

# Training the Trainers: Towards a Description of Translator Trainer Competence and Training Needs Analysis

## Former les formateurs : pour une description des compétences des enseignants en traduction et une analyse des exigences de formation

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Résumé de l'article

En traductologie, de plus en plus d'études ont pour objet la formation en traduction, mais, au lieu de s'intéresser au facteur humain, elles portent en général sur les aspects impersonnels du métier tels que les activités, les procédés et le contenu. Le rôle des étudiants et stagiaires, ainsi que des enseignants et formateurs, est essentiel, car chacun participe activement aux processus d'apprentissage. Outre le fait de déplorer leurs points faibles ou d'établir toutes sortes de règles d'admission, peu a été dit en traductologie à propos des étudiants. Il faut ajouter qu'encore moins a été dit à propos des enseignants. Lorsqu'elle est abordée, la question est généralement centrée sur la nécessité pour chacun d'entre eux de faire preuve de compétences spécifiques en traduction. Si cet article s'intéresse avant tout aux enseignants tout en établissant des liens entre les nouveaux critères professionnels et le milieu de la traduction, il tente aussi d'aborder le sujet de manière plus générale de façon à illustrer la place de ceux-ci dans le vaste contexte des études supérieures comme formation professionnelle. En établissant ce contexte général, l'auteure tente de dresser le profil des enseignants en traduction selon leurs compétences et revoit brièvement dans quels domaines de la traductologie il a déjà été question de ce sujet et où il serait nécessaire de pousser davantage la discussion. L'article se termine par un survol des résultats préliminaires d'une étude lancée en Espagne qui tente d'élaborer une analyse complète des exigences de formation pour les enseignants en traduction.

# Training the Trainers: Towards a Description of Translator Trainer Competence and Training Needs Analysis

Dorothy Kelly

## 1. Introduction and Prior Remarks

There is now a relative wealth of Translation Studies literature on translator training, but it is often the case that it centres on impersonal aspects such as processes, content or activities, and ignores the human factor. There are two sets of participants in the teaching and learning process, both of whom are essential for its success: students or trainees, and teachers or trainers. Except to bemoan their supposed deficiencies, or to design elaborate entrance filters, little has been said about students and their profiles (Calvo and Arrés, 2007; Morón and Calvo, 2006). But even less has been said about teachers or trainers. In this paper, attention will focus on the latter.

First, a brief comment on terminology: some authors associate the use of the term *teacher* with traditional didactic and teacher-centred approaches and, for that reason, prefer *educator* or *facilitator*. It is important to make clear here at the outset that my use of the term does not imply such an approach, it is simply the standard term used in a multitude of situations and the most easily understood in most cases.

Secondly, it is important to situate the comments made here in their training context. Although some training does take place in other environments (in-house, continuing professional development under the auspices of professional associations, and so on), it is probably the case that the majority of those involved in translator training are full-time university lecturers. This has of course numerous implications, among which the fact that full-time university lecturers are expected to carry out a large number of other tasks which are not directly linked to teaching as such. Most university systems expect full-time lecturers to be quite heavily involved in research, and promotion and incentive schemes are usually based on reward for dedication to, and achievements in, research, whereas teaching and achievements in teaching tend inevitably to play second fiddle. University lecturers often also have heavy administrative or management responsibility at different levels, working in programme coordination, departmental management, quality assurance systems, setting up and running exchange and other mobility programmes, tutoring activities such as work placements, to name but a few. Additionally, our particular field also tends to require those who teach translation to be actively involved in professional translation practice of some kind. Whatever the system, then, it is practically impossible to find teachers who only teach.

Let us take as an illustration of what we have just mentioned, and a starting point for the remainder of our discussion some extracts from a recent advertisement for a post at a US institution, where many of the points made above are explicitly included. The highlighting is my own:

Now accepting applications for **full-time faculty** to teach [...] **a full load** [and to] gradually assume **additional academic and curricular duties**, such as:

- Serving on committees
- Directing student theses
- Conduct researching
- Acting as Program Head-Administrative duties include:
  - Advising students
  - Organizing exam sessions
  - Reviewing student applications
  - Coordinating staffing assignments
  - Participating in student recruiting events

The successful candidate will be a **highly experienced translator and/or conference interpreter ready to shift his/her primary focus to teaching, while remaining active in the profession.**

**Figure 1. Extracts from a recent advertisement for a post in a US translator training institution**

## **2. What TS Literature Has to Say About Trainer Profiles**

As I comment above, most TS literature about training is written in general terms about processes and activities, but much less about the people involved, whether they be students or teachers. What has been written about teachers (with very few exceptions) focuses mainly on their prior knowledge and experience. And indeed on only one aspect of that: professional experience as a translator is usually seen as being the essential prerequisite for successful teaching. The following three quotes deal with the issue from different angles, but all in essence make the same demand of the translator trainer: professional translation experience.

