And it is considered unlikely that interpreter students will acquire necessary skills without additional self-study (Dingfelder Stone, 2015). Repeated exercises to acquire the necessary “mileage” (Seeber, 2017, p. 13) in interpreting are indispensable.

In other disciplines, such as mathematics or foreign language learning, special workbooks with multiple tasks or problems are used for this purpose. Practice-oriented interpreting coursebooks are also available. In the following section, we shall briefly discuss if they comply with the above suggestions.

### ***Contemporary handbooks***

There are several contemporary practice-oriented publications by experienced interpreter trainers (e.g., Kautz, 2000; Nolan, 2005; Gillies, 2013; Setton & Dawrant, 2016)<sup>2</sup>. Their advantages have already been reviewed in the literature but, as far as the part-task exercises are

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<sup>2</sup> Textbooks dedicated to consecutive interpreting or note-taking are not included in this review as the main focus of this paper is simultaneous interpreting.

concerned, they all have something in common that hinders them from becoming more popular among teaching professionals and students (cf. Pavlisová, 2022).

First of all, as briefly noted in the introduction, most exercises proposed so far seem to be suggested by the authors solely on the basis of their own working experience, and not scientific evidence (cf. Kalina, 2000b); moreover, in most cases there is no data about the effectiveness of the proposed exercises, and the usefulness of some of them is challenged (Gile, 2005, p. 136); finally, and most important, practice materials per se are not provided, as the manuals contain only descriptions of possible tasks, while the exercises have to be prepared by trainers.

It is understandable: these manuals are meant to be not language specific, and hence do not contain any ready-to-use materials. But, as demonstrated above, repeated exercises for automatization are crucial for skill-acquisition within the part-task training paradigm, and the question remains: where to find the examples, and how to create materials for practice.

For a long time, in spite of the obvious importance of this issue, different regions, institutions, and instructors seemed to come up with own and often ad hoc solutions. This is illustrated by the fact that Sawyer, in 2004, was quoting Weber's comment from 1984 as still applicable: "It is always surprising to people wanting to add a translation and interpretation component to their language instruction that there are very few – if any – textbooks in these fields" (Weber, 1984, as cited in Sawyer, 2004, p. 25).

Even now, almost another 20 years later, the situation looks similar: *The Routledge Handbook of Conference Interpreting* (Albl-Mikasa & Tiselius, 2021) covers a lot of topics on more than 600 pages but doesn't mention specific collections of interpreting exercises, apart from some publications that cannot be considered ready-to-use consolidated practice materials for reasons described above.

At the same time, a recent survey among 63 interpreter trainers showed that 36% of participants do not use any textbooks at all, and 98% of respondents create their own teaching materials (Pavlisová, 2022, p. 88). While this data describes only the situation in Czech Republic, judging from the anecdotal reference from other regions we

may suggest that the overall trend is similar in other countries, too: own training materials are very common in the field.

Interpreting courses could benefit from collections of (or at least from a method to create) such pedagogical materials for different language combinations, as a help for interpreter trainers who are often, at the same time, practicing conference interpreters. While their working experience is surely very useful for teaching, they are not always able to spend a lot of time to develop and update own teaching materials, and additional research-based textbooks with multiple exercises to simplify the preparation for the classes will probably be welcome.

In the absence of such textbooks, other sources may be used to facilitate creation of the needed exercises. The corpus-based approach, which is evolving as a promising field of interpreter education, might be able to deliver training materials that will comply with the ideas described above.

### ***Corpora as the source of training materials***

Text corpora are already being used for teaching translation (cf. Bárcena et al., 2014). At least 72 programs within the European Master's in Translation network use corpora in their curricula (Mikhailov, 2022, p. 10). In this regard, translation research is naturally one step ahead of interpreting studies because in order to create a written text corpus one doesn't need to transcribe the oral speeches. This is a rather difficult task (cf. Niemants, 2012), and it is not surprising that interpreting corpora are less frequent than translation corpora. But corpus-based interpreting studies also gather momentum, as more and more publications appear (cf. Russo, 2019; Bendazzoli et al., 2018).

As demonstrated by the recent coursebook on text translation by Baer and Mellinger (2020), there is a difference between using corpora for research purposes and using them for training. The latter allows for less sophisticated design, smaller amounts of text, and more flexibility in data selection. Spontaneously created corpora for teaching and learning purposes do not necessarily need to have the significance of an extensive scientific corpus, but they still can be successfully used by instructors and students.

The same applies to corpus-assisted interpreting pedagogy: even corpora of smaller size may be relevant for educational purposes, as shown by the examples below.

Bertozzi (2018) reports on the development of Italian-Spanish intermodal corpus ANGLINTRAD with a focus on loanwords. While this work revolves around only 241 target words, it delivers valuable pedagogical material: terminological sheets with in-depth analysis for each of the 241 English loanwords in the Italian corpus, and a classification of the strategies adopted by interpreters and translators to each loanword, allowing for comparison between the two in interpreting or translation classes.

Ferraresi (2016) describes how English-Italian intermodal<sup>3</sup> parallel corpus EPTIC can be used in an educational setting to analyze differences in decision-making processes in translation and interpreting, and proposes corpus-based teaching materials on collocations.

For the purpose of the part-task training approach, a corpus doesn't have to be multimodal, nor is a special translation or interpreting corpus needed. If chosen carefully, even a monolingual corpus can become a source of interpreting exercises within the suggested training framework. It is, however, important to find the right corpus for this goal, and the corpora of parliamentary or political speeches seem to be especially suitable.

Advantages lie in the nature of this source. Parliamentary corpora contain official spoken speeches of appropriate stylistic quality and required lexical level, they reflect political discourse, and some are constantly updated. All this makes their content nearly perfect for training conference interpreters.

Corpora segments can be flexibly searched, extracted, and reused, which allows to create multiple exercises without much manual formatting work. There are corpora of this kind that can be accessed free of charge, with modern user-friendly online interfaces, and a simple search procedure does not require any specific technical knowledge. In the following section, two of such online corpus tools are presented, and possible exercises are discussed.

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<sup>3</sup> Intermodal corpora combine parallel or comparable translations and interpretations of the same source text; for additional information about such corpora see Bernardini et al. (2016).

### ***Examples of corpus-assisted exercises***

The first corpus to be presented is the Europarl corpus of European Parliament proceedings. It contains speeches in the official languages of the EU with around 60 million words per language, from the period 2007–2011. Europarl is available via Sketch Engine online tool<sup>4</sup>.

The second corpus that was used for the present report is the corpus of German political speeches available on the DWDS<sup>5</sup> platform. It contains 15240 official speeches (ca. 27 million words) of German-speaking politicians from six countries and regions, from the period 1982–2020<sup>6</sup>.

Both corpora have been used by the author as sources of teaching materials for German-Russian conference interpreting classes. In the following final part of this article, three examples of such corpus use are reported. In all three cases, the exercises were created on different accounts: in the first case, the reasoning is represented by combined pedagogical experience of colleagues; in the second case – exercises were means to tackle a particular problem trigger in interpreting; in the third – the idea was taken from the literature and developed into a proper exercise material.

The first case, is trainer's suggestion to practice set phrases, syntactic constructions, standard expressions, or language formulas, that, from his or her experience, are deemed advisable to learn for conference interpreters. Such elements can be easily found in available speech corpora in sufficient amount<sup>7</sup>, and this option is rather obvious and self-explanatory: the lists of examples can be then interpreted one by one, out of context of the speeches, in order to focus attention only on rendering this, presumably common, German constructions in Russian, according to the described part-task approach.

Second, when alternating between the exercises and the full-fledged interpreting of speeches, a trainer may notice that some

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sketchengine.eu/europarl-parallel-corpus>

<sup>5</sup> Digitales Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache (eng. "digital dictionary of the German language"), a project of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.dwds.de/d/korpora/politische\\_reden](https://www.dwds.de/d/korpora/politische_reden)

<sup>7</sup> If this is not the case (e.g., if what is intended to practice as a common formal greeting to open a speech is not found in a large speech corpus), it may be a sign that such experience-based training material needs amendment.



students have particular difficulties with certain expressions, and suggest individual exercises for a specific phrase. For example, the German syntactic construction “das ist etwas, was” (eng. “this is something that”) turned out to be a recurrent problem trigger during a German-Russian interpreting class. The literal translation is not the best option stylistically and, in the Russian language, it could pose significant difficulties for further processing of the source speech. It is advisable to omit or rephrase this German construction. This can be trained by multiple repetition, and a simple search in the above mentioned Europarl corpus provides many dozens of examples of this syntactic construction in the German language. Search results can be then exported to a spreadsheet file, sorted (e.g., some of them may be deemed too difficult for beginners and deleted manually), and prepared for the next class.

