

# Integrating vocational and research elements in translator training programmes

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# Growth story = success story? Industry

- ▶ Common Sense Advisory: The language industry shows resilience to crisis and good growth prospects: annual growth rate of 10% for the size of the language industry in the European Union
- ▶ UK 2015 Survey: Combined volume of all companies in the survey grew by 11% in 2014 (software, e-commerce and e-learning as the customer group with the fastest growing demand)
- ▶ Translation and interpretation services is the fastest-growing industry in the country by job growth, [...] expected to add about 12,400 jobs between 2014 and 2019, or a 36 percent increase.
- ▶ <http://fusion.net/story/147489/why-translation-is-the-fastest-growing-career-in-the-country/>

# Growth story = success story? Programmes

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- ▶ Growth of translator training programmes
- ▶ Lexicool: lists 63 countries, over 600 courses worldwide, mainly post-graduate courses that lead to a recognised qualification (Master of Arts, PHD, Diploma, Certificate, etc)
- ▶ <http://www.lexicool.com/courses.asp>

# Aims of translator training

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- ▶ **Employability:**
  - ▶ Graduates who are qualified for the market
  - ▶ Graduates who are job-ready

# But what is the market (like)?

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- ▶ It is rapidly changing
- ▶ A diverse profession (translators, project managers, revisors, etc)
- ▶ One of the most fragmented sectors in the world (the top 30 LSPs represent only about 26% of the total market revenue)
- ▶ Unregulated
- ▶ Increase of machine translation and amateur (volunteer) translation

# What job?

## Language Industry:

Gaming localization, Internationalization, Interpreting, Interpreting technologies, Localization, Machine translation, Market sizing, Multimedia (audio, video, e-learning) localization, On-site interpreting, Service-specific market studies, Software localization, Telephone interpreting, Testing and quality assurance, Transcreation, Translation, Translation management systems, Translation technologies, Video interpreting, Web globalization