It cannot be expected that language instructors without professional translation expertise will have a professional translator self-concept themselves or that they will be able to help their translation students develop one. (Király, 1995, p. 3)

[In reply to “How should trainers be trained?”:]

Another simple answer to a simple question: teachers on a translator-training programme should spend one month in all three of the following situations:

- Working in a translation firm (either as a translator or a reviser or a terminologist)
- Working in an in-house translation service (same as above)
- Being a free-lance professional (same as above).

That should be enough for a start. And that should clearly determine on their teaching approaches.

(Gouadec, 2003, p. 13)

Il est certainement enrichissant pour les étudiants dans une école de traducteurs d’avoir pour enseignants des traducteurs professionnels, mais cela ne va pas sans inconvénient; en effet, il manque à ceux-ci une formation spécifique.

(Durieux, 1988, p. 8)

As the third quote recognizes, however, professional experience as a translator is simply not sufficient to become a professional translation teacher. Furthermore, as we have seen above, a substantial number of varied demands involving very diverse competences and skills are made simultaneously on translation teachers/translator trainers in the higher education context. The view I will adopt here is that, irrespective of other considerations, those devoting themselves to teaching or training should first and foremost be professional teachers and trainers. As is the case for other professions, I believe that there is a need for a clear description of exactly what this means. We hear much about translator competence, and now about competence-based curricular and syllabus design. In this paper I would like to attempt to outline translator trainer competence, its component parts, briefly review previous work on each of them, and offer some initial reflections on needs analysis for trainer training.

### **3. Professional Standards for Teaching in Higher Education**

In view of the complexity of the demands made on them as professionals, it is paradoxical that universities in many countries have traditionally paid little attention to teacher training. In many countries, compulsory training exists for all other levels of education, but at universities it is simply assumed that those who know, know how to teach. It is still the case in many countries that new members of teaching staff are left literally to sink or to swim in the classroom, while more attention is paid, for example, to their training as researchers in their discipline.

Fortunately, there does seem to be a strong move now in some university systems towards the introduction of initial and continuing professional development programmes, such as the postgraduate certificates in Teaching and Learning at UK institutions. In Europe in general, the European Higher Education Area, whose implementation is colloquially known as the Bologna Process, grants much higher priority and prestige to teaching than most European systems previously did, and places student learning at the centre of university activity; in so doing, it has launched a profound, if often misinformed, debate within institutions about teaching.

As an illustration of recent developments in this area, of particular interest for my purpose of attempting to define a teacher/trainer competence profile is the UK Higher Education Academy's Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education. This document is the direct result of the White Paper *The Future of Higher Education* (2003), although much of it stems from earlier work arising after the 1997 Dearing Report (*Higher Education in the Learning Society*) which insisted that teaching staff in higher education should be properly trained and accredited in matters relating to learning, teaching and assessment<sup>1</sup>. The ensuing work of the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILT) laid the groundwork for much of the content of the current standards.

The document defines “areas of activity”, “core knowledge” and “professional values” for higher education teachers, reproduced in figure 2. These three elements fit well into standard definitions of “competence”, of which I have chosen two:

a transferable, multifunctional package of knowledge, skills and attitudes that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, inclusion and employment. (Working Group “Basic skills, entrepreneurship and foreign languages”, 2003, p. 11)

Une compétence est un savoir-agir complexe résultant de l'intégration, de la mobilisation et de l'agencement d'un ensemble de capacités et d'habiletés (pouvant être d'ordre cognitif, affectif, psychomoteur ou social) et de connaissances (connaissances déclaratives) utilisées efficacement, dans des situations ayant un caractère commun. (Lasnier, 2000, p. 32)

<b>Areas of activity</b>
1. Design and planning of learning activities and/or programmes of study
2. Teaching and/or supporting student learning
3. Assessment and giving feedback to learners

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1 Implicitly stating that that was not the case at the time.