Third, even more complex elements of interpreter training, like interpreting strategies, may be trained in the same way. Setton and Dawrant (2016) argue that segmentation is an important interpreting strategy that can be used when interpreting concessive clauses. It is recommended to start interpretation with the subject noun to avoid further difficulties: “ignore the subordination (opening preposition, subordinate conjunction, etc.: *although, which, notwithstanding*) and instead start with a subject noun, but restore the meaning, where necessary by making later, downstream adjustments” (Setton & Dawrant, 2016, p. 281). Along with this recommendation, Setton and Dawrant (2016) provide only four examples which is not enough for proper training, and a mere awareness about the existence of such strategy is not sufficient to automate the sub-skill. To train this strategy more examples should be used. They can be found by a simple corpus inquiry for sentences that begin with “obwohl” (eng. “although”) and “trotz” (eng. “notwithstanding”). The DWDS corpus provides hundreds of such phrases in appropriate context.

Such high quality of context and content is a very important feature, as it makes the use of political speech corpora much more efficient compared to Internet search engines. In all of the above examples, a corpus search not only delivers the necessary results, but they also all come from authentic political speeches or addresses and thus represent exactly the type of text that is relevant for interpreter training. Additional advantages are: left and right context of the given

phrase, rich lexical content, formal language style, relevant facts and figures.

Finally, all of the above methods may be used by trainees independently to practice at home which makes this exercise model similar to a “technology assisted self-study tool” that is considered to increase student motivation (Dingfelder Stone, 2015, p. 246).

### ***Conclusion***

The described corpus-assisted approach facilitates preparation for the classes, makes them more responsive to individual needs of trainees, and, in accordance with the provided research-based rationale, presumably promotes effective part-task training and sub-skills acquisition.

The above considerations regarding the training mode are based mainly on research from other fields of science, and the cases of corpora use are reported from own experience of scholars and teachers. As a next step, an empirical test of the effectiveness of corpus use in pedagogy and part-task training would be of great interest. Challenges that are common for empirical interpreting studies have already been described above, but even a small pilot study, with all the usual limitations of such research projects, may provide valuable experimental data. If such pilot study is feasible and delivers meaningful results, similar experiment designs with a control group and with less limitations can be considered.

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# ***The Translation Duel as a Gamified Hybrid Learning Activity***

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**Abstract:** This paper intends to show how a translation competition, namely the “translation duel,” can be turned into a useful pedagogical tool to train translation students to adapt their target text to imposed discursive parameters and consequently learn the skopos theory in an intuitive, applied, and playful way. A translation duel can be defined as a translation competition between two translators (or two teams of translators) who compete against the clock to translate a source text under the constraint of imposed discursive parameters. The target text of both translators is projected on large screens to let spectators see the translations typed in real time including idea changes, correction of spelling mistakes, last-minute editing, etc. Finally, at the end of the round, the target texts are read out loud and the spectators can vote for their favorite target text. The concept of translation duel is largely inspired by the “lucha libro,” which is a creative writing competition in which writers are invited to produce a creative text in a very short time. This paper guides the reader through the implementation of a real translation duel that took place during the COVID-19 pandemic between translation students from the University of Mons (Belgium) and translation students from the Université Laval (Canada). Most importantly, this article argues that this type of activity provides four main advantages: first, a translation duel provides an intuitive introduction to the skopos theory. Secondly, it enables students to develop the natural skills on which a professional translator usually relies, such as rapidity, creativity, composure, team spirit, and interpersonal competence. Thirdly, it can take place either on-site, remotely, or in hybrid mode, with translators competing (and spectators watching) from different parts of the world. Finally, the translation duel can be seen a gamified activity that allows to enhance learning.

**Keywords:** gamification of translation, hybrid learning, skopos theory, translation duel, translation pedagogy.

<https://doi.org/10.24193/JRHE.2022.2.5>



## ***Introduction***

The translation duel (also called “traduel” in French) is a relatively recent activity which consists of a competition between translators inspired by the much largely known concept of “lucha libro,” which is based on creative writing.

Lucha libro was invented by the author Christopher Vasquez in Peru in 2002 to reveal new talented authors to the public (Vasquez, 2022). Vasquez became inspired by the atmosphere of the Mexican professional wrestling league called “Lucha Libre AAA” to make new authors compete in a creative writing competition by having them wear masks (like wrestlers) and write in a wrestling ring environment in front of a cheering public. Authors taking part in the lucha libro competition receive specific writing instructions such as reinventing the rest of a famous piece of literature, writing in a specific genre, writing without using a specific vowel, or writing a story based on an object provided by the public. After the competing authors have received the writing instructions, they have only a few minutes at their disposal to write their texts on a computer which are then projected in real time onto two large screens (one for each author). Thanks to this real-time context, the public becomes aware of the instant writing and editing of the authors, who often communicate with the public through the screen by adding extra comments in their document for entertainment such as “I really don’t know what to write anymore,” etc. Once the time limit is reached, the produced texts, which still appear on the screens, are printed and read out loud by an actor. The spectators can then vote for their favorite piece of writing (or writing performance) by raising a sheet of color corresponding to the author.

Since writing and translation are closely related activities, the lucha libro concept was naturally adapted to the practice of translation. In a similar fashion as the lucha libro, the translation duel is a competition between two translators (or two teams of translators) who compete against the clock to translate a source text sometimes under the constraint of imposed discursive parameters. The translators receive a source text and have a few minutes at their disposal to think of translation strategies before starting to type their target text, which is projected onto real-time large screens for the public. Therefore,

changes of translation strategies, last-minute editing or correction of spelling mistakes also appear on the screens. Finally, at the end of the round, the target texts are read out loud and the spectators can vote for their favorite target text.

Translation duels have only recently started to take place and have only involved professional translators. Several of them were organized from and to different languages by Daniel Hahn at the Marlborough Literature Festival (2017), in the Literary Translation Centre at the London Book Fair (2017), in the British Library of London (2018), at the Edinburgh International Book Festival (2019), and at the Toronto International Festival for Authors (2022). Other events include the translation duel organized by the Ledbury Poetry Festival (2017) or the one hosted at the Festival of Literary Diversity in Canada (2020).

This paper explores the pedagogical context in which the translation duel was used during a translation course and provides explanations about the theoretical background of the skopos theory that can be taught through the translation duel. It also addresses the design of the translation duel as a hybrid learning activity. Most importantly, the paper stresses different benefits of organizing such an activity in a translation course. Finally, a conclusion provides insight into other practices that could benefit from the online writing environment on which the translation duel is based.

### ***Pedagogical context***

This section reports how the face-to-face activity of hosting a translation duel was turned into a hybrid learning activity for translation students of the University of Mons (Belgium) and the Université Laval (Quebec, Canada) during the Covid-19-related lockdown.

Very shortly after the first Covid-19 outbreak, many teaching activities were shut down at all levels of education in Belgium. Similar actions were taken worldwide, including at the Université Laval in Quebec. Although most teachers had already integrated digital tools into their courses through the use of MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) platforms, the pandemic caused a massive shift from face-to-face learning activities to hybrid learning and distance learning activities (Bican & Mălăescu 2021; Chimbunde, 2021; Cohen & Sabag,

2020) and forced teachers to innovate in their regular practice, including in courses such as foreign languages (Le Cor & Couterut, 2020), linguistics (Luporini, 2020) and translation (Bordet, 2020).

During the pandemic, two colleagues from the Université Laval and I discussed the idea of organizing a few virtual seminars about translation involving our French-speaking translation students. With the gradual integration of remote communication technologies into the classrooms (such as the use of virtual conferencing tools), it became easy to plan three virtual seminars with each of them including a discussion about a specific topic on translation and a playful activity in teams that could be helpful for translation training (a quiz on world news, the translation of “memes,” etc.). The main objective of the seminars was to let students actively take part in discussions about translation and in fun activities with translation students from another university. By the time the translation duel was organized in December 2021, students from Quebec were still under lockdown, while Belgian students could return to their universities if they wore face masks.

It is in this context that the translation duel was integrated into one of the seminars as a playful activity and turned into a training tool for translation students exploitable in a hybrid environment. Aside from the translation duel being a pleasurable competing activity for translation students, it has turned out to be a great tool to teach the skopos theory in an intuitive and didactic way.

### ***Theoretical background***

The particularity of a translation duel is that it can be set under several linguistic and stylistic constraints that a translator may come across in his/her professional activity. Indeed, translation activities imply the consideration of constrictive parameters such as character count limit, adaptation to a specific target audience, compliance with an enterprise’s specific terminology, cultural adaptation, or localization, etc.

The idea that a translation should comply with sociocultural and contextual constraints was first addressed by the functional theories of translation and more specifically the translatorial action model (Holz-Mänttari, 1984) and the skopos theory (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984/2013). Both the translatorial action model and the skopos theory

conceptualize translation as a purposeful activity that takes place in a specific sociocultural environment which plays an influential role in the final output of the translation activity.