► *The Language Services Market: 2014*

<http://www.common senseadvisory.com/AbstractView.aspx?ArticleID=21531>

# Training: what for? what? where? how?

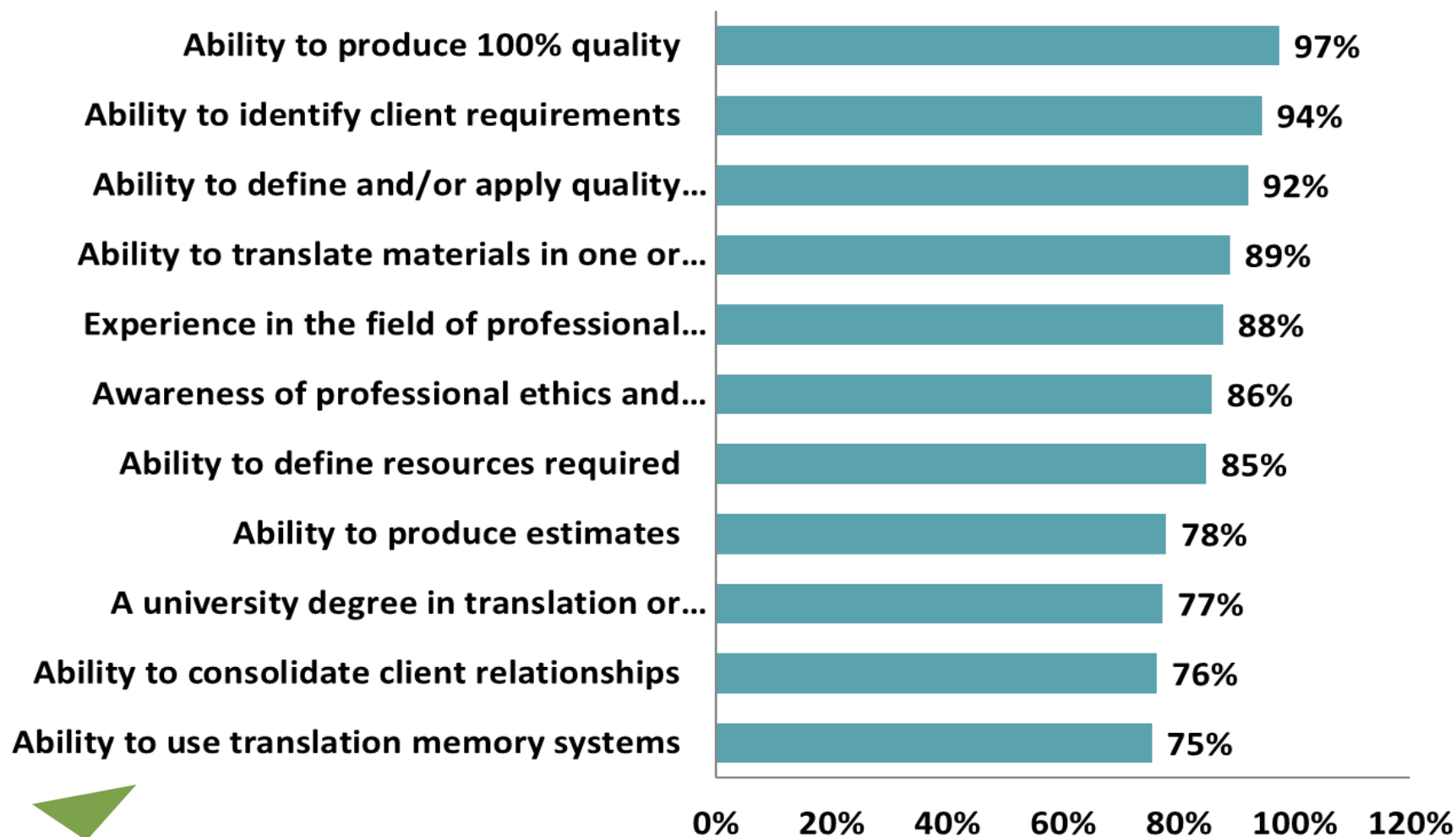
- ▶ Aims? Training for local / national / international market(s)?
- ▶ Content? Curriculum?
- ▶ At university? Technical college?
- ▶ Level? (Bachelor? Master?)
- ▶ Dedicated programme? General or Specialised domain (legal / medical / audio-visual translation / ...)?
- ▶ Translation and/or interpreting? Which language(s)?
- ▶ Duration?
- ▶ Teachers? Trainers? (Academics vs professionals)
- ▶ Teaching and assessment methods?

# Agreement on curriculum design

- ▶ training should be organized around a set of skills and/or competences as learning outcomes
- ▶ translator training programmes should be professionally oriented and guided by the needs of the translation industry – employers surveys (e.g. OPTIMALE survey 685 respondents from 27 European countries)
- ▶ [http://www.translator-training.eu/attachments/article/52/WP4\\_Synthesis\\_report.pdf](http://www.translator-training.eu/attachments/article/52/WP4_Synthesis_report.pdf)
- ▶ OPTIMALE = Optimising professional translator training in a multilingual Europe (2010 – 2013)



# Employer survey: Top 11 competences



# Reference framework for learning outcomes

- ▶ European Master's in Translation (EMT)
- ▶ [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/programmes/emt/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/programmes/emt/index_en.htm)
- ▶ Competences for professional translators, experts in multilingual and multimedia communication
- ▶ what is to be achieved, acquired and mastered at the end of training
- ▶ 'competence' = the combination of aptitudes, knowledge, behaviour and knowhow necessary to carry out a given task under given conditions

# Wheel of competences



# Translation Service Provision Competence

## **Interpersonal dimension:** Knowing how to

- ▶ organise approaches to clients and potential clients (marketing)
- ▶ negotiate with the client (to define deadlines, tariffs/invoicing, working conditions, access to information, contract, responsibilities, etc.)
- ▶ comply with instructions, deadlines, commitments, interpersonal competences, team organisation
- ▶ comply with professional ethics
- ▶ ...

## **Production dimension:** Knowing how to

- ▶ create and offer a translation appropriate to the client's request
- ▶ define stages and strategies for the translation of a document
- ▶ justify one's translation choices and decisions
- ▶ ...