4. Development of effective environments and student support and guidance
5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and supporting learning
6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional development
<b>Core knowledge</b>
Knowledge and understanding of:
1. The subject material
2. Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
3. How students learn, both generally and in the subject
4. The use of appropriate learning technologies
5. Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching
6. The implications of quality assurance and enhancement for professional practice
<b>Professional values</b>
1. Respect for individual learners
2. Commitment to incorporating the process and outcomes of relevant research, scholarship and/or professional practice
3. Commitment to development of learning communities
4. Commitment to encouraging participation in higher education, acknowledging diversity and promoting equality of opportunity
5. Commitment to continuing professional development and evaluation of practice

**Figure 2. Summary of HEA professional standards for higher education teachers**

(Source: *The UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education*, The Higher Education Academy, [www.heacademy@ac.uk](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk))

#### **4. Applying the Standards to Translator Trainer Competence: A Tentative Approach**

In an earlier description of translator trainer competence, I suggested (Kelly, 2005, p. 151) that the different areas of competence or expertise required in order to be a competent translator trainer are:

Professional translation practice  
Translation Studies as an academic discipline  
Teaching skills

Although the first two are essential for overall translator trainer competence, they are a little like the language competence one expects of a professional translator, in that they constitute prerequisites rather than the central competence we are interested in. As in teaching in other disciplines, that central competence can be subdivided into the following “subcompetences” or areas of competence:

- *Organizational:*
  - the ability to design courses and appropriate teaching and learning activities
  - the ability to apply and manage these
  - the ability to design, apply and manage appropriate assessment activities
- *Interpersonal:*
  - the ability to work collaboratively with trainees towards their learning goals
  - the ability to work in a training team
  - the ability to act as a mentor for trainees
- *Instructional:*
  - the ability to present content and explain clearly
  - the ability to stimulate discussion and reflective thinking
  - the ability to arouse interest and enthusiasm
- *Contextual or professional:*
  - understanding of the educational context in which



- training takes place (local, national, international)
- understanding of the teaching profession
- *Instrumental:*
  - knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process

I believe that this initial approach is fully compatible with the UK HEA standards, and in this section and the next shall attempt to combine the two, as summarized in table form in Figure 3, and then proceed in Section 5 to comment briefly on the state of affairs within our discipline in general in each of the different areas covered by the standards.

HEA standards	Translator trainer competence
<i>Areas of activity</i>	
1. Design and planning of learning activities and/or programmes of study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to design courses and appropriate teaching and learning activities</li> <li>-the ability to apply and manage these</li> <li>-understanding of the educational context in which training takes place (local, national, international)</li> <li>-knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process</li> </ul>
2. Teaching and/or supporting student learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to present content and explain clearly</li> <li>-the ability to stimulate discussion and reflective thinking</li> <li>-the ability to arouse interest and enthusiasm</li> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> <li>-knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process</li> </ul>

<p>3. Assessment and giving feedback to learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to design, apply and manage appropriate assessment activities</li> <li>-knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process</li> </ul>
<p>4. Development of effective environments and student support and guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to work collaboratively with trainees towards their learning goals</li> <li>-the ability to act as a mentor for trainees</li> <li>-the ability to work in a training team</li> <li>-the ability to stimulate discussion and reflective thinking</li> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> <li>-knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process</li> </ul>
<p>5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and supporting learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Professional translation practice</li> <li>-Translation Studies as an academic discipline</li> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> </ul>
<p>6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Core knowledge</i></b></p>	
<p>Knowledge and understanding of:</p>	
<p>1. The subject material</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Professional translation practice</li> <li>-Translation Studies as an academic discipline</li> </ul>

<p>2. Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to design courses and appropriate teaching and learning activities</li> <li>-the ability to apply and manage these</li> <li>-the ability to work in a training team</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to present content and explain clearly</li> <li>-the ability to stimulate discussion and reflective thinking</li> <li>-the ability to arouse interest and enthusiasm</li> <li>-understanding of the educational context in which training takes place (local, national, international)</li> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> <li>-knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process</li> </ul>
<p>3. How students learn, both generally and in the subject</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to work collaboratively with trainees towards their learning goals</li> <li>-the ability to act as a mentor for trainees</li> <li>-the ability to present content and explain clearly</li> <li>-the ability to stimulate discussion and reflective thinking</li> <li>-the ability to arouse interest and enthusiasm</li> <li>-knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process</li> </ul>
<p>4. The use of appropriate learning technologies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process</li> </ul>