According to Holz-Mänttari (1984), several actors are involved in the process of translation and each of them plays a significant role in the evolution of the translation project: the initiator of the translation project who needs the translation, the commissioner of the translation who contacts a translator, the producer of the source text (ST), the translator who produces the target text (TT), the user of the target text, who can be a person using the text without reading it, and the receiver of the target text, who is the primary reader or “consumer” of the text. The main goal of the translatorial action model is to produce a target text that is suitable for the use of the receiver. In other words, the target text must be functional:

Translatorial action focuses very much on producing a TT that is functionally communicative for the receiver. This means, for example, that the form and genre of the TT must be guided by what is functionally suitable in the TT culture, rather than by merely copying the ST profile. What is functionally suitable has to be determined by the translator, who is the expert in translatorial action and whose role is to make sure that the intercultural transfer takes place satisfactorily. (Munday, 2016, p. 125)

In a similar fashion, the main goal of the skopos theory, first developed by Reiss and Vermeer (1984/2013), is that the target text must be functionally adequate. In fact, the word “skopos” was specifically chosen for this theory, as it is the Greek word for “purpose.” According to the skopos theory, the translator must know why a translation is commissioned and the function that the target text will fulfill. The skopos of a translation needs to be explicitly or implicitly stated for the translator in a “commission,” which details the goal of the target text and the conditions under which this goal should ideally be reached. Functional adequacy is reached whenever the skopos of the target text is fulfilled in compliance with what was stated in the commission (Vermeer, 1989/2021).

The concept of the “translation brief” by Nord (1997/2018) echoes the concept of commission by Vermeer (1989/2021) and can be

defined as all the sociocultural and contextual constraints that apply to the translational activity through the following information: the intended function of the source and target texts, the addressees of the texts, the time and place of the reception of the texts, the medium of the texts and the motive behind the texts.

In both the translatorial action model and the skopos theory, it is the role of the translator to determine how to make the target text functional for the receiver. For instance, the translator may choose to explain terminology for a lay target audience (e.g.: the term “apoptosis” can be explained as “the programmed self-destruction of a cell”) or to shorten a target segment to make it fit into a subtitle box, which often contains a limited number of characters.

Since the translation duel is based on imposed contextual constraints related to what Nord (1997/2018) calls the “translation brief,” the skopos theory can intuitively be taught through the translation duel.

### ***Activity design***

#### *Creating the “ring” of the translation duel and its associated content*

A beta version of an online environment for translation duels was created by putting two google docs windows next to each other on the same computer screen. Google docs are word processing documents that allow instant editing by several users. By granting students who wanted to test the translation duel the access to the two documents and by opening these two documents in two adjacent windows on my computer desktop, I was able to project a crash-test version of a first translation duel in the classroom during a course on general translation.

Since the translation students showed a lot of interest in the activity and in view of the virtual seminars with Université Laval, it was decided to create an improved version of the online environment for the translation duel that could fit in only one window (instead of two in the test version). The pedagogical unit of the University of Mons helped building this new environment for the translation duel by associating

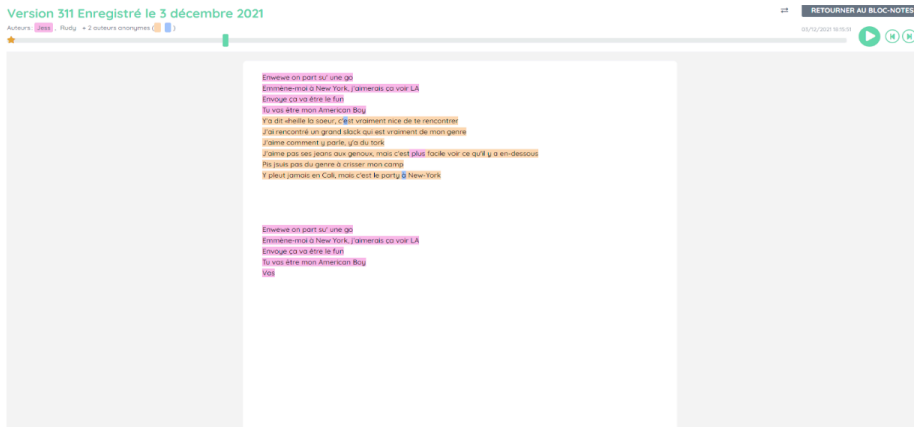
the word processor “Etherpad” and the creative environment called “Genially.”

Etherpad is a word processor that allows collaborative instant editing:

[It] allows you to edit documents collaboratively in real-time, much like a live multi-player that runs in your browser. Write articles, press releases, to-do lists, etc. together with your friends, fellow students or colleagues, all working on the same document at the same time. (The Etherpad foundation, 2022).

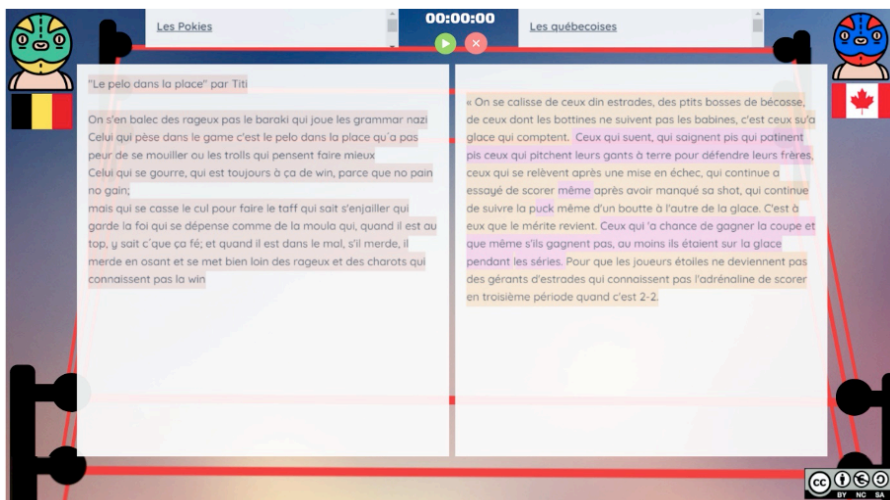
Etherpad was chosen as the word processor to be used in a translation duel as it could be more easily integrated into the “Genially” environment, but also because it saves a new version of the working document every other second (and therefore keeps track of changes) and displays a “rewind” function that allows the user to replay the entire writing process. This rewind function is particularly interesting to analyze the writing process of translation students, but also the various changes they made during this process. For example, after the activity was over, teachers or students could decide to look into a particular moment of the writing process by clicking on the “play,” “previous,” and “next” buttons or directly on the progress bar that appears at the top of the text in a similar way of using a music player.

Another advantage of Etherpad is that the production of each different person editing the text simultaneously is highlighted in a different color. Students willing to take part in the translation duel could therefore write their translation with fellow teammates by using an Etherpad window in which they could also customize the name of their team. The Etherpad window used in the translation duel is depicted in Figure 1. The production of the two different teammates is highlighted in different colors, while the progress bar is depicted at the top of the document with its play, previous, and next buttons:



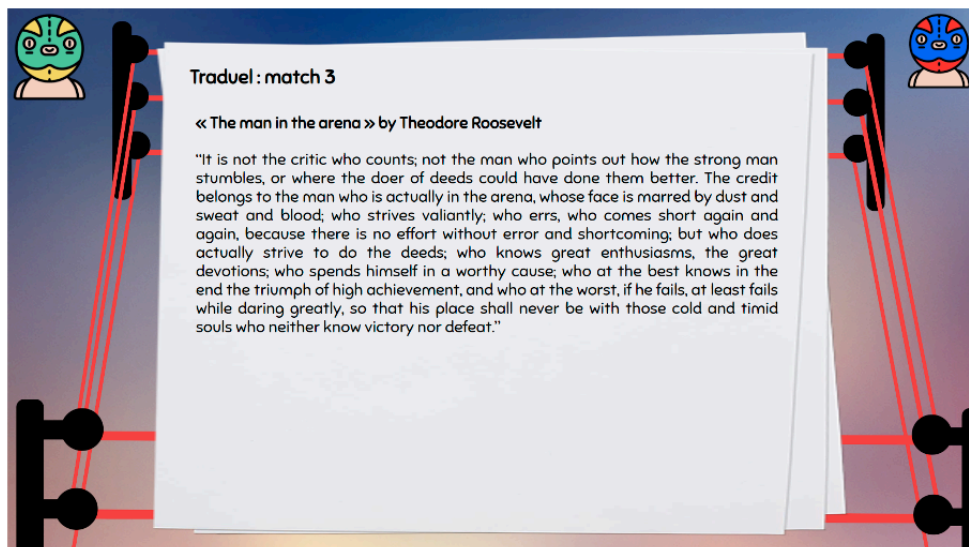
**Figure 1.** The Etherpad word processor

The Genially environment was used to integrate the Etherpad windows from both teams in order to display the translation duel in a “ring.” This ring was made of the target texts instantly typed by the Belgian team and by the Quebec team. The two teams were clearly identifiable thanks to visual elements, such as flags and wrestling characters, and to their customizable team name. A timer was also implemented in the Genially environment to limit each round of competition to 15 minutes. The ring of the translation duel is depicted in Figure 2:



**Figure 2.** The ring of the translation duel

In addition, source texts were integrated into the same visual environment for aesthetical reasons and were presented as in Figure 3, depicting part of Theodore Roosevelt's "the man in the arena" speech, which was used as one of the three source texts during the activity:



**Figure 3.** Example of source text used for the translation duel

Each source text was associated with a translation brief provided by the teachers. Each translation brief consisted of one the following constraints to respect during the translation process : cultural adaption, genre adaptation, and register variation.

