The Knowledge Model and the Give-And-Take of Instruction and Research: An overview of translation training programs in Argentina

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Abstract/Résumé
En Argentine, quatre modèles didactiques ont dominé la formation des traducteurs : le modèle de communication, le modèle informationnel, le modèle séquentiel et le modèle linguistique (Arrizabalaga, 2012a). Cet article a pour but, dans un premier temps, de décrire les programmes de formation des traducteurs de trois universités d’état parmi les plus renommées du pays — Université nationale de Cordoba (Cordoba), Université nationale de La Plata (Buenos Aires) et Université nationale du Comahue (Rio Negro) — de manière à 1) rassembler les sujets selon les compétences en traduction qui y sont cultivées, et 2) identifier les modèles de formation à la traduction prévalant dans chaque université. Dans un deuxième temps, il présentera le modèle de connaissance comme une gageure dans la formation des traducteurs, notamment en rapport avec le développement d’un enseignement axé sur la recherche en Traductologie. Finalement, il laissera la place à quelques réflexions sur la mise en œuvre des modèles de formation des traducteurs dans les différents niveaux de formation, à savoir : niveaux débutant, intermédiaire et avancé.

Keywords/Mots-Clés
Translation studies, training programs, didactic models, knowledge model, research

I. Preliminary words

In Argentina, the translation training arena has been dominated by four didactic models, namely the communication model, the information model, the sequential model and the linguistic model (Arrizabalaga, 2012a). Each of these models is linked with theoretical concerns on genre description, terminology, translation techniques and discourse analysis, respectively.

The communication model focuses on descriptions of generic formants at variance with cultural contexts or language register. The information model is based on terminological analysis and centers on the study of word-formation and word choice in accordance with text-types and language register. In the sequential model the role of
translation techniques is reasoned out in the steps of text composition and throughout the phases of translation commissions. In the linguistic model translation patterns are sorted out using either discourse segmentation or the classification of frequent collocations and grammar structures.

In this article, I will firstly describe the translation training programs in three of the most renowned universities country-wide, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba [National University of Córdoba, NUC], Universidad Nacional de La Plata [National University of La Plata, NULP] and Universidad Nacional del Comahue [National University of Comahue, NUCo]. With this I seek to i) group subjects according to the translation competences which are being cultivated, and ii) identify translation training models prevailing in each university.

It is important to clarify that the notion of competence I am using serves the specific purpose of identifying skills or areas of knowledge where practical abilities of trainees are tested: i) language skills in Spanish; ii) language skills in the foreign language which is part of the language pair in translation; iii) encyclopedic knowledge about the culture and history of communities speaking the foreign language (in the case of NULP, of the mother tongue as well), and iv) knowledge about Linguistics-related disciplines, such as Semantics or Terminology, and translation skills (interpretation being included in them).

Furthermore, in this article I aim to show that the four models that dominate translation training programs at Córdoba, La Plata and Comahue universities are inclined towards the cultivation of skills in both the mother tongue (see previously, i) and the foreign language (see previously, ii), to is to say, towards the construction of linguistic competence.

Secondly, I will present the knowledge model as a challenging option in the field of

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2 This is worth noticing since in TS competence has become an “umbrella” word. To a large extent, the work of Spanish translation scholar Amparo Hurtado Albir and the PACTE group has contributed to a homogeneous view of the concept and its classifications. Nevertheless, there is no uniform understanding of what competence points to in TS. Widely speaking, this is also the case with much terminology that is coined by translation scholars – technique, procedure, strategy are but three examples of that, not to mention translation types (see Arrizabalaga, 2011; Hurtado Albir, 2003; Mayoral, 1999; Moya, 2004).

3 See Appendix 1. The bar chart offers a contrastive view of the emphasis on competences in all three universities.

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2 The Knowledge Model and the Give-And-Take of Instruction and Research: ...