<p>5. Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to design, apply and manage appropriate assessment activities</li> <li>-knowledge of training resources of all kinds and ability to apply them appropriately and usefully to the training process</li> </ul>
<p>6. The implications of quality assurance and enhancement for professional practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Professional values</i></b></p>	
<p>1. Respect for individual learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to design courses and appropriate teaching and learning activities</li> <li>-the ability to apply and manage these</li> <li>-the ability to design, apply and manage appropriate assessment activities</li> <li>-the ability to work collaboratively with trainees towards their learning goals</li> <li>-the ability to act as a mentor for trainees</li> <li>-the ability to stimulate discussion and reflective thinking</li> <li>-the ability to arouse interest and enthusiasm</li> </ul>
<p>2. Commitment to incorporating the process and outcomes of relevant research, scholarship and/or professional practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-professional translation practice</li> <li>-Translation Studies as an academic discipline</li> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> </ul>

3. Commitment to development of learning communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the ability to work collaboratively with trainees towards their learning goals</li> <li>-the ability to work in a training team</li> <li>-the ability to act as a mentor for trainees</li> <li>-understanding of the educational context in which training takes place (local, national, international)</li> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> </ul>
4. Commitment to encouraging participation in higher education, acknowledging diversity and promoting equality of opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-understanding of the educational context in which training takes place (local, national, international)</li> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> </ul>
5. Commitment to continuing professional development and evaluation of practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-understanding of the teaching profession</li> </ul>

**Figure 3. Comparison of the HEA standards with Kelly's description of translator trainer competence (2005, p. 151)**

### **5. A Brief Review of the State of Affairs in Translation Teaching/Translator Training**

Given the space limitations for this paper, I shall only be able to offer here some examples of work carried in Translation Studies on the different areas outlined by the Higher Education Academy, with no claim to exhaustiveness<sup>2</sup>. Some areas, in particular the first

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<sup>2</sup> As has been commented by many authors, literature on training often suffers from being produced at a very local level and having little dissemination. In this sense, initiatives such as the bibliography on training drawn up by Kearns (2006b) for the IATIS Training Committee are of particular interest and it is to be hoped that it will be completed with references from other geographical and cultural areas in the near future.

area of activity (design and planning of learning activities and/or programmes of study) and the first point of core knowledge (the subject matter), much work has been done, whereas in others there is a distinct lack of material, publications or, one might venture, of interest.

### **5.1 The HEA Areas of Activity in Translation Teaching**

In the field of design and planning of learning activities for translation, the work of Hurtado (1999) and González Davies (2003, 2004) from a task-based approach inevitably stands out as the most innovative, along with Kiraly (2000) or Vienne (1994) and Gouadec (2002) from a project-based approach. From the curricular design point of view, interesting work has been carried out by CIUTI (International Permanent Conference of University Institutes of Translators and Interpreters),<sup>3</sup> by the FIT POSI project (PraxisOrientierte Studieninhalte für die Ausbildung von Übersetzern und Dolmetschern), and is currently underway at the Directorate General for Translation at the European Commission with its European Master's in Translation (EMT) project; similarly Gabr (2003/2007), Kelly (2005), Kearns (2006a) or Calvo (forthcoming) deal specifically with curricular design issues as opposed to classroom activities per se.

The issue of teaching and/or supporting student learning is dealt with in considerable depth by Kiraly (2000) and González Davies (2004), and also in earlier work by Robinson (1997/2003), which surprisingly tends to receive less attention from training specialists.

As for assessment, while it has been touched on by several authors, the overall tendency is to pay more attention to translation quality assessment (hence usually summative) than to formative assessment and giving feedback to learners. Waddington (2000) is of particular interest for the former, while some innovative work on the latter has been published by Dollerup (1994) and Way (2006).

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3 [www.ciuti.org](http://www.ciuti.org)

While it is the case that social constructivist approaches have effective learning environments at the heart of their approach, it is also true that little attention has been paid in general to student support and guidance in the specific area of translator training. Some exceptions are Calvo and Arrés (2006) and Morón and Calvo (2006) on student expectations and motivation or Calvo et al. (2007) and Vigier et al. (2007) on careers guidance for advanced translation students.