### *Practical organization of the activity*

The translation duel was made of three rounds. At the beginning of each round, students were asked if they wanted to observe the competition as spectators or if they wanted to actively participate in the duel with other students and to form two teams (one Quebec team and one Belgian team). Teammates were then asked to find a name for their team and to test the Etherpad word processor. Whenever it was possible, new teams were formed for each round.

Once both teams were ready, they received a short source text to translate (such as in Figure 3 above) during the duel. The translation



brief associated with the source text was provided orally. Both the source text and the translation brief were made available to the on-site audience and to students connected online.

In each round, the teams had 10 minutes to reflect on the source text and the translation brief to elaborate a strategy. At the end of this preparation time, the timer was set to 15 minutes, which corresponded to the time allotted to type in the translation during the duel. During the ongoing duel, spectator students could cheer for the team of their choice or comment on the target texts both on-site or online by using the chat or microphone of the video conferencing software. At the end of each round, spectators could vote for their favorite target text. A debriefing session was then organized through a discussion between active participants and spectators about translation strategies and cultural aspects. The rewind function of the Etherpad was used to either replay a part of the target text writing process or to stop at a particular interesting moment.

In the first round, the beginning of a song by Estelle (2008) entitled “American boy” was selected as the source text. This song contains many references to the American culture: “MIA” for Miami International Airport, “LA” for Los Angeles, the use of the United States customary system, American slang, etc. Therefore, the instructions provided in the translation brief associated with the source text stated that translation students had to culturally adapt the song to the public of their home country. Students were encouraged to be as creative as they wanted and were free to use the same rhymes, to find new rhymes or to get rid of them.

In the second round, the source text was a news text found on the BBC website (2021) about the resignation of Magdalena Andersson, Sweden’s first female prime minister. In the translation brief, students were asked to change the genre of the text and turn this news text into a poem. They were free to adopt any prosodic conventions associated with poetry.

Finally, a quote was extracted from Theodore Roosevelt’s speech entitled “the man in the arena<sup>1</sup>” (1910) and chosen as the source text for the third round of the translation duel (see Figure 3). Instructions provided in the translation brief stated that students had to change the

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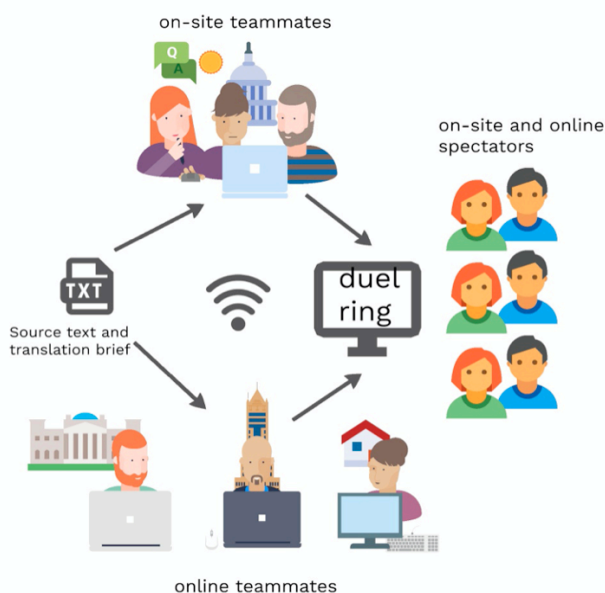
<sup>1</sup> Also known as “Citizenship in a Republic.”

formal register of the quote into a very informal register through the use of slang for instance.

### *Hybridization of the activity*

The translation duel was organized in hybrid learning<sup>2</sup> with Belgian students being on-site in the same computer room and Quebec students being connected to the activity at home.

The planning of a hybrid learning translation duel required the use of a video conferencing software by all participants. On-site Belgian students were in a computer room to connect to the software and participate to the translation duel or to cheer for the participants, while online Quebec students connected to the software and participated in the duel (or watched it) from their home. Most importantly, one computer (the teacher's) was used to share the screen projecting the ring of the translation duel (Etherpad integrated in the Genially) in the virtual meeting and onto computer screens for on-site students. The translation duel in hybrid learning can be schematized as in Figure 4:



**Figure 4.** The translation duel as a hybrid learning activity

<sup>2</sup> This type of learning implies that some students are in the same physical environment as their teacher and others connected online to follow the course.

In addition, a portable camera was placed in the computer room in order to show, in the Zoom meeting, the Belgian students cheering and competing during the translation duel. However, the use of a camera is not necessary to organize the translation duel in hybrid mode, since students on-site could all activate their computer's webcam if they wanted. The aim of using of a portable camera was to add a bit of fun to the activity and let students from Quebec see all the Belgian students who were present in the same physical environment.

### ***Activity benefits***

#### *Learning the skopos theory*

The types of constraints stated in the skopos theory emerge in the real practice of professional translation and are more or less explicitly specified in translation briefs. Unfortunately, too many translation courses tend to reduce translation activity to a simple transfer from a source language to a target language without considering the very purpose of this activity. Part of the solution to tackle this issue is to integrate the skopos theory in translation courses, as it allows to “take both ST and TT out of the void (Vienne 1994: 52) that these texts often appear to inhabit (in the translation class as well as in the reality of translation), and to attempt to contextualize them in situations linked to real-life assignments” (Vienne, 2000, p. 91).

Therefore, teaching translation students how to adapt their target text to the skopos outlined by the constraints stated in a translation brief has become an essential part of their training: “the inclusion of real-world commercial translation constraints is welcome in addressing some of the decisions faced by translators [...]” (Munday, 2016, p. 125).

The skopos theory can be integrated in translation courses in a didactic, intuitive, and playful way through the organization of a translation duel: by providing a translation brief with each source text included in the duel, translation students learned to comply with different constraints applied to the translation of a source text and were didactically initiated to the skopos theory.

In the three rounds of translation duel presented in this paper, translation students had to adapt to different types of constraints stated in the translation briefs: cultural constraints, constraints associated with genre and its rhythmic structure or prosody, and constraints related to register.

First, several examples show that translation students specifically made the effort to adapt cultural references to their own culture when they were asked to adapt an American song containing American cultural references. In the first round of the translation duel (in which the source text was the pop song “American Boy” by Estelle (2008)), the expression “I just met this 5-foot-7 guy who’s just my type” was adapted by the Quebec translation students with this sentence: “J’ai rencontré un grand slack qui est vraiment de mon genre.” A “slack” is a word in Quebec French which means a slim or slender guy. This translation strategy was a good cultural adaptation because neither Quebec nor Belgium uses the United States customary system of feet to which the original song refers, but also because a “slack” is a Quebec slang word for a “slender man.” Other cultural adaptations were made through the use of typical Quebec swear words such as “crisser” in the sentence “Pis jsuis pas du genre à crisser mon camp.”

Cultural adaptation may even be grammatical. Quebec French grammar can appear slightly different from other types of French. This is clearly the case in the sentences “j’aime comment y parle, y a du tork” and “on part su’ une go” in the target text typed by the Quebec team of translation students. First, the use of the adverb “comment” in the sentence instead of the adverb “comme” is typical from Quebec. Secondly, the contraction of the pronoun “il” into “y” or of the adverb “sur” into “su’ ”are also typical from Quebec French.

Secondly, translation students were asked to transform a piece of news into a short poem in the second round of the translation duel. Because they had to change the genre of the source text, they had to choose strategies to transform prose into poetry. By doing so, they also had to adopt prosodic conventions associated with poetry. This resulted in translation students choosing to make rhymes. In the following excerpt of their target text, the Quebec translation students chose an AAAA rhyme scheme:

*Comme représent[ant]e, Dame Andersson a été sacrée,  
 mais elle a démissionné.  
 parce que le budget n'est pas passé.  
 Car le budget anti-immigration par le parlement a été donné.*

As for the Belgian translation students, not only did they choose different rhyme schemes for their target text (such as ABBA, AAAA, BBBB), but they also tried to apply rhythmic constraints to certain verses, such as a fixed number of 7 syllables in a line. After interrogating the students about their strategy, they explained they tried to imitate the structure of the well-known French song “Marie” by Johnny Halliday (2002). Here is one of their verses in an ABBA rhyme scheme with lines of 7 syllables (except for the third line of the verse, which only contains 6 syllables<sup>3</sup>):

*Magda, Ô belle Madga,  
 T'es partie, maintenant prions  
 Ton départ, nous pleurons  
 Magda, on te tend les bras*

Finally, translation students had to adapt the formal register of the “man in the arena” speech by Theodore Roosevelt (1910) into a familiar register. As a result, translation students introduced a lot of slang, linguistic regionalisms, and anglicisms in their target text. In addition, they made references to popular culture or to their own culture.