# Language and thematic competence

## **Language competence**

- ▶ Knowing how to understand grammatical, lexical and idiomatic structures as well as the graphic and typographic conventions of language A and one's other working languages (B, C)
- ▶ ...

## **Thematic competence**

- ▶ Knowing how to search for appropriate information to gain a better grasp of the thematic aspects of a document
- ▶ Learning to develop one's knowledge in specialist fields  
Developing a spirit of curiosity, analysis and summary
- ▶ ...

# Intercultural competence

## **Sociolinguistic dimension: Knowing how to**

- ▶ recognise function and meaning in language variations (social, geographical, historical, stylistic)
- ▶ produce a register appropriate to a given situation, for a particular document (written) or speech (oral)
- ▶ ...

## **Textual dimension: Knowing how to**

- ▶ recognise and identify elements, values and references proper to the cultures represented
- ▶ compose a document in accordance with the conventions of the genre and rhetorical standards
- ▶ ...

# Information mining competence

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- ▶ Developing strategies for documentary and terminological research (including approaching experts)
- ▶ Knowing how to evaluate the reliability of documentary sources (critical mind)
- ▶ Knowing how to use tools and search engines effectively (e.g. terminology software, electronic corpora)
- ▶ ...

# Technological competence (mastering tools)

- ▶ Knowing how to use effectively and rapidly and to integrate a range of software to assist in correction, translation, terminology, layout, documentary research (for example text processing, spell and grammar check, the internet, translation memory, terminology database, voice recognition software)
- ▶ Knowing how to prepare and produce a translation in different formats and for different technical media
- ▶ Knowing the possibilities and limits of MT
- ▶ ...



# Training (in) all these competences – how?

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- ▶ As individual competences?
- ▶ Specific module/course for each competence?
- ▶ In a particular sequence?
- ▶ Using which methods?
- ▶ How to assess?
- ▶ Or train all competences simultaneously, in an integrated way? Possible?

# Competent professional translators

- ▶ are able to undertake a professional translation
- ▶ are able to understand and justify the translational choices made (requires knowledge in TS, Intercultural Communication, etc)
- ▶ have the professional skills that allow them to operate in a commercial environment
- ▶ are able to interact with various agents in the translation process (from commissioning to quality assurance and customer care - interpersonal and entrepreneurial skills)
- ▶ Therefore: the role of training and education is to develop reflective professionals that can function in the work context
  - ▶ BUT: is this too narrow?

# Dublin Descriptors (2004): Master's level

<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>	provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing or applying ideas often in a research context
<b>Applying knowledge and understanding</b>	[through] problem solving abilities [applied] in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts
<b>Making judgements</b>	[demonstrates] the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete data
<b>Communication</b>	[of] their conclusions and the underpinning knowledge and rationale (restricted scope) to specialist and non-specialist audiences (monologue)
<b>Learning skills</b>	study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous

# Complexity and ambition

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- ▶ Achieving learning outcomes of a postgraduate translation programme is more than being able to undertake a professional translation
- ▶ Aim is not just to produce graduates who are job-ready to work as practitioners solely in the translation industry, but to educate professionals who are able to act independently and to take on new and innovative projects after graduation, and who are recognized as such by society – therefore training in a pure vocational way is not enough

# Integrated approach

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- ▶ Students should experience broad scope of programme and feel challenged and appreciated
- ▶ Programme design guided by overarching learning outcomes
- ▶ Programme modules are related and build on each other
- ▶ What has been discussed and learnt in one module feeds into the other modules
- ▶ Coherent combination of theoretical, practical, and professional aspects
- ▶ Allow flexibility and adaptability
- ▶ Coordinated and coherent approach of all trainers (including assessment)

# Aston's MA

- ▶ Text Analysis for Translation (input from Linguistics, Stylistics, Pragmatics, Intercultural Communication, CDA, etc; variety of material to be translated – what is a ‘text’? Multi-semiotic)
- ▶ Theoretical Concepts of Translation Studies (TS as a discipline, definitions, approaches, research)
- ▶ Practical Translation / Specialised Translation (annotated translation)
- ▶ The Translation Profession (group project: translation ‘companies’ manage authentic projects – students are effectively encouraged to take responsibility and manage their projects autonomously, take responsibility for their own learning; assessment: reflective report)
- ▶ Research Methods
- ▶ Master’s Dissertation (free choice of topic, scope for integrating theoretical, practical, professional aspects)

