Proposals on the Didactics of Translation for Undergraduate Students

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The didactics involved in the teaching of translation provide students with skills to improve their translation skills, allowing them to acquire knowledge and understanding of the auditive, oral, reading, and writing aspects, optimizing the language systems in terms of phonetics, grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. The objective of the present research is to analyze the proposals on the didactics of teaching translation in higher education at the undergraduate level. The methodology that has been developed responds to basic research with a quantitative approach. For this purpose, we worked with argumentative criticism by analyzing the state of the art on the subject. Thus, the approach (introduction), development (arguments), and conclusions are presented. As a synthesis, the didactics of translation have an updated proposal that improves the interpretative and communicative process; employing the current approaches, the translating competencies guide the teaching proposals integrally and reflexively.

Keywords: didactics, translation, higher education, translator education

INTRODUCTION

Since the middle of the 20th century, the development of the translation process has gained autonomy and a renewal in terms of the translator's work method (Hurtado, 2020). The transformation in recent years has been very diverse, so translators have aimed to propose a classification of resources to deploy the competencies that help to meet the challenges of learning (Enbaeva and Plastinina, 2021). Thus, different formats and resources have been developed for the development of automated translation; however, teachers are skeptical about the effectiveness and quality of the results so they make examinations and guidance considering the new implications for the teaching of pedagogical didactics (Sangmin, 2021).

In the studies of González and Rico (2021), they argued that the proposals of translation didactics provide significant changes in the university environment since they are motivated by the contribution of technology, mechanization, and the introduction of different technological resources of artificial intelligence. Thus, through pedagogical innovation, future translators and interpreters are provided with suitable training to optimize decision-making in the process of innovation and activity in the translation process. By providing new techniques and tools to the student, a critical vision of proofreading is kept,

adapting to the requirements needed and considering the productive conditions of translation. Similarly, Hurtado et al (2019) argued that the training of translators should develop translation skills that benefit linguistic competence, taking into account the specialization, performance, and globalization demanded by the market. The motivation of professional translators should be based on guiding and developing translation programs with designs that enable an evaluation of diagnostic tests and a formative evaluation through teaching materials and manuals that provide professional quality.

Meanwhile, Carabajal (2017) in the project "Propuesta didáctica para abordar la traducción técnica" seeks to describe collaborative work activities based on projects carried out by students in the Technical Translation course. The traditional methodology of translation didactics implied that the teacher designed translation exercises and students translated fragments, individually, and proceeded to terminology research; on the contrary, the author seeks to address the translation of technical texts and acquire translation competence, through the use of a different methodology, designed in bimonthly blocks and these composed of tasks, where students will develop the activities collaboratively.

Similarly, there is the study by Trovato (2020), who proposed the use of the project-based learning approach in the teaching of specialized translation, where he conceives the project as a broad and integrating element that is consistent with professional practice. Furthermore, according to the author, within the so-called translation project, attention should be paid not only to the stages involved in the writing and translation itself, but also to the translation process, deadlines, resources, etc., and this is aimed at producing a concrete product. This proposal includes the stage of approaching the linguistic problem in which the teacher makes the students aware of the differences or similarities of the working languages and a linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic analysis is carried out. There is also the terminology and content documentation, in which lexicographic resources are sought and the subject matter and terminology of the text are documented. There is also the translation assignment and distribution of tasks and roles for the translation itself, in which some take on the role of translators, revisers, and project supervisors. Finally, there is the sharing and evaluation, a stage in which a team member talks about the development of the project, including an explanation of problems and their solutions; and the evaluation of the translation process.

Another research that addresses project-based work in the Scientific and Technical Translation classroom is by Castillo (2018) who recognizes that the main objective of project-based learning is the acquisition of translating competence. The author divided the subject into 5 units with thematic content and established the following phases: organization phase where students are organized into groups of 5-6 and roles are divided (project manager, documentalist, translator, reviewer, and evaluator); assignment and project realization phase where they receive the text to translate and are asked for the quotation and deadline, and proceed with the translation; and exhibition phase where the groups present their project and the translation.

On the other hand, according to Méndez's research (2022), the presence of professional translators has an expansion with the cultural, commercial, and touristic features that are evidenced in the current labor market. Thus, the analysis of translators' development has evolved considering the transmission of students' learning and development as a product of the didactic act. Moreover, taking into account the contributions of Vega et al. (2021), the approaches to teaching in translation should be focused on teaching by learning objectives, a functionalist approach, a cognitive and psycholinguistic approach, an approach based on the balance of conscious analysis and subliminal assimilation, learning centered on the translation process, situational learning, task-based learning, a socio-constructivist approach, etc.

Within this context, Pacheco (2019) presented a proposal for a task-based didactic activity, which includes the different stages of the translation process and involves the development of three tasks: research, translation, and revision. Although these tasks can be performed in class, the didactic activity foresees that those are performed before the class, so that the projected time in class is not used for the acquisition of extra-linguistic knowledge and, on the contrary, would increase the time for the analysis of the tasks, as well as the independence of the translators in training. This proposal implies the development of the didactic activity collaboratively in classes where the teacher assumes the role of mediator and the students a participatory role in the production of the meaning of the text. It also allows all team members to collaborate and actively participate in each stage, encouraging critical analysis and debate.