For instance, the second sentence in the Belgian team's target text is “Celui qui pèse dans le game c'est le pelo dans la place qu'a pas peur de se mouiller.” The expression “peser dans le game” is an anglicism which means someone who becomes successful by getting really involved in an activity. Students used the slang “pelo” which is the equivalent of the slang “dude” in American English. Negation is also expressed in a very informal way, with the absence of the mandatory “ne” in French which forms negation with the negative auxiliary “pas” in regular and formal registers. Finally, the verb “se mouiller” is an

<sup>3</sup> Note that the use of the future tense of the verb “pleurer” would have resulted in the third line containing 7 syllables instead of 6. It could be hypothesized that the students had the intention to use the future tense for the verb but did not spell it properly due to the fact that the two verb forms are very similar: pleurons (present tense) / pleurerons (future tense).

informal expression which means “making a lot of effort” and refers to the sweat one might produce during the effort. Two references to popular culture can be identified in the Belgian team’s target text: “grammar nazis” who are people paying too much attention to spelling and grammar and who enjoy correcting language errors, and “troll” which is cyber-slang to describe someone who uses deliberately provocative arguments on the internet and whose intention is to disturb other users and create controversy.

The Quebec team of translation students also used slang with the regional swear word “calisse” in the sentence “on se calisse de ceux din estrades” which could be more formally translated into “nobody cares about the ones in the spectator seats.” They also introduced references to ice hockey, which is a very popular sport in Quebec and more broadly in Canada with the sentence “c’est ceux su’a glace qui comptent. Ceux qui suent, qui saignent pis qui patinent pis ceux qui pitchent leurs gants à terre pour défendre leurs frères...” roughly meaning “those who count are on the ice. They sweat, bleed and skate and even pitch their gloves on the ground to defend their brothers...” The idea of players throwing their gloves on the ground “to defend their brothers” refers to the established tradition of fighting in ice hockey. The rest of the translation is centered on ice hockey with further references to the puck, the ice hockey series or the ability to score during the third period.

### *Developing translation competence*

Translation competence can be understood as an umbrella term referring to a series of interrelated sub-competences, with “knowledge of the languages, knowledge of the cultures and domain-specific knowledge” being the most frequently identified ones (Schäffner & Adab, 2000, p. ix). However, translation is a “complex activity, involving expertise in a number of areas and skills” (Schäffner & Adab, 2000, p. viii).

Aside from understanding the translation brief and applying the skopos theory by making the best translation choices according to the stated constraints, translation students can, thanks to the translation duel, also train other skills on which a professional translator usually relies.

Since the translation duel is a competition against the clock, translation students learn to think and to work in an accelerated way. By participating to the translation duel, students get out of their “comfort zone”: while they usually have several days or weeks to hand in their translation homework, the translation duel trains their ability to translate faster and on the spot.

The constraints stated in the translation brief can be customized in any desired way to train the creativity of translation students. Making cultural adaptations (such as in the first round of the translation duel), genre adaptations (such as in the second round), or register adaptations (such as in the third round) necessarily appeal to the translator’s creativity.

Although translation is often perceived as a lonely job, professional translators often collaborate with other translators, commissioners, or revisers and editors to complete their translations. Collaboration is an essential part of the translation duel presented in this paper since translation students had to work in teams. They could actively collaborate by translating simultaneously in the Etherpad or take on the role of translators and revisers where the translators took care of the translation, and the revisers were in charge of editing it and correcting spelling mistakes.

Finally, because of the time limitation and the collaborative aspect of the activity, students also learn to stay composed during the activity and to communicate their strategies as clearly as possible. These constraints allow them to work on their interpersonal competence, which is an essential aspect of translator competence (Kelly, 2000, p. 165).

### *On-site, distance learning or hybrid learning activity*

In the absence of pandemic-related constraints, teachers tend to give up using distance learning tools (Duroisin, 2020). However, since the translation duel can be adapted according to different learning modes, it can be organized in many different circumstances.

Indeed, the practical advantage of the translation duel is that it can take the shape of either an on-site, distance learning, or hybrid learning activity. Although the translation duel described in this paper was organized as a hybrid learning activity, with Quebec students being

online and Belgian students being in the same room (and all connected to computers), it is fully adaptable to on-site or distance learning modes.

On-site activities are organized in the presence of the teacher and the students in the same physical environment, while distance learning is performed when both the teacher and the students are in different physical environments and therefore connected online.

An on-site translation duel would require having access to a computer room with computers for competing teams to write their translation, a computer connected to a projection screen to project the translation duel ring displaying the translations typed in real time by both teams, and some seats for the cheering audience.

To organize a distance learning translation duel, it would be necessary to have competing and cheering students connect to a video conferencing software and to have the teacher share his/her screen displaying the translation duel ring.

### *Gamification of translation*

Gamification can be roughly defined as the use of game mechanics or game elements in contexts which do not normally rely on game, such as education: “Gamification refers to the application of game design elements to non-game activities and has been applied to a variety of contexts including education” (Nah et al., 2014, p. 401). The gamification of a learning activity has been proved to improve learning outcomes: game design patterns are indeed known to enhance learning and engagement among students (Nah et al., 2014).

In that sense, since the translation duel makes use of several game elements that have been identified as successful elements to enhance learning (Nah et al., 2014, p. 402-403) such as onboarding (Eleftheria et al., 2013), customization (Eleftheria et al., 2013), avatars (Todor & Pitica, 2013), visual elements (O'Donovan et al., 2013), time limit (Antonaci et al., 2017), competition (Berkling & Thomas, 2013; Sanchez & Mandran, 2017), cooperation (Berkling & Thomas, 2013; Sanchez & Mandran, 2017), reward (de Freitas & de Freitas, 2013), and replay (Eleftheria et al., 2013), it can be understood as a way to gamify translation.



Onboarding, which is the ability to quickly engage in an activity and easily understand its mechanisms, is part of the translation duel as students are free to either actively participate in the translation duel or to be a cheering spectator. In addition, the activity makes use of material students already know very well (collaborative word processor, chat rooms, keyboards, etc.), which allows them to rapidly get “on board.”

The translation duel also makes use of customization, since competitors had the possibility to choose a name for their team and type it in the box specifically integrated in the Genially environment for this purpose. The name of one of the Belgian teams was for instance “Les Pokies” in reference to the name of one of the teammates’ cat. Another team name was “Les Tradestructibles,” which is a pun made up of the words “translation” and “indestructible.”

Avatars were created for the translation duel: they were based on wrestling characters to imitate the masks worn by writers in *lucha libre*, which were themselves inspired by the wrestlers in the *lucha libre* AAA league. Flags were also added to the avatars to be able to identify translation students from Quebec and from Belgium and keep track of their translation. It would probably be possible to create various avatars and add new flags in later versions of the translation duel interface and to let students choose their own.

Time limit was represented with a countdown clock that produced a bell sound once the time was up. Time limit can be set to any number of minutes and could be used to create different levels of difficulty to the translation duel. Very little research has been led on the impact of time limit in the gamification of writing skills (Zhihao & Zhonggen, 2002) and to the best of our knowledge, no research has ever been done on the impact of limited time in the gamification of translation.

By deciding to actively take part in a competition such as a translation duel, a student has the opportunity to “test his way of thinking and behaving” (Sanchez & Mandran, 2017, p. 468). He/she attempts to win over his/her competitor by trying out strategies more or less successfully: “game-based learning consists of an adaptive process rooted in the recognition of success and failures. By recognizing inappropriate knowledge, the player revises his/her knowledge and

learns from his/her reflection on playing” (Sanchez & Mandran, 2017, p. 468).

Aside from competition, which makes up an essential part of the translation duel, collaboration is just as important in this activity. Students were able to collaborate on-site (in Belgium) or by using the Etherpad’s chatroom (in Quebec) to agree on strategies to apply. Moreover, it was not necessary to have one student take the lead in a team and be the only one writing the translation since teammates could also directly collaborate in the writing as they could simultaneously edit the target text (as the different colors of highlight suggest in Etherpad). Collaboration can play a significant role on learning (Berkling & Thomas, 2013) because of the interaction that is entailed between the teammates. This interaction allows the team to seek the best strategy to adopt in the competitive activity:

There is evidence to suggest that collaboration with other players can positively impact learning gains through epistemic interactions. Epistemic interactions are explanatory and argumentative interactions that play a role in the co-construction of knowledge. Through players’ dialogues and according to the experience gained from individual plays, the validity of the strategies and knowledge is collaboratively established. (Sanchez & Mandran, 2017, p. 468)

Since the translation duel is gamified based on both competition and cooperation, it can be considered as a “co-opetitive” activity (Sanchez & Mandran, 2017).

Another advantage of the translation duel is that translation students who took actively part in the translation duel were rewarded by their spectator peers who could vote for their favorite target text among the two produced by the competing teams.

