FOREIGN LANGUAGES APPLIED TO TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING AS LANGUAGES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES: CLAIMS AND IMPLICATIONS[1]

LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS APLICADAS A LA TRADUCCIÓN E INTERPRETACIÓN COMO LENGUAS PARA FINES ESPECÍFICOS: REIVINDICACIONES E IMPLICACIONES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to provide the necessary background to strongly claim that foreign languages in translation and interpreting studies must be considered languages for specific purposes, as their teaching implies choosing a differentiated course design, selecting different material, and taking into account students' needs and both students and teachers' characteristics. Even though there is a certain logic in separating the criteria of language acquisition from those of translator training, it has become obvious over the years that translator trainees need to develop language competencies that are relevant to their future areas of specialisation, hence the need for teachers to adopt a goal-directed approach aimed at preparing students for their future profession. The study also advocates for the necessity of overlapping between language and translation teaching, consequently affecting the way foreign language and translation subjects should be taught, both being complementary to increase our students' competence, autonomy, motivation, and critical thinking.

Keywords: Foreign languages, translation, interpreting, LSP, competence, needs analysis.

RESUMEN

El propósito de este artículo es proporcionar las premisas necesarias que permitan afirmar

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de modo fundamentado que las lenguas extranjeras en los estudios de traducción e interpretación deben considerarse lenguas para fines específicos, ya que, en estos estudios, el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje exige un diseño curricular específico y diferenciado, derivado de un análisis de las necesidades y características tanto de estudiantes como de profesores, lo que implica la selección de un material docente particular. A pesar de que subyace una cierta lógica cuando se separan los criterios relativos a la adquisición de lenguas de los propios de la formación en traducción, a lo largo de los años se ha hecho evidente que los estudiantes de traducción necesitan desarrollar competencias lingüísticas que sean relevantes para sus futuras áreas de especialización, de ahí la necesidad de que los profesores enfoquen sus objetivos hacia la preparación profesional de los aprendices. Este estudio aboga también por una necesidad de solapamiento entre la enseñanza de lenguas y la enseñanza de la traducción, lo cual afecta a la forma en que se deben enseñar tanto las asignaturas de lenguas extranjeras como las asignaturas de traducción. Consideramos que ambas materias deben ser complementarias si se pretende incrementar el nivel de competencia, la autonomía, la motivación y el pensamiento crítico de los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Lenguas extranjeras, traducción, interpretación, LFE, competencia, análisis de necesidades.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching practice, whatever the scope in which it is developed, firstly requires a clear delimitation of the subject to be taught, as well as the scientific and methodological framework to understand the way in which efficient teaching should be performed. Just like students need a solid theoretical and practical foundation in translation in order to successfully practise as competent translators, foreign language teachers also need a sound base of theoretical knowledge upon which they can build their practice. In this regard, it is evident that a single subject of study, such as any foreign language, may be addressed from different perspectives according to the aims to be achieved through teaching (Cerezo, 2020). This is why we can speak of 'languages for translators' as a reality that presents its own specificities, and which must be defined in order to construct the direction and focus of the teaching activity using this premise. This particularity arises when considering the profile of future graduates, notably the specific needs of their professional activity. As is widely known, if, during the comprehension stage of the original text, translators develop a semasiological activity – in other words, the thorough analysis of the textual components that will allow them to interpret the overall meaning of the text –, during the expression stage, conversely, their activity is onomasiological (Neşu, 2015), and the aim is to seek equivalents that re-convey the content and style of the original text in the target language (García, 1983).

Success will only be achieved in this operation if the translation professional is capable of expertly overcoming the difficulties presented during both stages. For this reason, it is essential that university teaching be aimed specifically at developing the skills necessary to prevent failure.

Thus, foreign language teaching for translators must be designed in consideration of a practical purpose, such as ensuring that students are capable of creating coherent texts that also possess the same value, or in other words, texts that efficiently fulfil the same function as the original text. This means that, apart from having an excellent knowledge of the linguistic instrument, students must have the necessary instruments to resolve any issue related to constructing texts in the target language (Bernardini, 2016; Molés-Cases, 2016), which also involves mastery of the cultural specificity of the community at which the translated text is aimed.

2. PRELIMINARY DEFINITIONS

2.1. Translation and linguistics

Thirty-five years ago, when translation studies were in their early years, Delisle (1984) explained in quite an illustrative way that translation studies should aim at teaching use of the language, more than focusing on the theoretical description of linguistic systems (Cerezo, 2020).

Indeed, this practical aim of teaching does not only set the guidelines delimiting the subject of study, the teaching methodology and the way linguistic disciplines should be addressed within the theoretical framework of the teaching activity. It also implies an analytical approach that is different from that adopted in more traditional language and literature schools or faculties, or in teacher training programmes.

Although it is certainly advisable to concentrate on analysing linguistic facts from a specific perspective (whether a philosophical, psychological, neurological, sociological, or an exclusively linguistic approach), it cannot be ignored that language is an enormously rich, complex, and transcendent central reality for human beings. Therefore, the more extensive the linguistic approach, and the more aware it is of the multiplicity of approximations to the reality, the more accurate and significant the conclusions reached will be.