Development

Translation didactics aims at training translators (Abdel-Latif, 2019) and new approaches to competency-based teaching transcend translation training. For his part, Carabajal (2017) argues that didactics of translation should focus on the development and improvement of translator competence and that the implementation of theory and practice in translation classes represents a challenge. Therefore, it is important to know some methodological proposals that have been applied in the translation classroom and that, depending on the context, can be replicated in other educational spaces to ensure that students develop translation competence.

The didactics of translation should not be limited to a transfer of words from one language to another but should be a set of cultural and linguistic adaptations by which an understandable message with an impact on the audience is provided (Abreus, 2020). For this reason, there is a need to become familiar with the rules of the competently written language of a foreign language (Baker, 2001). The proposals of translation didactics should be based on a deep knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and linguistic structures which provide cultural conventions through approaches and techniques from a literal translation to the prioritization of fluency and comprehension of the message in the target language (Tinedo, 2021). Therefore, it covers different fields such as literary, technical, medical, legal, and other translations.

The training of translators has been influenced by the theoretical aspects developed in Translatology, as well as by the various translations consolidated in the labor market and collateral activities. In terms of pedagogical approaches, there is the transmissionist approach, which focuses on the teacher and is oriented toward the product; there is also the approach centered on student learning and oriented toward the process (Hurtado, 2020). On the other hand, there is the socio-constructivist approach and the action research approach which are incorporated into the training and development of collaborative translation (Sanchez, 2019). As changes have occurred in the technological, social, and cultural aspects, new forms of collaborative work have been developed to optimize the translation process. Thus, collaborative translation is currently important in the training of translators (Sanchez, 2019).

For Trybisz (2019) in the training of translators, the competencies that the translator possesses, both linguistic and extra-linguistic, are identified so that he/she can master the levels of analysis and the encyclopedic knowledge of the language. In this sense, the process of comprehension, deverbalization, and re-expression must be followed. Likewise, the introduction of characteristic elements in the teaching of foreign languages must be consigned. According to Cerezo (2020), didactic proposals in translation should adhere to general pedagogical models which are contextualized from traditional pedagogy to reflect and highlight the importance of the contents in text comprehension, written expression for text production, oral comprehension that involves the understanding of oral interpretation and oral expression that develops the skills that allow optimizing oral interpretations so that they are precise and fluent.

De Luxán (2017) states that a translation can be considered both as a version, adaptation, rewriting, or retranslation of a previously written text; it is a transfer from a language-culture "A" to a language-culture "B". Considering these concepts, translation cannot be considered as a mere transfer of a message from one language to another, but implies the transfer of explicit or implicit denotations and connotations of the source text, considering the context, the linguistic conventions, and the culture of the target language. On the other hand, didactics involves two approaches: one is considered as instruction and the other focuses more on learning; the latter approach has been predominant in recent years and under this view, didactics seeks to identify the teaching-learning processes of each student to propose relevant actions (Imbernón, 2022).

As for the method of grammar translation, we have the method of teaching and learning of the English language which allows respecting the textual and normative characteristics of the language. Thus, it is considered the most effective method used by students (Spahiu and Kryeziu, 2021; Ricra 2019). On the other side, there is also the direct method which proposes translation using actions and demonstrations of what is to be learned. Thus, direct associations are made by considering gestures and visual materials that will optimize communication without the use of the mother tongue (Ricra, 2019). Another method is the audio-linguistic method which emphasizes the formation of phonetic reproductions allowing them to imitate and reinforce lexical and grammatical contents (Richards and Rodgers, 2015).

CONCLUSIONS

The didactics of translation is a complex knowledge that plays an important role in the training of professionals who are aware of linguistic and cultural complexities, allowing them to contribute significantly to an interconnected world. Access to global information is also a benefit provided by translation didactics. Access to a range of knowledge is valuable in enabling students to meet the challenges and prepare them for the globalized work environment.

Among the main advantages of the proposals of the didactics of translation is that it provides competent training to the professionals guaranteeing the necessary skills to have effective communication through different languages and cultures, being fundamental in the professional fields. On the other hand, it has to provide a promotion of intercultural understanding by encouraging and allowing the student to explore and understand the cultural and linguistic aspects of different languages. In this way, a bridge between communities and appreciation of diversity is developed. It also develops complex cognitive skills such as analysis, synthesis, decision-making, and problem-solving which can be transferable to other aspects of life.

Finally, it is understood that the proposals on the didactics of the translation process have focused on the aspects of written translation, the interpretation of contents, translation for accessibility, and localization. In this sense, they have challenged the curricular system to optimize the training of translators, as well as the methodological aspects and research problems to face in the field of study.

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