

Translator training, English language teaching and corpora: Scenarios and applications

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The importance of translation as an academic discipline is now firmly acknowledged, and so is research on translator training. In this field, however, there seems to be a void concerning language teaching (in this article, English). This contribution will discuss how integrating corpora into English language teaching for translator training allows to overcome the major limits of English course books for general purposes, which do not promote the teaching/learning of the language from a contrastive viewpoint and do not tackle domain-specific languages. Starting from research on translator competence, the role of bilingual competence will be identified along with its positive repercussion on other sub-competences. The communicative approach in ELT will be contrasted with the goals of translator training, so as to understand the areas where ELT for TT has to be redesigned and how corpora might contribute to this goal.

Keywords: Bilingual Sub-competence; Corpora in ELT; Domain-Specific Languages, ELT; Translator Training

1. Introduction

The importance of translation as an academic discipline is firmly acknowledged and confirmed by the growing offer of translation courses and degrees. As vocational institutions and universities have started to merge (Orlando, 2019), the design of Translation & Interpreting curricula has come to mirror both the practice and the theory of translation, providing professional training within an academic framework. While research on translator training has become increasingly prominent in an attempt to keep up with this rapidly evolving framework, the specific problems concerning language teaching for Translator Training (henceforth TT) are in need of deeper examination.

In translation, the knowledge of the L2 (in this article, English) has to be channeled and used for a precise professional purpose. Attention has to be paid to how linguistic competence interacts with the other competencies, in order to adapt English Language Teaching (henceforth ELT) to the needs of future translation professionals. This is the perspective to be privileged in TT,

lest translation risk(s) becoming a merely pedagogical tool (Cerezo Herrero, 2015). So far, the only English course book specifically devised for translation trainees is *Targeting the source text: A course book in English for translator trainees*, edited by Brehm Cripps in 2004. Therefore, most English for Translation courses have no other choice but to select General English (henceforth GE) materials, despite ELT for TT having been identified as a type of English for Specific Purposes (Carrasco Flores, 2019). Defining ELT for translator trainees requires careful consideration of the learners' necessities, lacks and wants (Nation & Macalister, 2010), to define the goal(s) and, consequently, the content(s) of the English course. Therefore, the objectives of ELT for TT are to be modeled on the skilled professional translator, who represents the 'Successful User of English' (Prodromou, 2003, as cited in O'Keeffe et al., 2007, p. 29) in that specific area. Some skills need to be privileged and specific aspects, which might not get the proper focus in a GE course, should be covered. This contribution will argue that the latter could be targeted by introducing corpus-based tasks in ELT for TT.

2. Background

Corpora stand midway between translation and language learning. Their use in professional translation has been widely discussed (Tognini Bonelli, 2001; Frankenberg-Garcia, 2005), but corpus methodology has been affecting language teaching as well. Including corpus-based data on variations and registers improved and enriched grammatical descriptions, and corpus-based learner dictionaries have facilitated the formulation of definitions by providing authentic examples of language (McEnery & Xiao, 2011). In TT, the two major complementary approaches to using corpora and corpus technology are known as "Corpus use for learning to translate" and "Learning corpus use to translate" (Frérot, 2016, p. 40). Both mainly focus on introducing trainees to the benefits of using corpora as a translation tool. Consequently, the application of corpora as a learning tool in ELT for TT still needs to be fully analyzed.

This contribution aims at investigating the theoretical framework within which to define ELT for TT and the potential didactic role of corpora. Starting from a definition of TC, Section 3 will identify the role of language competence and the way it interrelates with the other sub-competences. Section 4 will discuss the features of Communicative Language Teaching as the prevailing methodology in ELT and therefore the most likely approach adopted in university courses, to identify which aspects need to be reconsidered in order to meet the needs of translation trainees. Section 5 will introduce the features of corpora and corpus-based activities as a way to tackle the specific knowledge required of ELT for TT.