The most explicit work relating to the HEA's fifth area, the integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and supporting learning, is Colina (2003), although the issue is also touched on, for example, by Gile (1995). And much attention has been paid to the integration of professional activities with teaching by authors writing within the project-based paradigm (Vienne, 1994; Gouadec, 2002; Kiraly, 2000).

The final element, evaluation of (teaching) practice and continuing professional development has been practically ignored by Translation Studies as a discipline, and few if any specific resources are available.

## **5.2 Core Knowledge**

Moving on to core knowledge and its components, the subject matter itself, Translation Studies, is now the object of very numerous publications and the discipline has advanced substantially from the early theories. We are certainly much closer to understanding the translation process, although much work remains to be done. Interestingly, there is still a strong tendency to perpetuate the profession versus academia conflict, with much reticence on both sides. The field can, however, now be considered a relatively consolidated discipline in most countries, and there is little doubt that it covers the basics required by translator trainers in sufficient depth.

Appropriate methods for teaching and learning are well covered with regard to the basic issue of methods, although perhaps less well in the issue of methods appropriate for the particular level of the programme. Some work has been done on

this (e.g. Marco, 2004), attempting to bridge the apparent gap between task-based and project-based approaches which are often believed to be mutually exclusive, when indeed they are probably equally useful and applicable, but at different levels on different programmes and with different students.

How students learn is an area which is definitely in need of further research within Translation Studies, although Robinson (1997/2003) includes a magnificent chapter on learning, and the socio-constructivist authors also cover the subject from their particular viewpoint. Ongoing research by the PACTE group in Spain (e.g. 2000, 2003) is also attempting to understand how translator competence is acquired.

In the area of learning technologies, much has been written on translation technologies (Austermuhl, 2001; Esselink, 2000; Bowker, 2002 to name but three of the better known), but less on learning technologies or the use of translation and other technologies in translator training. Worthy exceptions are De Caesaris (1996), Kenny (1999), Pym et al. (2003) or Bolaños (2002) for translation, or De Manuel and Sandrelli (2007) for interpreting.

Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching have received little attention, with the exception of a few postgraduate and doctoral dissertations, which deserve greater dissemination. The action research carried out by De Manuel (2006) in interpreter training or La Rocca in translator training (2007), for example, begins to touch on this issue.

Finally, the implications of quality assurance and enhancement for professional (teaching) practice are dealt with indirectly through the issue of the accreditation of translators or of training programmes. There has been much debate within CIUTI on this question, and the EMT project also addresses it indirectly, as did the 2006 edition of the annual Rennes conference on training. Gabr (2003/2007) also attempts to apply total quality assurance principles to translator training programmes. Little has been done directly in the field of quality assurance of actual translation teaching practice and its implications, including enhancement of practice.



### 5.3 Professional Values

The third major HEA area is that of professional values. This broad area is where fewest studies have been carried out in the field of Translation, although there are some interesting recent developments, such as De Manuel (2006), or the panel on training organized at the recent Forum on Translation and Social Commitment in Granada in 2007.

Respect for individual learners is probably best covered by Robinson (1997/2003) and by Calvo and Arrés (2006), in that they avoid the tendency present in much other literature on teaching and learning to assume that there is one correct way to teach and learn applicable to all students, a premise which is rightly questioned by these authors.

Moving on to the various areas of commitment for professional teachers, the first—to incorporating the process and outcomes of relevant research, scholarship and/or professional practice—is an area well covered in our field by Colina (2003) from the point of view of research and scholarship and, from the professional practice perspective, by authors writing within the project-based paradigm.

Socio-constructivist authors (Kiraly, 2000; González Davies 2003, 2004; La Rocca, 2007), together with others such as Monzó (2002), writing on the socialization of apprentice translators, deal with the issue of commitment to the development of learning communities, although more explicit work in this field would be welcome.

The fourth professional value, a commitment to encouraging participation in higher education, acknowledging diversity and promoting equality of opportunity, is a complex one, perhaps the most explicitly ideological of all, and indeed it could be seen to clash with some of the givens of traditional approaches to translator and particularly interpreter training, based on the need for strong prior selection filters for admission to programmes. There is also a strong tendency not to consider translating and interpreting as an integral part of higher education, or to posit

that it is a special case. For further debate on this, see Sawyer (2004) for interpreting and Kearns (2006a) for translation.