Moreover, the integration of the Etherpad word processor in Genially allowed to replay on fast forward the entire production of target texts by the different teams, providing instant feedback to the translation duel. Immediate feedback is said to raise learning effectiveness, learner engagement in the activity and to make it easier for learners to stay focused on the ongoing activity:

The more frequent and immediate the feedback is, the greater the learning effectiveness and learner engagement. Clear and immediate

feedback has been shown to be important for attaining the flow state, which is a state of engagement and immersion in an activity. Hence, feedback is an important criterion for performance and engagement. (Nah et al., 2014, p. 406)

The integration of all these game elements to the translation duel shows that this activity can be seen as a first attempt to gamify translation learning.

## ***Conclusion***

This paper intended to explain how the “lucha libro” writing competition was adapted to turn it into a translation duel. More precisely, it showed how to design such activity in different teaching modes.

In addition, this paper highlighted several advantages of organizing a translation duel: it provides an intuitive introduction to the skopos theory through several sociocultural and contextual constraints. It helps students train various professional skills and therefore their translation competence. It is highly adaptable to different modes of learning (distance, on-site, hybrid). It can be understood as a first attempt to gamify translation learning.

Finally, it should be noted that other practices could benefit from the online writing environment (Etherpad implemented into Genially) on which the translation duel is based. Any practice in which writing exercises are involved could adapt the writing environment to their peculiarities. For instance, the real-time writing and editing environment could be used by law students to compete to write their best legal plea based on a series of files and evidence. Another example would be students in mathematics trying to solve an equation in a real-time competition, or students in marketing competing to conceive the best advertising slogan for a product. The replicability of the writing environment could be used in countless ways.

### ***Acknowledgement***

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Catherine Laumonier and Rudy Potdevin from the pedagogical unit (“Service d’appui pédagogique”) of the University of Mons for creating the online environment of the translation duel and for their invaluable contribution to this project. I also wish to thank Valérie Florentin and Lucie Ons from the Université Laval and all the students from the Université Laval and the University of Mons who kindly accepted to take part in the translation duel. More broadly, I would like to thank members of the University of Mons for granting me the award of best pedagogical innovation 2022 (see the article by Jauniaux (2022) for further information) for the translation duel I organized and reported in this paper.

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# ***A Descriptive Study on the Use of Subtitling as a Didactic Tool in Translation Courses at Spanish Universities***

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**Abstract:** In the context of translator training, subtitling has already been included into some translation curricula as an independent discipline of study aiming at training future subtitlers. Several scholars have discussed about the benefits from using subtitling as an active tool to develop students' translation competence in generic translation courses. However, there are few studies which focused on the use of active subtitling as a didactic tool in the field of translator training from a generic perspective. This article presents a descriptive study on the application of subtitling skills in generic translation courses which is carried out in the context of translator training at BA level in Spain. The main objective of this descriptive study is to present an overview on the use of subtitling in the translation classroom and analyze its level of implementation in non-audiovisual translation courses as a didactic resource that allows to develop the students' translation competence. Thus, the degree of the inclusion of subtitling into translation curricula at different Spanish universities is presented by providing data collected from questionnaires to both translation students and trainers at BA level. In this way, questionnaires not only provide relevant data about the degree of inclusion of this didactic tool in generic translation courses but also intend to collect students and trainers' experiences, opinions and expectations concerning the use of subtitling in a non-audiovisual translation context. Although the inclusion of subtitling into non-audiovisual translation courses is still quite low, the results of this study prove that subtitling leads to the activation of various general and specific competences in the translation classroom.

**Keywords:** subtitling, didactic tool, translation curricula, translator training.

## ***Introduction***

Several scholars have focused their research on analyzing the educational benefits of including specific subtitling modules within translator training aiming at training professional subtitlers (Blane, 1996; Klerkx, 1998; Williams & Thorne, 2000; Díaz-Cintas, 2001; Neves, 2004; Bartoll & Orero, 2008; Díaz-Cintas, 2008; Kruger, 2008; Bartrina, 2009). Although some of these authors (Klerkx, 1998; Neves, 2004; Kruger, 2008) pointed out the impact that subtitling has on the acquisition and development of general translation skills and argued in favor of its inclusion in generic translation courses, there are still few studies dedicated to analyzing the use of active subtitling in non-audiovisual translation courses. Some of the researchers who introduced specific subtitling modules aiming at training future subtitlers (Klerkx, 1998; Neves, 2004; Kruger, 2008) argue that subtitling can be integrated to other types of translation courses. In an introductory course to subtitling, Klerkx (1998: 264) observes that subtitling activities not only provided students with basic knowledge about the characteristics of subtitling, but also had an impact on the acquisition of other translation skills. In addition, Klerkx (1998) indicates that students provided more creative solutions when subtitling than in other more conventional translation activities. Also, the spatial constraints of subtitling forced students to reformulate the source text (ST) in order to transfer the most essential part of the message. Klerkx (1998: 264) states that subtitling can be used to train students to perform a future career in the media, but it also contributes to training better translators who will not necessarily become audiovisual translators in the future. In a translation course that was held in 1999/2000 in Portugal, Neves (2004) points out that training in audiovisual translation and specifically in subtitling was already introduced. This specific training proved that the students, instead of becoming professional subtitlers, acquired certain skills that were later applied in other courses and activities of their training. According to Neves (2004), carrying out activities that involve going through the different phases of the subtitling process leads to the improvement of a wide variety of translation skills. Kruger (2008: 79) also mentions the possibility of integrating subtitling to generic translation curricula and

other courses. In this regard, Kruger (2008) adds that attention should be paid to the way in which subtitling is related to more generic training in order to take advantage of the benefits of this didactic tool in the most optimal way. In the field of generic translator training, only three relevant qualitative studies (Kiraly, 2005; Incalcaterra 2009, 2010; Beseghi, 2018), a quasi-experimental study (Talaván & Ávila-Cabrera, 2015) and a didactic proposal (Orozco, 2009) related to the use of active interlinguistic subtitling are registered. Subtitling can be integrated to generic translation curricula, either by means of a task-based approach (Orozco, 2009; Incalcaterra, 2009, 2010; Talaván & Ávila-Cabrera, 2015; Beseghi, 2018) or by means of a project-based approach (Kiraly, 2005). According to the holistic model of translation competence proposed by PACTE group (2011), these studies prove that subtitling allows students to develop different subcompetences, such as bilingual subcompetence (Talaván & Ávila-Cabrera, 2015) extralinguistic subcompetence (Beseghi, 2018), strategic subcompetence (Kiraly, 2005; Incalcaterra, 2009, 2010; Talaván & Ávila-Cabrera, 2015), instrumental subcompetence (Beseghi, 2018), translation knowledge subcompetence (Incalcaterra, 2009, 2010). In the same way, the development of the translation competence is influenced by psychophysiological elements like critical thinking, synthesis capability, creativity and motivation (Incalcaterra, 2009, 2010).

In the following empirical descriptive study, an overview on the use of subtitling in the translation classroom in Spain is presented and its level of implementation in non-audiovisual translation courses is also analyzed. This descriptive study can be divided into two phases. The first phase consists of observing and analyzing generic translation curricula in Spain. During this phase the available curricula from different Spanish universities are examined in order to collect data on the use of subtitling as a didactic tool in the translation classroom. The second phase intends to verify that the data extracted from curricula correspond to the actual inclusion of subtitling into generic translation courses in Spain. Throughout this phase individual questionnaires with closed-ended questions are filled by both translation trainers and trainees in order to obtain quantitative data on the actual use of subtitling in the translation classroom. These questionnaires also allow trainers and students to express their opinions on the object of study.

### ***Analysis of genetic translation curricula in Spain***

In order to start measuring the degree of inclusion of subtitling into generic translation courses at Spanish universities, the first step to take in the descriptive study presented throughout this article is to analyze the translation curricula of the BA in Translation and Interpreting in Spain. Translation curricula are very heterogeneous in terms of names assigned to translation courses, the didactic contents offered by each university and its distribution within the curricula. Many Spanish universities still maintain the distinction between general and specialized translation courses. On the one hand, general translation courses are compulsory in most universities. On the other hand, some specialized courses are mandatory, while others are elective; even in some curricula all specializations are elective (e.g. University of Granada). In other cases, some universities' curricula only contain one compulsory specialization, whereas the rest of the specialized courses are elective (e.g. University of Vigo and University of Valladolid). In contrast, other universities offer different training itineraries that allow students to specialize in one specific discipline (e.g. Complutense University of Madrid). Exceptionally, at the University of the Basque Country there is no distinction between general and specialized subjects, since all the competences are integrated into courses called Translation Practices. Apart from its diversity, another aspect that can be observed when analyzing the translation curricula from Spanish universities is that many of them do not specify the types of texts to be translated throughout the different courses. In many cases, the teaching plan for each course only includes the competences, the learning outcomes, the course content and the evaluation system, but there are no explicit references to the didactic materials and the texts to be used in the classroom. However, in some generic translation curricula it is mentioned that the contents of the course will be based on "general texts" or "non-specialized texts in standard language". Different types of texts such as narrative (history books, biographies, short stories), argumentative (opinion articles, complaint letters), descriptive (tourist guides, description of characters in novels, etc.), instructive (manuals) and informative texts on different topics are also mentioned. In several generic translation courses, especially in those which are taught during the third or the fourth year