3. Translator competence

Translation is a textual, communicative, and cognitive activity, involving decision-making, problem-solving skills and expert knowledge. The PACTE research group (2011) defines TC as the underlying system of knowledge required to translate, which comprises five sub-competences: (1) Bilingual, (2) Extralinguistic, (3) Knowledge of Translation, (4) Instrumental, and (5) Strategic.

Translators are expected to be bilingual and bicultural specialists (Hornby, 1992) who have developed communicative and textual skills as well as cultural and intercultural competence (Kelly, 2005). The definition of Bilingual sub-competence includes the ability to control interference in terms of: (1) linguistic functions, and pragmatic and socio-linguistic conventions; (2) register and dialects; and (3) textual features. Furthermore, bilingual sub-competence comprises knowledge of the source and target culture, subject (field-specific) knowledge, and encyclopedic knowledge (PACTE, 2017a). Consequently, building bilingual sub-competence implies overcoming the following difficulties:

1. Extralinguistic difficulties related to a specific field of knowledge (specialized concepts), or cultural/encyclopedic knowledge;
2. Textual difficulties related to coherence, cohesion, text genres (genre conventions) and style, all of which related to contrastivity between the two languages;
3. Lexical or morphosyntactic difficulties related to shortcomings in the knowledge of the source or target language, whether in direct or inverse translation. (PACTE, 2017e, p. 175).

In terms of specific language-related difficulties which may interfere with TC, seven categories were thus identified:

- a. linguistic difficulty of comprehension;
- b. linguistic difficulties of reformulation;
- c. linguistic difficulties of reformulation of terminology;
- d. extralinguistic difficulties;
- e. textual difficulties;
- f. difficulties of intentionality; and
- g. difficulties related to the function of the text and the identification of target reader.

According to the PACTE Group (PACTE, 2017c, p. 83), there exists a relationship between the degree of TC and the identification and solution of

translation problems (connected to strategic sub-competence), as well as the use of external resources (related to instrumental sub-competence). Both of these aspects are directly dependent on bilingual sub-competence. The perception of the difficulty of the translating task and the number, types and variety of problems detected, which will determine the frequency and the type of external help needed to tackle them, all start from the translator's linguistic ability. A study by PACTE showed that translators who used internal support alone and relied solely on their linguistic and textual knowledge, without consulting external resources, can still obtain "acceptable solutions" (PACTE, 2017b, p. 79). It is logical to infer that the more developed bilingual sub-competence is, the more agile the cognitive process leading to the solution becomes. Weak bilingual sub-competence forces the translator to resort to other sub-competences. Improving bilingual sub-competence does not minimize or erase the importance of instrumental competence or other sub-competences: it implies that the reasons for seeking external help would be of a different nature because the perceived translation problems would be different.

Research showed that TC also depends on the directionality of the translation task, that is, whether translators are asked to translate into or out of the foreign language (PACTE, 2017d). Therefore, bilingual sub-competence has implications for inverse translation as well. Translators who achieve acceptable results in direct translation (managing to activate the same connotations of the ST, thus proving that they can master function and language use) do not automatically reach the same degree of acceptability in inverse translation, with the following possible scenarios:

1. The translator might produce an understandable target text, but the type of mistakes reveal that the translator is a non-native speaker. In particular, inverse translation into English usually features syntactic problems in terms of word order, pre-modification and post-modification (Pavlović, 2013);
2. The translator might not produce an understandable text, hence communication fails partially or entirely;
3. The target text might contain major meaning-related errors (Rodríguez-Inés, 2014).

Shortcomings of linguistic nature deriving from translating into a language other than the L1 are once more compensated by instrumental sub-competence (PACTE, 2017f). According to Pavlović (2013, p. 163):

The only difference [between L1 and L2 translations] is how successful the translators are in finding solutions to these problems. It could then

be said that if a translator is adequately trained, s/he could produce an L2 translation that is of equal quality as L1 translation.