The last element included in the HEA document is commitment to continuing professional development and evaluation of practice: a value at the heart of trainer training as a field of study. It must be said that there is very little systematic training, whether it be initial or continuing, available for trainers in the specific field of translation. Some initiatives, such as the regular Consortium for Translator Teacher Training (CTTT) events in Rennes or in Tarragona, or the annual summer course organized by Maria González Davies at Vic (Spain), which she hopes to convert into a full Master's programme, are worthy exceptions to this rule. As for interpreting, the ETI at Geneva now runs a postgraduate e-learning programme to train interpreter trainers.

Encouragingly, despite the number of areas in which much work is still to be done, there is growing recognition in the field that trainer training is an area of concern. The last section of this paper describes one initially small-scale project currently underway.

## **6. Trainer Competence: An Example of a Needs Analysis Study**

Standard recommendations for the design of training courses state that the first step is to establish learning outcomes, taking into the account social or market needs. Existing and especially new translator training programmes clearly generate a need for specialized trainers, a need rarely attended by specific institutional training programmes. Careful attention needs to be paid, then, to institutional and local context, despite the internationalization of higher education and the globalization of the translation profession, which should be taken into account in trainer training. Research into teacher training in general has suggested that the closer the training is to the trainer's actual context, the better. This would tend to suggest that specific local (perhaps departmental) programmes may be the best way to guarantee learning, although this is not to say that external participation is not to be considered as valuable input.

As an example of a local needs analysis, we are currently completing a study to draw up a profile of, and identify training needs among translator trainers at Spanish universities. In Spain, an estimated 600 trainers work at 24 different universities at undergraduate level after a boom in translation degree programmes in the early to mid 1990s.

For the study, an on-line needs analysis questionnaire was designed in which respondents were requested to give answers in the following areas: their university education; their professional experience in translating, interpreting and related fields; their teaching experience; and their training as teachers (including self-learning). Following Dunne (2006), a final section of the questionnaire asks them to self-assess the different components of their translator training competence as outlined in Section 4 above, and to identify areas in need of improvement. The survey can be consulted at: [www.temcu.com/cuespro](http://www.temcu.com/cuespro). The following is a brief summary of the major preliminary results.

Firstly, it is gratifying to report that Spanish translator trainers seem to be motivated with regard to the issue of trainer competence, as the response rate was relatively high for this kind of survey: approximately 27% of the total population. The motivation existing can further be deduced from the extent to which respondents wrote extensive replies to open questions, and from the numerous requests for information on the results of the study from colleagues at different universities.

From a socio-demographic point of view, the group of respondents is in general relatively young (majority under 40), mostly feminine, of quite diverse national and linguistic origin. Most of those responding had some form of tenure at their institutions.

As to their university education, almost 50% of the trainers responding have an undergraduate qualification in Translation, and over 70% have either an undergraduate or a postgraduate degree in the field. This tendency is a very clear indication of the consolidation of the discipline in Spain, a country where the first university degrees in Translation date back only to the 1970s, and

where full undergraduate programmes were only approved for the first time in the early 1990s.

Interestingly, alongside their academic training in the field, over 80% of the trainers responding claim to have the equivalent of at least one year's full-time professional experience in translating or interpreting. These results point, then, to a body of trainers with sound grounding in the subject matter itself as part of their core knowledge.

Moving on to teaching experience, the respondents report fairly substantial teaching experience: over 60% report that they have been teaching for over 9 years, and 38% report that they have been teaching Translating or Interpreting for the same length of time. Apart from this experience, the respondents also report considerable interest in trainer training: almost 68% claim to have received some form of teacher training, and the vast majority report that they participate in different forms of self-learning as trainers. It is, of course, impossible to extrapolate these results to the remainder of the trainer population, since it is likely that there is a high correlation between motivation for training, responding to the questionnaire, and participation in trainer training activities.

Finally, and perhaps most interestingly, the results of the self-evaluation as trainers offer some interesting preliminary results, which are summarized here as tendencies. The overall self-evaluation is acceptable but not high. The respondents situate their competence in general between 3 and 4 on a six-point scale, from 1 to 6, that is the medium scores. Understandably, they show considerably less confidence in the field of interpreting than in translation, and negatively assess their knowledge of the educational, administrative and management contexts in which they work.

When it comes to identifying training needs, there is considerable consensus amongst respondents on the need for training in the following general areas.