# Master's Dissertation: Examples

- ▶ An investigation into whether or not a translator's mood affects the quality of a translation
- ▶ Translation and censorship of sexual discourse under Franco's dictatorship in Spain. A case study
- ▶ Comparison of Polish translations of 'Alice in Wonderland'
- ▶ Analysis of Obama speeches and their translations into German
- ▶ An analysis of translation in the Republic period of China (1911-1949): *The Commercial Press* as a case study
- ▶ Translation as a representation of cultural practices in West Africa: a study of the leaflets produced for the Ebola virus
- ▶ Post Editing of Machine Translation and its role in professional translation

# Research project for LSPs (2014/15)

- ▶ A 2014 report by professor Foreman-Peck (Cardiff Business School) on behalf of UK Trade and Investment shows that
  - ▶ poor language skills is costing the UK £48bn a year in lost exports or a 3.5% loss to GDP
  - ▶ lack of awareness of multilingual communication needs of SMEs
- ▶ Foreman-Peck study based on single equation estimates
- ▶ More evidence? Joint research project ATC and School of Languages and Social Sciences at Aston University



# Case studies: Questions to investigate

Case study investigations of individual companies as follow-ups to the Foreman-Peck report

Case studies (supported by the translation company Comtec)

- ▶ Which language needs do companies have and how do they solve them?
- ▶ Which needs are catered for internally?
- ▶ For which purposes are LSPs used?
- ▶ How does the company cooperate with the LSPs?
- ▶ What are benefits for the companies?
- ▶ Is there scope for development?

# Findings

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- ▶ Both X and Y work with an external LSP and have good cooperation, but translation needs mainly customer-driven
- ▶ Staff have different opinions on the value of having translations produced by a professional LSP ('translation does not have any influence on the corporate performance' vs 'translations bring customers closer to the company')
- ▶ Communication needs not yet fully incorporated into the strategic planning of X and Y (i.e., they don't have a formal language strategy)

# Benefits

- ▶ For translation industry: LSPs can gather case studies of good practice to show benefits of working with professionals (But: Companies reluctant to share information, esp. financial data)
- ▶ For Translation Studies (underresearched field: role of translation in SMEs, perceptions of translation, translation policies)
- ▶ For Students: theoretical framework, methodological framework, communicate with SME staff and with LSP, evaluate findings (e.g. notions of translation), present results in the form of a Master's thesis, communicate results back to LSP and to ATC conference
- ▶ Students as researchers are part of the discourse community of TS (sense of belonging)

# Potential research areas

- ▶ research into the realities of the translation workplace: analyse the various (physical, cognitive, social, environmental) factors which impact on professional translators' work, well-being, identity and continuing development (ergonomics of translation)
- ▶ translation as a social activity/phenomenon taking place in social contexts marked by positions of power and subject to intervention of various potential agents (e.g. author, client/commissioner, editor, publishing houses, distributors, academia) – case studies
- ▶ Translation (and interpreting) activities by non-professional translators (volunteers, activist translators): Who? When and where? How? Assumptions and perceptions? Effects?

# Cont'd

- ▶ Public views of translation/interpreting, of translators/interpreters
- ▶ Media images of translators and interpreters
- ▶ Institutional practices, policies, and values
- ▶ Immigration: needs, expectations, agents
  
- ▶ E.g. News translation - Gavin Esler interview with the German Chancellor Merkel on BBC Newsnight (May 2012)
- ▶ “The Kanzleramt provided Frau Merkel with a translator (or rather an interpreter) – although she speaks perfect English, and I speak some German. We used the interpreter’s words as a guide but I thought we could have a better translation which we organised separately in London. This translation was voiced by an actor.”

# Final word

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- ▶ Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.
- ▶ (Albert Einstein 1921)

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