The market is moving more and more oriented towards flexibility, which means that it is becoming increasingly important for translators to be able to produce satisfying results in indirect translation as well. Despite studies on directionality in translator education being still scarce (Horcas-Rufián & Kelly, 2020), TT should acknowledge that inverse translation has become a widespread habit and re-design ELT to respond to this new professional requirement. Based on these findings, ELT in TT should privilege the following areas:

1. vocabulary expansion (to tackle linguistic difficulties a., b., c.). The goal should be to develop lexical awareness and interest in language use, working on the various purposes and pragmatic effects. Translators have to work with collocations, connotation, lexical cohesion and language variation, which are therefore essential aspects in ELT for TT but redundant and potentially demotivating in a GE course.
2. textual training (to tackle linguistic difficulties e., f., g.). Among the expertise expected from and required of translators is the ability to infer meaning and understand implicatures from the co-text, identifying the audience, the thematic field, and the level of specialization of the written text. Equally important is the ability to understand the register and language functions of the written text, and detecting the textual conventions of various text-types and genres (Carrasco Flores, 2019).
3. written comprehension and production (to tackle linguistic difficulties a., b., c., f.). Translation trainees should work on their writing skills so as to produce pragmatically and sociolinguistically acceptable written texts. Training should include expressing ideas clearly, rewriting texts according to stylistic rules, producing coherent and cohesive written texts (Carrasco Flores, 2019).

Moreover, a contrastive approach from both a linguistic and cultural point of view should be promoted to prepare the ground for inverse translation. The process of building English bilingual sub-competence cannot be expected to take place during translation-oriented tasks, where the interest is entirely devoted to the re-expression of the message: the trainees' attention is far from being focused on improving their L2 (Bowen, 2008). For this reason, the English course within a translation program becomes the crucial moment where trainees acquire the linguistic skills which will be elicited during the translation process.

4. ELT for translator training

An overview of the current ELT approach is necessary to understand whether its core principles are aligned with the objective of translation trainees and whether some areas or skills which are crucial in ELT for TT but too specific for GE students risk being left undeveloped or underestimated. Despite the discrepancies of definitions (Littlewood, 2011; Richards, 2006), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is still the most adopted approach in ELT and has redefined the goals and the methods of ELT through the concept of communicative competence, which includes and at the same time goes beyond linguistic competence. While looking at structural and lexical meaning, CLT also aims at grasping the real value of the utterance in context (Swan, 1985b). The vision of the ideal language learning process is now considering the importance of (a) collaboration, (b) input, and (c) negotiation of meaning between interlocutors. Rather than being the sole source of knowledge, the teacher becomes a facilitator who encourages students to find their own learning method. The focus is on:

- learning how to use language in a range of different purposes and within various settings;
- knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts;
- knowing how to employ communication strategies to overcome limitations in one's language knowledge (Richards, 2006); and
- negotiating and navigating through different conventions (Breen & Candlin, 1980).

The complete framework includes linguistic competence, discourse competence, pragmatic competence, sociolinguistic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), and sociocultural competence (Littlewood, 2011). The core principles and goals of CLT thus perfectly adhere to the fundamental perspective of translation as a mediating and intercultural activity.¹

CLT moved from product- to process-oriented instruction, which is seen as truly conducive to acquisition (Ellis, 1982; Richards, 2006). Crucial points in the definition of CLT included the role and importance of form, and the dichotomies 'form versus meaning' or 'accuracy versus fluency' (Chabert Ull & Agost, 2020). Two dimensions should belong to CLT: (1) the analytic dimension, where instructions and conscious learning of language increase automaticity of correct language; and (2) the experiential dimension, where communication and subconscious learning increase correctness of spontaneous language (Littlewood, 2011). In TT, the product is as important as the process, for quality assessment involves the tangible, final text. This implies that analytic, form-focused activities have to be particularly privileged so as to favor accuracy and the correct use of language.

This introduces another aspect that has to be foregrounded in ELT for TT. Textual training and written comprehension/production are crucial for translation trainees. A GE course tends to focus equally on all four skills, which means that translation trainees risk encountering a systematic discussion on textual variety only during translation classes. ELT for TT should instead devote a consistent amount of time to reading strategies aiming at identifying textual genres, the author's intention, discursive markers, cohesion and coherence, intertextuality, and ideological traits (Cerezo Herrero, 2015) so that the translation-oriented classes could rather focus on the other specific sub-competences.