of the BA, students also worked with the translation of literary texts (novels, plays, essays, etc.), journalistic texts (news, reports, biographies, articles, etc.) and advertising texts. In some translation courses it is stated that only journalistic or literary texts are used in the classroom. To a lesser extent, there are also references to semi-specialized texts on different subjects such as technical, scientific, commercial, administrative, biosanitary and even legal. Although very few references to audiovisual translation are registered, in some generic translation curricula it is stated that students will translate audiovisual texts. Audiovisual materials will be used as a didactic support throughout the course and there is even explicit reference to working with film scripts (Autonomous University of Barcelona) or audiovisual products (Pompeu Fabra University). For instance, at the University of the Basque Country there is a fourth-year course which focuses on the translation of audiovisual texts (subtitling) which are combined with other didactic contents regarding scientific and technical and literary texts. In the same line, audiovisual translation contents are also integrated together with literary and advertising texts in a very same course at the University of Valencia. Finally, in a second-year generic translation course at the University of Vigo, a whole unit is devoted to the introduction of audiovisual translation (with a special focus on cinema). This unit covers the history and the techniques of AVT and explicit mention is made to the use of dubbing and subtitling throughout the course.

From these initial observations of the subject of study, it can be concluded that the degree of use of subtitling as a didactic tool in generic translation curricula in Spain is unspecific, which implies that its inclusion into the translation classroom tends to be quite low. The questionnaires that allow to complete the descriptive study contribute to confirm the data obtained from the curricula and also provide information on the opinions of trainers and students regarding the usefulness of subtitling in this didactic context. The questionnaires were administered to both trainees and trainers of the Translation and Interpreting degree from a total of 18 different universities: Pompeu Fabra University, Autonomous University of Barcelona, University of Vic-Open University of Catalonia, University of the Basque Country, University of Vigo, Complutense University of Madrid, University of Valencia, University of Alicante, University of Malaga, University of

Granada, Autonomous University of Madrid, University of Murcia, University of Pablo de Olavide, University of the Basque Country, University of las Palmas de Gran Canaria, University of Jaume I, University of Salamanca and University of Cordoba.

### ***Results obtained from questionnaires on the use of subtitling in the context of translator training in Spain***

The data obtained by means of the questionnaires to both translation trainers and students can be divided into two main sections. The first section includes questions that intend to find out to what extent trainers have used subtitling in translation curricula and it analyzes its degree of inclusion in Spain. In this part the use of other didactic tools such as audiovisual products and dubbing is also measured. The second section presents data which are related to the participants' opinions, expectations and preferences concerning the inclusion of subtitling into the translation classroom. In some cases, both groups of respondents were asked the same questions about their preferences concerning didactic practices in the translation classroom in order to establish comparisons between their opinions. However, questions related to the didactic potential of subtitling or the competences and skills involved in it were only answered by the group of trainers. It is also important to mention that the questionnaires were fulfilled by 120 translation trainers and 570 students who belonged to the different Spanish universities that have already been cited.

Concerning the use of subtitling as an active tool in the translation classroom, most of the trainers (69.2%) state that they do not have included subtitling activities into generic translation courses. Some trainers (10.8%) have used subtitling as a non-assessable activity, others (10%) introduced it as an assessable activity, whereas 10% of them included both assessable and non-assessable subtitling activities into the translation classroom. As for other types of Audiovisual Translation such as dubbing or voiceover, the obtained results are very similar to those of subtitling. Only 24.2% of the trainers have introduced dubbing or voiceover into generic translation courses, whereas 75.4% of the respondents had never used this type of activities in their translation classes. Finally, trainers were also asked if they had carried out activities with audiovisual products such as video watching,

movie script translation or publicity. In this case, most trainers (70%) state that they introduced activities which involved the use of audiovisual materials but were not strictly related to subtitling nor dubbing. In comparison to subtitling or dubbing activities, it can be observed that trainers are in favor of using audiovisuals in generic translation courses but prefer not to relate their teaching activities to any AVT discipline. Finally, trainers were expected to provide data about the use of subtitling in other translation courses such as Language for translators, Scientific & Technical Translation, Literary Translation, Theory of Translation and Legal Translation. The course into which subtitling was included the most was Language for translators, as 13.3% of the trainers confirm that they used this tool in their language lessons. Subtitling was integrated to Scientific & Technical Translation and Literary Translation by 5.8% and 5% of the respondents respectively. Only 1.6% carried out subtitling activities in a course about Theory of Translation, whereas none of the trainers used it to teach Legal Translation.

After providing an overview on the degree of inclusion of subtitling and other AVT activities in the translation classroom in Spain, the next objective is to present both trainers' and students opinions concerning the use of this didactic tool in a non-audiovisual translation context. The data that will be discussed in the following paragraphs intend to provide relevant information on students' and trainers opinions and expectations about including subtitling into current and future translation curricula. Regarding the analysis of the data, it is essential to bear in mind that the questions which are ordinal and exclusive are ordered by intensity according to a Likert scale of five values: 1. Not at all, 2. A Little, 3. To some extent, 4. Quite a lot, 5. A lot. This type of questions allows to collect participants' opinions concerning different factors that affect the didactic potential of subtitling such as usefulness or feasibility of the activities together with the respondents' preferences regarding these didactic practices. In this way, a set of questions and their correspondent answers will be discussed as follows.

As for the didactic potential of using subtitling, trainers were asked if they considered it useful to integrate subtitling to generic translation courses. According to the obtained data, the highest result corresponded to 39.2% of trainers that consider subtitling to be "quite

useful". Also, 30% of them thought that it was useful "to some extent". Consequently, 11.6% selected the option "5. A lot", whereas only 10% and 9.2% chose the values "2. A little" and "1. Not at all". It can be observed that many trainers agree that subtitling can be very useful to train students in the context of generic translation courses. However, the number of teachers who express a more neutral opinion is also representative. From the analysis of these data, it is evident that very few teachers consider that subtitling is not a useful tool and trainers' opinions are mostly divided into positive and neutral values. Another aspect that was studied was their opinion about designing subtitling activities themselves. Thus, trainers were expected to tell if they considered it feasible to design their own subtitling activities to be included into the translation classroom. As in the previous question, opinions seem to be divided into neutral and positive answers. However, in this case the number of negative opinions has remarkably increased. Although 28.3% of the trainers show a neutral vision towards this aspect and even 27.5% consider it quite feasible for them to design subtitling materials for the class, it is relevant to remark that 23.3% opted for option "2. A little" and 11.6% selected option "1. Not at all". Despite the fact that these data show that opinions concerning design of materials are very diverse, quite a lot of teachers show a negative opinion towards the design of their own subtitling materials, while only 9,1% consider it very feasible for them to prepare this type of activities. After this observation, trainers were expected to think of a hypothetical situation on which they would be given all the necessary subtitling materials to make use of them in generic translation courses and therefore, reflect on the decision of including subtitling into the translation classroom. In this case, an increase of positive opinions towards the use of subtitling has been registered, as 37.5% of respondents consider it more feasible to integrate subtitling activities once the didactic materials have been provided to them. There is still a high percentage of trainers who express a neutral attitude, 25% of trainers selected option "3. To some extent". The number of trainers who consider "very feasible" to use subtitling in their classes under this condition has also increased in comparison to the previous items: 17.5% chose option "5. A lot", whereas only 14.2% and 5.8% selected values "2. A little" and "1. Not at all".



Concerning the respondents' preferences about the use of subtitling in generic translation courses, trainers were asked if they thought that their students would like to carry out subtitling activities in the translation classroom. In this case, the number of positive opinions is clearly higher than the neutral and negative ones. Most trainers agree that their students would prefer to perform subtitling activities in non-audiovisual contexts, 44.3% state that they would prefer it "quite a lot" and 25.8% think that they would like it "a lot". In comparison to previous questions, the percentage of neutral opinions is still representative, as 25.8% selected option "3. To some extent". In spite of this, the number of negative opinions has clearly decreased, only 3.3% and 0.8% of the trainers considered that their students would like "a little" or "not at all" to subtitle audiovisual texts in the translation course. In the same way, students themselves were asked if they would like to perform subtitling activities in generic translation courses. Translation trainees show a clear positive opinion towards subtitling, 39.5% and 30.4% selected options "4. Quite a lot" and "5. A lot". The percentage of neutral opinions corresponds to 15.3%, while a total of 14.8% show a negative opinion. Based on these data, trainees' opinions are very similar to trainers' ones, as both groups think that students would have a clearly positive attitude towards the use of subtitling in the classroom. Apart from expressing a clear preference for performing subtitling activities in generic translation courses, students also stated that they would appreciate doing more subtitling activities during the whole BA degree. The collected data indicate that 69.9% of the trainees would like to carry out either "quite a lot" or "a lot" more subtitling activities during the BA degree and not only in generic translation courses. In addition to their preferences, both groups were expected to think about the fact that subtitling could increase students' motivation. The opinions of both groups concerning trainees' motivation tend to be very similar as well and both of them show very positive opinions. The most selected value was "4. Quite a lot", 40.8% of trainers and 37% of trainees chose this option. In the same way, 19.2% and 28.6% argue that subtitling activities would increase "a lot" students' motivation. Moreover, the number of neutral opinions has also increased in comparison to the previous values, as now it corresponds to 29.2% in the case of trainers and 24% in the case of trainees. According to these data, it can be inferred that the number of

both trainers and trainees that show negative opinions is very low (10.8% and 10.4%). At the end of the questionnaires, respondents were asked to provide, if they wish, their personal opinion and make open observations about the topic. This allows to obtain further information about the subject of study while obtaining qualitative data that complement the quantitative results that are being presented. Some students took the opportunity to express their personal opinions and wrote comments talking about their preferences about didactic practices in the translation classroom.

