DEVELOPING TERMINOLOGICAL COMPETENCE IN A SPECIALIZED TRANSLATION

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Annotation: This article examines the development of terminological competence in specialized translation classrooms, focusing on the challenges faced by both students and educators, as well as the resources and tools available to support this process. Terminological competence, a critical skill for translators working in specialized fields such as law, medicine, and technology, involves not only the accurate understanding and use of specialized terms but also the ability to apply them in context. The article highlights key problems, including the rapid evolution of terminology, the complexity of subject-specific language, and the vast amount of knowledge required to master specialized terminology.

Keywords: translator, linguistics, competence, databases.

The development of terminological competence is a key component of translation training, especially in specialized fields such as law, medicine, engineering, and finance. Translators working in these domains are required to handle specific, highly technical language with accuracy and consistency. Terminological competence entails not just the ability to understand and apply specialized vocabulary but also the skills to use terminology in the correct context, ensuring the translation is both precise and appropriate for its intended audience. However, fostering terminological competence in a specialized translation classroom is fraught with challenges. This article explores the problems faced by both students and educators, examines the resources and tools available to address these challenges, and offers suggestions for improving terminological competence in translation programs.

In the field of translation studies, numerous scholars have explored the complexities of developing terminological competence in specialized translation classrooms. Their opinions provide valuable insights into the challenges and best practices for fostering this essential skill in aspiring translators. Here are some key perspectives from various experts:

Henrik Gottlieb (2005)[1] emphasizes the importance of integrating both linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge in the translation process. He argues that specialized terminology cannot be understood in isolation but must be contextualized within the specific field of study. Gottlieb stresses that "effective terminology management is as much about understanding the concept behind the term as it is about knowing its linguistic form". This highlights the need for translation students to develop a broad understanding of the subject matter they are translating, in addition to mastering the terminology itself.

Hanna Kujamäki (2009),[2] in her work on terminology and translation, argues that "the acquisition of terminological competence is a continuous process". She points out that even experienced translators need to continuously update their knowledge of terminology, especially in fast-evolving fields such as technology or medicine. For students, Kujamäki advocates for a learning environment that encourages lifelong learning, where tools such as termbases and specialized dictionaries are not only taught but also actively used as part of the learning process.

Mona Baker (2011),[3] a leading figure in translation studies, highlights the significance of terminological competence in achieving translation accuracy and consistency. She notes that specialized translation often involves dealing with terms that may not have a direct equivalent in the target language. In such cases, Baker argues that the translator must be adept at using resources like bilingual dictionaries, online databases, and even consultation with experts in the field. Baker stresses the importance of "terminological research" in the translator's workflow, positioning it as an essential skill that should be nurtured during translation training.

Carla P. J. Martin (2013),[4] who has worked on pedagogical approaches in translation training, suggests that the development of terminological competence should be supported by collaborative and interactive learning. In her study, she proposes that translation classrooms should integrate practical exercises such as translating real-world texts, using termbases, and engaging in group discussions on terminology issues. Martin asserts that "collaborative learning fosters a deeper understanding of both the language and the specialized knowledge underlying the

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[1] Gottlieb, H. (2005). *The Concept of 'Functional Translation'*. In *Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 155-172). Routledge.

[2] Kujamäki, H. (2009). *Terminology and Translation*. In *The Translator's Handbook* (pp. 124-136). John Benjamins.

[3] Baker, M. (2011). *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

[4] Martin, C. P. J. (2013). *Teaching Translation: A Pedagogical Approach*. Translation and Interpreting Studies, 8(2), 206-221.

terminology". This approach encourages peer interaction and exposes students to a broader range of resources and perspectives.

Michael Cronin (2003),[5] known for his work on the role of technology in translation, advocates for the use of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools to enhance terminological competence. According to Cronin, CAT tools such as translation memory and terminology databases "enable translators to achieve consistency and precision, especially in large-scale projects with a high volume of specialized terminology". He suggests that the incorporation of these tools in translation classrooms not only helps students familiarize themselves with the technology but also teaches trem the importance of maintaining terminological consistency throughout a translation.