Good reading and writing skills are connected with another key knowledge which emerged from Section 3—i.e., vocabulary expansion. The role of vocabulary in the development of language performance is being re-evaluated, for effective vocabulary use has been found to have a positive influence on the quality of writing and one's general language level as well (Levitzky-Aviad & Laufer, 2013). At the same time, as written texts are lexically more sophisticated than spoken texts (Milton, 2013), reading is a powerful source of vocabulary acquisition (Zahar et al., 2001).

The literacy skills needed by translation trainees imply formal teaching. Being based on learning, Ellis's notion of "formal communicative approaches" (1982, p. 80), ideally meets those needs. Formal communicative syllabuses are likely to be specific rather than general but, in either case, they are concerned with the product of communication, which still coincides with the objective of professional translation.

One last aspect to be redefined in ELT for TT involves the monolingual paradigm (Cook, 2010), according to which "only by thinking in the target language can students increase their chances of avoiding interference and becoming fluent and accurate" (Liao, 2006, p. 194). In ELT for TT, the main limitation of this paradigm lies in the fact that it does not favor the contrastive approach to language which is indispensable to develop Bilingual sub-competence and work on interference. The revaluation of the bi- or multilingual perspective in SLA research is ongoing (Chabert Ull & Agost, 2020). Despite the 'native speaker' myth being challenged by World Englishes, the wide majority of English courses offer only monolingual English instruction. In translation, both the L2 and the L1 are of equal importance, as the former dominates the analytical stage and the latter in the recreation stage. Students are asked to ignore their L1 during language classes only to have to bring it back operatively during translation tasks. This contradiction dilutes trainees' confidence in mastering both languages, which will have to be tackled and built anew in translation classes.

5. Corpora in ELT for TT

5.1. Why corpora?

ELT for TT is supposed to be based on (a) translation oriented reading and writing for a purpose (procedural knowledge); (b) learning about language, culture and civilization; contrasting cultures, rhetoric, genres and language systems (declarative knowledge). The use of GE course books, although possible, is not perfectly compatible with the above goals. Firstly, most GE textbooks seek to build the foundations for the various English language certificates (Cerezo Herrero, 2015), with a balanced focus on all four skills. Therefore, rarely do GE textbooks focus explicitly on written texts and written production, nor do they prepare students to tackle domain-specific languages. Secondly, GE course books do not promote the teaching/learning of the language from a contrastive viewpoint, as EFL textbooks are written exclusively in English. Strictly connected to this preference is the belief that foreign languages can only be competently taught by native speakers (Cook, 2009).² Given the lack of textbooks specifically designed for ELT in TT, the ability to integrate new contents and teaching methods becomes essential; equally important would be to exploit methodologies which anticipate the future needs of the profession. For this reason, the integration of corpus-based activities in ELT for TT would not only target the specific needs of translation trainees but also help learners familiarize with key tools that will likely become part of their professional kit.

The importance of reading comprehension strategies and production skills is linked to vocabulary expansion, as shown in Section 3. Two approaches are to be distinguished in vocabulary learning theories: (1) explicit vocabulary learning, and (2) implicit vocabulary learning (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). According to Krashen (1989), only incidental learning, which generates acquired knowledge, is involved in authentic language use, while deliberate, form-focused learning only results in learned knowledge. However, the number of new words learned incidentally is relatively small compared to the number of words that can be learned intentionally. Furthermore, deliberate learning provides an efficient and convenient way of memorizing vocabulary (Elgort, 2011). Corpora integrate both form- and meaning-focused instruction; the former activates learners' lexical knowledge (Levitzky-Aviad & Laufer, 2013), but the latter derives from the exposure to authentic, hence meaningful, language.