These testimonials have been translated from Spanish into English in order to facilitate comprehension for the readers.

**Observation 1:** I think that subtitling can be a very motivating translation activity for students. It can be included into generic translation courses or even into a separate course on subtitling (and an introduction to dubbing, if possible).

**Observation 2:** If I had not taken a course on Audiovisual Translation during the fourth and last year of my BA, I would not have learned how to subtitle. I think that having knowledge about the subtitling process is important for a future career as translator. Subtitling should have been integrated to the curricula much earlier.

**Observation 3:** I am a fourth-year student and I am currently taking a course on Audiovisual Translation. I think that starting using subtitling in generic translation courses would increase trainees' motivation. Also, it would help decreasing the frustration we feel when we face AVT courses and we do not know how to proceed.

**Observation 4:** At my university we do not learn about Audiovisual Translation until the third year.

**Observation 5:** I think that subtitling can help us become more capable of translating concepts instead of words. It would also help us be more concise when translating and learn how to summarize. I think that it would be useful for us to perform at least two subtitling activities in generic translation courses before taking a specialized course in Audiovisual Translation.

**Observation 6:** In our curricula we already have the possibility of taking two courses in AVT, subtitling, accessibility, etc. So, I would not find it necessary to include these activities into generic courses, unless they are presented as different activities aiming at developing creativity, reformulation or analysis and synthesis capability.

**Observation 7:** There is not any course on Audiovisual Translation at my university. I think that I would like to specialize in AVT in the future, so I am looking for courses and masters outside my university. I think that if I had the opportunity of performing these activities during my BA, it would be easier for me to make this decision.

**Observation 8:** There is not any course on Audiovisual Translation at my university.

These comments reflect that translation trainees consider that subtitling activities are a resource that can be interesting and motivating not only in generic translation courses, but also in other types of courses of the BA degree. Moreover, these testimonials also verify the fact that translation curricula in Spain are very diverse, and therefore not all students have the chance to acquire knowledge about Audiovisual Translation. Some of them criticize the lack of training in audiovisual translation at their universities, while others think that the AVT contents are introduced too late into the curricula. In addition, they argue that if they had had a previous incursion into the field of subtitling, they would have a more complete background when taking a specialized course on Audiovisual Translation. Also, several students highlight the importance of learning how to subtitle in order to be able to build a professional career in this field. Others argue that, in case of including this type of activities in general translation subjects, they should be complementary and they should not be predominant over the rest of the didactic content. In spite of that, they also highlight the benefits of subtitling to focus on specific aspects of the translation process such as rephrasing, creativity and synthesis capability, which helps them avoid a literal or word-for-word translation.

In relation to this, trainers explained the reasons that prevent them from including subtitling into generic translation courses. First of all, they were provided with a list of factors and they were asked to assign them a score from 0 to 5 depending on the importance that each

of the suggested factors had for them. From their point of view, specific training in subtitling was the factor that obtained the highest score (4.2). They also considered that the time available within the course to perform this kind of activities was a quite important factor and it was given a score of 4. Other aspects such as the level of difficulty of the activity and the classroom equipment were rated with a score of 3.7 each. As well as the students, trainers were also given the possibility of writing their personal opinions and make open observations about the subject of study. Some of them left observations regarding the influence of the factors previously discussed and it is relevant for the study to pay attention to them. These testimonials have also been translated from either Spanish or Catalan into English. These trainers claim that the lack of time within their courses, the lack of knowledge about subtitling and the low level of translation expertise of their students are some of the reasons why they do not use this didactic tool in their generic translation classes.

**Observation 1:** I do not integrate subtitling (even though I think it allows the student to develop skills that are useful for many other translation specializations) due to the curriculum (which already includes AVT courses) and the time available in my course.

**Observation 2:** I do not use subtitling because I do not have specific knowledge in that field.

**Observation 3:** I find it very interesting the use of subtitling in the translation classroom, but I am not proficient enough to integrate it myself.

**Observation 4:** In my opinion, it is very difficult to introduce training in audiovisual translation in a four-month generic translation course for two reasons: (1) students' translation expertise is still very low and (2) time constraints within the course.

**Observation 5:** The aim of the generic translation courses is not to translate audiovisual products. I use subtitling and dubbing as a didactic support different from a written text. In this case, the objective is not to learn the technical requirements because this needs to be done in a specialized course.

**Observation 6:** I think that audiovisual translation can be used in a generic translation course, but it should not focus only on AVT. A module of subtitling could be included into the course because I am sure that it is interesting for the students but it should not focus on specific requirements because the objective of a generic translation course is to acquire more general translation skills.

Finally, trainers were asked to select the specific translation competences and consequently, the generic competences that they thought that trainees could acquire and/or develop by means of subtitling activities. According to the the model of translation competence proposed by the PACTE group (2011), trainers were expected to select the subcompetence/s that they believed that students could develop to a greater extent when performing subtitling activities in the translation classroom. The most frequently indicated subcompetences by trainers were the instrumental subcompetence (54.2%), the extra-linguistic subcompetence (48.3%) and the strategic subcompetence (48.3%). These results indicate that trainers give especial importance to the potential of subtitling when it comes to developing operational knowledge related to information and communication technologies (instrumental subcompetence), acquiring declarative knowledge that can be bicultural, encyclopedic and thematic (extralinguistic subcompetence) and expanding operational knowledge focused on executing the translation process effectively and solving problems (strategic subcompetence). On the contrary, the subcompetences that were less frequently selected by trainers were the subcompetence of knowledge about translation (38.3%), the bilingual subcompetence (32.5%) and the psychophysiological subcompetence (6.6%). Therefore, from these results it can be deduced that the specific translation subcompetences that would be developed to a greater extent are: management of computer tools, knowledge of foreign cultures and civilizations and mastery of translation techniques. It is also important to mention that 26.7% of trainers agree that subtitling allows trainees to develop all the subcompetences mentioned above. As for generic competences that can be developed by means of subtitling activities, trainers agree that subtitling can develop the following competences to a greater extent: problem solving (81.7%), decision

making (77.5%), analysis and synthesis capability (75%), creativity (68.3%) and knowledge about ICT related to the field of study (62.5%).

### ***Conclusion***

The questionnaire results together with the curricula analysis allow to measure the degree of inclusion of subtitling activities in non-audiovisual translation courses in Spain. The results obtained by means of this descriptive study illustrate that the use of subtitling in generic translation courses at Spanish universities is still quite low. It should be taken into account that there is a low percentage of translator trainers who already include subtitling in their translation classes, whereas most of them have not used this tool in their curricula yet. Apart from translation courses, it can also be stated that active subtitling is not frequently used in other courses which are not directly related to audiovisual translation. Even though neither subtitling nor dubbing are frequently used in the translation classroom, audiovisual products tend to be highly used in this pedagogical context.

Despite the fact that the use of subtitling is still quite low, it is considered to be a useful tool for the development of the translation competence and most trainers agree on the fact that the use of this type of tasks would increase their students' motivation in the translation classroom. Moreover, both trainers and trainees themselves recognize that students would appreciate doing more subtitling activities during the bachelor's degree. However, trainers' opinions reveal that the lack of subtitling training is a key factor that prevents them from using it. Furthermore, they state that they would be willing to include subtitling in their translation classes if they were provided with the necessary didactic materials. In contrast, those trainers who have already included this type of activities into the translation classroom show a more positive attitude towards its use, but they find it difficult to design new subtitling activities for their courses. It is important to remark that those trainers who have not used subtitling yet do not have a clearly negative opinion against its usefulness for the development of the translation competence, but their answers show a more neutral perspective instead. Translation trainers agree that subtitling can have an impact on the students' development of both generic and specific competences.

This descriptive study presents an overview of the degree of inclusion of subtitling into translation curricula in Spain. By means of the questionnaires, it also collects relevant opinions and expectations about active subtitling and its didactic benefits in the translator training context and the obtained results allow understanding the reasons why subtitling has not been used to a greater extent in this didactic context yet.

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