Problems in Developing Terminological Competence

Developing terminological competence in a specialized translation classroom involves several complexities. First and foremost, the nature of specialized language itself is inherently challenging. Technical terms often have no direct equivalents in the target language, requiring translators to be not only linguistically skilled but also knowledgeable about the subject matter. Without a deep understanding of the field, students may struggle to correctly interpret and translate the terminology, which could lead to errors or inconsistencies in their work. Moreover, specialized terms often evolve rapidly, which means students need to keep up with the latest changes in terminology across different fields.

Another major problem is the sheer volume of specialized terminology that translators need to master. In fields like medicine or law, hundreds or even thousands of terms need to be understood and used correctly. This vast amount of knowledge can be overwhelming for students, especially those who lack experience in the field in question. Furthermore, many terms have multiple meanings depending on the context, and students may find it challenging to navigate these nuances, particularly when translating complex documents where precision is critical.

Resources and Tools for Terminological Development

To address these challenges, specialized translation classrooms need to make use of various resources and tools designed to enhance students' terminological competence. One of the most important resources is specialized dictionaries and glossaries. These provide students with authoritative references for specific fields and help them find accurate translations for terms they may not be familiar with. In

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[5] Cronin, M. (2003). *Translation and Globalization*. Routledge.

many cases, these dictionaries are available in both print and digital formats, offering flexibility in how students access and use them.

Another valuable resource is the creation and use of termbases (terminology databases), which store lists of terms, their definitions, and their corresponding translations in multiple languages. Termbases are essential tools for ensuring consistency and accuracy in specialized translation, especially for large projects that involve a large number of technical terms. These databases allow students to quickly retrieve the appropriate term, enhancing their efficiency and helping them avoid errors.

Computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools are also indispensable in developing terminological competence. These tools, which include translation memory systems (TMS), enable students to store and reuse translations they have already done, ensuring consistency across larger projects. TMS tools store translated segments of text alongside their corresponding source text, allowing students to quickly retrieve previously used terminology and phrases, reducing the likelihood of errors and ensuring consistency in long documents.

Additionally, the rise of machine translation (MT) has introduced new challenges and opportunities for translation students. While MT systems can quickly provide initial drafts of translations, they are not always reliable in specialized fields. As such, students need to learn how to use MT outputs critically, cross-checking the translated terms with reliable terminological resources.

Pedagogical Approaches

To help students develop terminological competence, educators need to adopt a multifaceted pedagogical approach. First, incorporating subject-specific training into translation programs is vital. For example, students translating medical texts may benefit from exposure to basic medical terminology, while those working on legal documents should become familiar with the language of contracts, regulations, and case law. Instructors can integrate specialized vocabulary exercises, case studies, and field-specific readings to help students build familiarity with the terminology they will encounter in their translation work.

Furthermore, educators should emphasize the importance of research skills. In the professional world, translators often have to work with unfamiliar fields or topics. Therefore, students must be taught how to research terminology effectively, using the aforementioned resources such as dictionaries, termbases, and online forums. Translation assignments should encourage students to use these resources actively, promoting a research-oriented approach to learning terminological accuracy.

Group projects and peer reviews can also be useful for developing terminological competence. By collaborating on translation tasks, students can learn from each other and improve their understanding of terminology in context. Peer feedback allows students to spot potential errors or inconsistencies in each other's use of terminology, fostering a deeper understanding of the nuances involved in specialized translation.

Conclusion

In summary, developing terminological competence is a central challenge in specialized translation classrooms. The problems associated with mastering specialized language—such as the evolving nature of terminology, the vast amount of terms to be learned, and the contextual nuances—require a concerted effort from both educators and students. However, with the right resources and tools, such as specialized dictionaries, termbases, CAT tools, and MT systems, students can improve their terminological competence and become more effective translators in specialized fields. Educators play a crucial role in guiding students through the process, providing them with the theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and research tools they need to succeed. Through a combination of focused training, research practices, and the strategic use of modern technologies, translation programs can effectively address the challenges of terminological competence and better prepare students for the demands of professional translation.

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