One of the achievable goals connected to lexical awareness involves building a positive approach to vocabulary learning so that learners may develop an enduring interest in the analysis of vocabulary use and increase the understanding of the variety of purposes behind the use of a given word

(Nation, 2008). Once more, these aspects are particularly relevant in ELT for TT. Corpora contribute to these goals by providing an alternative to dictionaries. Dictionary entries are decontextualized and inconsistent in providing information on phraseology and synonyms. By providing form and meaning at the same time, dictionaries reduce the students' elaboration and retrieval. Before looking up a certain word in dictionaries, students should be invited to recall or guess its meaning (Nation, 2020). Through corpora, characteristics of language which do not have a central position in traditional language teaching, such as the intrinsic connection of meaning and use, can be observed.

Furthermore, corpus-based activities allow for the exploration of at least four types of meaningful relations: (1) collocation, (2) colligation, (3) semantic preference, and (4) semantic prosody (Sinclair, 1991). As the ability to notice is a key factor in fostering performance and accuracy in language production (Nagy, 2019), corpus work shows the continuum which goes from maximum to minimum compositionality and allows noticing the recurrent semantic nature of collocations in both General English and English for Specific Purposes (henceforth ESP) texts, thus stimulating and enhancing the learners' linguistic intuition (Gavioli, 2005). Trainees are offered a tool to verify if their intuition is correct by bringing together the passive skill of recognizing the presence of collocations and other multi-word units in a text, and the active skill of reproducing them (Nagy, 2019). This approach is certainly more descriptive- than prescriptive-oriented, and requires some amount of metalinguistic observation and reflection which might be unsuited for GE learners with less specific needs.

The observation and analysis of these lexical relations can be beneficial in oral speech (Granger, 2009) but also in writing, with positive repercussions on inverse translation. The rationalist, logical approach to language regards idioms only as fixed units, paying little attention to compositionality. Native speakers usually have clear (even very restricted) expectations of words appearing in the proximity of other words or expressions. However, not even a native speaker knows every aspect of their native language, as intuition is closely related to experience; it is impossible to have experience in every area of life, let alone those that involve highly specialized knowledge (Rodríguez-Inés, 2004). Learners of English might grapple with the number of choices and the degree of probability involved in the way the language works. Definite rules do exist, but some aspects escape a rigid classification and are more probabilistic (O'Keeffe et al., 2007). There are specific difficulties in incorporating collocations even into the writing of advanced learners (Levitzky-Aviad & Laufer, 2013), but concordances and collocations are examples of this non-deterministic aspect of language which still needs to be

properly addressed by translators. Failing to acknowledge and work on this aspect leads to poor understanding of the source text and low quality in inverse translation. The positive feedback given by students who used corpora as a tool to improve their writing (Gordani, 2013) should encourage the applicability of corpora to lower levels as well, especially with translation trainees.

Translation trainees need to familiarize with the features of ESP and specialized texts. When working with these texts in translation tasks, monolingual and bilingual dictionaries are usually consulted to decode the contextual meaning (Peters & Fernández, 2013), together with technical and terminological dictionaries which help define the specific terms. However, these cannot be the only resources, in that they do not provide details on grammar and collocations to widen the users' lexical understanding and do not fight the tendency of translation trainees to be influenced by the semantic prosody of general language. Corpora represent a viable solution to start tackling these problems in ELT classes, widening the range of tools at the trainees' disposal. Considering that issues related to ESP and issues related to GE in terms of registers, text- or discourse-types, and communicative situations are difficult to separate (Gavioli, 2005) and that any material collected ad hoc for a particular teaching situation can constitute a corpus (Gavioli, 2005, p. 25), corpora might be used to introduce the features of a wide range of texts, including specialized texts or semi-specialized texts for lower levels of competence.