*The discipline:* research methodology; research supervision; ICT. Respondents also demand greater dissemination of work in progress, and greater communication within the discipline.

*The professions:* evolution of the markets and prospects for the future; job opportunities for graduates; project management; time management.

*Teaching and assessment:* in this area there is a marked demand for training in assessment methods, criteria and systems. Respondents seem to feel considerable insecurity when designing and implementing assessments, and continue to show a degree of confusion between translation quality assessment and the assessment of learning. There is also demand for training in the design of teaching and learning activities for the classroom.

*Educational and administrative context:* respondents specifically request further training regarding the European Higher Education Area and the reform underway, and also demand more information on institutional organization.

## **7. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the theoretical part of this study illustrates that for translator trainers, as for all other professions, drawing up a competence-based profile allows for better analysis of the current situation, and for more appropriate training to be designed. It is essential, furthermore, that this profile should be set firmly within the broader context of the profession of higher education teaching, something which Translation Studies as a discipline has often avoided. Considerable care should be taken thereafter to incorporate local considerations into planning much-needed trainer training programmes. To this end, detailed local needs analysis should be carried out, as local contexts impose trainer and competence profiles as well as specific training needs. There is no doubt that in this, as in many other issues, one size does not fit all, and tailor-made staff development courses and actions with specific intended outcomes will be required in each individual training context. The study still underway in Spain is an interesting example of how a detailed needs analysis can

help to design trainer training activities. It also serves as a pilot application of the survey instrument, which could potentially be applied in other local and national contexts.

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**ABSTRACT: Training the Trainers: Towards a Description of Translator Trainer Competence and Training Needs Analysis**

— There is now a relative wealth of Translation Studies literature on translator training, but it often centres on impersonal aspects such as processes, content or activities, and ignores the human factor. There are two sets of participants in the teaching and learning process, both of whom are essential for its success: students or trainees, and teachers or trainers. Other than to bemoan their supposed deficiencies, or to design elaborate entrance filters, little has been said about students. But even less has been said about trainers. In this paper, attention focuses on them. The little that TS literature says about trainer profiles is mostly centred on the need for them to have professional translator competence. This paper takes a broader approach to the issues surrounding translator trainers and their training, setting them firmly within the broader context of higher education teaching as a profession, and attempts to link recently developed professional standards in higher education teaching to our field. This background allows the author to draw up a competence-based profile of the translator trainer and briefly to review which areas of such a profile have been addressed in TS and which are still in need of further work. The paper ends with an overview of the preliminary results of a study currently underway in Spain, designed to carry out detailed training needs analysis for translator trainers.

**RÉSUMÉ : Former les formateurs : pour une description des compétences des enseignants en traduction et une analyse des exigences de formation**

— En traductologie, de plus en plus d'études ont pour objet la formation en traduction, mais, au lieu de s'intéresser au facteur humain, elles portent en général sur les aspects impersonnels du métier tels que les activités, les procédés et le contenu. Le rôle des étudiants et stagiaires, ainsi

que des enseignants et formateurs, est essentiel, car chacun participe activement aux processus d'apprentissage. Outre le fait de déplorer leurs points faibles ou d'établir toutes sortes de règles d'admission, peu a été dit en traductologie à propos des étudiants. Il faut ajouter qu'encore moins a été dit à propos des enseignants. Lorsqu'elle est abordée, la question est généralement centrée sur la nécessité pour chacun d'entre eux de faire preuve de compétences spécifiques en traduction. Si cet article s'intéresse avant tout aux enseignants tout en établissant des liens entre les nouveaux critères professionnels et le milieu de la traduction, il tente aussi d'aborder le sujet de manière plus générale de façon à illustrer la place de ceux-ci dans le vaste contexte des études supérieures comme formation professionnelle. En établissant ce contexte général, l'auteure tente de dresser le profil des enseignants en traduction selon leurs compétences et revoit brièvement dans quels domaines de la traductologie il a déjà été question de ce sujet et où il serait nécessaire de pousser davantage la discussion. L'article se termine par un survol des résultats préliminaires d'une étude lancée en Espagne qui tente d'élaborer une analyse complète des exigences de formation pour les enseignants en traduction.

**Keywords:** translator training, translator trainer training, trainer profiles, trainer competence, needs analysis for trainer training

**Mots-clés :** formation en traduction, formation des enseignants en traduction, profil des enseignants, compétences des enseignants, analyse des exigences de formation pour les enseignants

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