As corpora favor a contrastive study of language, they could help translation trainees to separate the two languages in contact, improve awareness and avoid interference. Contrastive Linguistics (henceforth CL) can be of use in that it predicts potentially problematic passages (Vandepitte & De Sutter, 2013). At the core of the contrastive approach was the belief that "the elements that are similar to (the learner's) native language will be simple for him and those elements that are different will be difficult" (Lado, 1957, pp. 1-2). A hierarchy of difficulty can be based upon the impact of positive, negative, and zero transfer from the source into the target language (Okičić & Osmankadić, 2014). L1 structures that are not only different from L2 structures but also typologically more marked will not be transferred, whereas those L1 structures that are different from L2 structures and typologically less marked are more likely to be transferred (Callies, 2008). Transfer is certainly a pivotal aspect in ELT for TT as it is the main cause of interference, in turn usually related to the translator's incompetence (Laviosa, 2009); it is among the causes of poor translation quality (Stepanova et.al., 2018), resulting in the production of a deviated language called 'translationese' (Newmark, 1991). As Swan (1985a) noticed, not all

interference is detrimental, in that “correct features in an interlanguage also contain a mother tongue element” (p. 85). Therefore, guiding translator trainees toward this awareness could facilitate their performance in translation classes. Corpora can be exploited to raise trainees’ awareness of actual source language use and also used to fight the tendency of native speakers to reject corrections in their L1 because they perceive themselves as experts, hence lacking motivation to deepen their knowledge of context, text type, register, and idioms.

Applying the contrastive analysis to language teaching reveals the assumption that the native language plays a role in learning a second language (Johansson, 2008). The main problem with applying CL to ELT for TT is thus the monolingual paradigm, as no systematic contrastive analysis is possible if the learners’ L1 is banished from the classroom. The great majority of ELT textbooks comply with the notion that no other language is needed to teach English apart from English (Pennycook, 2008), which inevitably determined the sidelining of the L1. However, ELT for TT needs a more translation-oriented framework, especially considering that the contrastive approach has been proven to reduce interfering effects significantly, improving students’ grammar and translation competence (Okičić & Osmankadić, 2014). Given the structure and nature of English textbooks highlighted in Section 4, the integration of the contrastive approach in ELT for TT is then dependent on the use of authentic materials to expand the range of activities beyond the course book.

5.2. What kind of corpus?

Corpora were not initially devised to be used directly as teaching/learning materials, but they are being increasingly included in normal classroom activities as an immediate pedagogical tool (Granger, 2009; 2015; Cotos, 2014; Wen-Ming & Hsien Chin, 2008; Lee & Swales, 2006). Learner corpora are the ideal starting point for introducing students to corpus-based work. Learner corpora involve learners as producers and users of the corpus data at the same time. Creating learner corpora requires a wide range of expertise such as data collection, automated analysis, and error editing software (Granger, 2009), which do not necessarily overlap with the teachers’ background. Online learner corpora might be a viable solution: the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) and the Open Cambridge Learner Corpus are already available to ELT teachers who are already familiar with corpus analysis tools and willing to invest. Alternatively, a collection of former students’ texts or written tasks might be still considered as learner corpora (Granger, 2015). Once the feature of interest has been identified, learner corpora might be of use in raising student’s awareness of typical transfer mistakes, so as to strengthen their contrastive abilities and structural

knowledge. As learners either fail to use multi-word units or use them significantly less than native speakers, learner corpora might target (dis)fluency features and improve vocabulary expansion, helping EFL learners to verify the extent to which they exploit the range of meanings of a word. To target the overuse of a certain form, students might be asked to think of other appropriate, but underused, forms. Learner corpora could also function as documents of progression to boost motivation, provided that teachers carefully select positive evidence from their students' production (Cotos, 2014). Learner corpora are suitable for revision work, as identifying mistakes in a given text trains students to do the same in their own writing. Students do not have to fear the teacher's nor the classmates' corrections, with beneficial effects on classroom anxiety. The contrastive analysis of non-native speaker corpora also raises awareness on the most common writing flaws. Having been tested on academic students and proficient levels, these methodologies suit TT courses.

Parallel corpora encourage the contrastive approach to languages. One risk usually associated with using parallel corpora in language teaching involves making sure that the students understand the relationships between the source language and the translated language (Frankenberg-Garcia, 2005). Far from complicating the learning process, this feature makes parallel corpora particularly effective in ELT for TT, especially in tackling L1 interference. Most importantly, they introduce students to the importance of contexts in deciding the most appropriate term and guide them into noticing the various solutions available. Comparable corpora too have been proved to reveal features and genre-specific contrasts in source and target languages, which lowered errors in inverse translation exercises (Liang, 2020).

Monolingual corpora, made of texts written by native speakers of English, allow learners to improve their writing already from language classes. Selection is once more essential to pick corpora that represent the right type of language and filter the appropriate results to avoid overcomplicating or oversimplifying the lesson. The Internet might seem the easiest source of ready-to-use references, but the risk of encountering incorrect occurrences still implies that students need proper guidance. Some reliable corpora are freely available on specific websites: <<https://corpus.byu.edu/>> features the British National Corpus (which contains both written and oral texts) but also more up-to-date corpora such as the Coronavirus corpus. Teachers could create—or encourage trainees to build—corpora tackling specific genres or themes. The use of monolingual corpora increases the sample of problems to analyze, including vocabulary depth, synonyms, colligation, and semantic prosody in ways that improve the textbook descriptions with a set of lexical knowledge that might be redundant for GE learners but indispensable for translation trainees.

Introducing these corpora in the classroom, however, would imply embracing data-driven Learning and computer-assisted language learning (Pérez Paredes, 2019). Students should be trained in a number of skills: using the computer, handling data, observing and hypothesizing from data, and assessing their hypotheses (Gordani, 2013). However, there is one more decisive factor. The affirmation of corpus-based learning is strictly connected to teacher learning. Not only should teachers of English in TT courses be aware of the specific purpose behind the language learning process (using the language to translate, the linguistic knowledge translators need, and the linguistic difficulties that they usually face), but they should also familiarize with CL by receiving proper training (encouraging results on this process come from Farr, 2008).

6. Conclusion

Corpora collect samples of authentic language use (Widdowson, 1998) and are beginning to be employed in various fields. For instance, GE textbooks are referring to corpus data of spoken and written English, so as to provide a more empirical vision of the language (Hunston, 2002). Corpora and data-based learning would prove effective also in teaching English to translation trainees. While the communicative method, currently adopted in ELT today, is ideally aligned with TT in its focus on intercultural mediation, ELT for TT has to be considered as a kind of ESP with goals of a specific nature. Following the model of TC, ELT for TT should comprise (a) an in-depth discussion on textual genres and ESP, (b) proper training in the increasingly required practice of inverse translation, (c) a contrastive investigation of the two languages involved which helps to avoid interference, and (d) a teaching approach focused on discursive features. Nowadays, English courses within translation courses still rely on GE syllabi, which do not target these specific aspects.

Therefore, integrative tasks based on various types of corpora can tackle some of the above-mentioned needs. Learner corpora could help students identify their weaknesses and improve accuracy. Monolingual corpora would facilitate the analysis of linguistic and extra-linguistic features of a wide variety of genres and texts. Contrastivity could be enhanced—or even introduced altogether—by using parallel corpora.

Despite the increasing popularization and availability of corpus tools and resources, the practice of ELT is still only marginally affected by the corpus-linguistic turn: few teachers are trained in corpus linguistics and use corpora regularly (Callies, 2019). However, the active use of corpora would help to meet specific translation-oriented learning objectives, and should therefore be among the aspects to be considered in tailoring ELT to meet the requirements of the translation profession.

Notes:

1. The perspective can also be reversed. Translation should rightfully be reintroduced as a pedagogical tool in CLT. Translation tasks in an EFL classroom not only provide students with an authentic contact with the Other but also teach them the importance of cultural mediation and exchange, which fulfills the CEFR requirements and leads to intercultural competence (Fois 2020).
2. While the advantages of using the L1 in TT are evident in terms of contrastivity, they can extend to GE as well, in that students could be taught to employ their bi/plurilingual repertoires in communicatively effective strategies.

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