The diverse aims university teachers of foreign languages set themselves favour the implementation of many methods and approaches within the classroom. They also lead to the formulation of traditional questions: "What?" and "How can a foreign language be taught/learned?" In view of the complexity of these questions, teachers must consider some linguistic movements whose influence is undeniably

significant in foreign language teaching approaches. Indeed, language pedagogy has come a long way since the days of the repetitive grammar translation methods. Nowadays, the task-based approach is widespread in most language teaching contexts, putting the emphasis on communication, collaboration, and the practical uses of language. Language is no longer taught or learnt through mechanical exercises, but it is developed through teachers and students interacting and engaging with one another for either general or specific purposes, as in the case of translation and interpreting.

In order to better understand the link between translation and linguistics, logic in this regard would recommend starting with a consideration of the differences or nuances between the words 'linguistics', 'language', and 'langue', before defining briefly what is usually understood by A, B or C languages in translation studies, and eventually addressing languages for translators and interpreters as languages for specific purposes (LSP), the latter aspect forming the core of this study.

2.2. Linguistics, language and langue

As stated by Crystal (1974), just like there are functional aspects to langue, there are also formal aspects. Linguistics allows the study of langue and language in all of their facets in order to better understand their nature. It considers the use of speakers' langue and goes beyond the superficial aspects of its structure.

Linguistics has become a discipline susceptible to being sub-divided into specialisms organised around a common axis: language knowledge. Therefore, translation and interpreting studies are presented as a subset of linguistic studies and they are differentiated from strict linguistics by the fact that knowledge is aimed at a different purpose: to provide practical solutions to specific problems with a linguistic basis.

In terms of the differences and similitudes of the concepts 'langue' and 'language', perhaps it should be considered that every langue is a language in terms of semiotics, but not every language is or participates in a natural langue, which is what occurs with the language of music, logic or gestures. Therefore, although language is a collection of articulated sounds with which people declare what they are thinking or feeling, langue is a verbal expression and communication system inherent to a nation, or common to several people (the English language, Spanish language, French language, etc.).

To explain how langue functions, and to highlight the differences between linguistics, language, and langue, more than a century ago Saussure established a dichotomy by opposing langue/parole, this being one of the greatest contributions to modern linguistics. He made a distinction between the set of rules in a system common to all speakers that comprise a certain linguistic group and its imple-

mentation, which depends on an individual act. The following statement made by Saussure sheds light on the difference between, on one hand, langue and language, and, on the other hand, langue and parole, therefore avoiding any confusion:

> La langue est un ensemble de conventions nécessaires adoptées par el corps social pour permettre l'usage de la faculté du langage chez les individus. La faculté du langage est un fait distinct de la langue, mais qui peut s'exercer sans elle. Par la parole, on désigne l'acte de l'individu réalisant sa faculté au moyen de la convention sociale, qui est la langue (Saussure, 2002, p. 129).

The complexity of teaching/learning foreign languages in a Faculty of Translation and Interpreting must take into consideration these basic principles of modern linguistics, offering students the opportunity to reflect on the target language structure, taking into account not only the set of rules common to all the speakers of a determined language, but also all the elements related to individual acts, including the cultural specificities of every particular language.

2.3. A, B and C Languages

When talking about a translator or interpreter's working languages, it is now commonplace to refer to A, B, or even C languages. In the field of translator training, institutions have also adopted the same terminology, using A, B, or C languages versus L1, L2, or L3. It is a way of indicating the language that trainees have nominated as their primary or strongest one (A), then the languages in which they need most training (B and C).

Once again, the naming of languages highlights the practical aim of teaching in faculties and schools of Translation and Interpreting and implies an approach that is different from other disciplines. If, on one hand, translation training uses the same terms as professional translators and interpreters when naming their working languages, on the other hand, the terms L1, L2, etc. are rather used in the study of language acquisition, sometimes to indicate the order in which languages are acquired, and more normally to separate the primary or 'mother' tongue from the others. As Pym (2011) makes it clear in his "tentative glossary", "although the two nomenclatures often overlap (the trainee's A language is usually their L1), there is a certain logic in separating the criteria of language acquisition from those of translator training" (p. 75).

Language A is the translator's most active language or so-called base language, usually their mother tongue or language of upbringing. Language B, their first foreign language, is meant to be highly active in terms of production and perception. Language C, on the other hand, is the translator's second foreign language. It is

meant to be more passive, or at least only partly activated due to shorter length of study or lack of practice. Generally, it is much more active in terms of perception than in terms of production.

The common aspect to be addressed when teaching A, B, or C languages to translation students is to determine students' specific needs (Cerezo, 2019a) and the use they will make of the foreign language in their professional lives as translators or interpreters. Those needs will determine the general competencies and aims of language teaching, which will subsequently be detailed in the specific competencies and aims of each of the language subjects to be taught in our translator training institutions, thus calling for particular methodological implications.

3. LANGUAGES FOR TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS AS LANGUAGES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (LSP)

The basic aims of teaching foreign languages to translators are: to develop reading comprehension, meaning to analyse the text from a translation standpoint; to study the foreign language in terms of contrastive linguistics; to develop cultural competence; to raise students' awareness of the translation activity; and to prepare them in the use of dictionaries, other reference works and, obviously, new technologies.

3.1. Languages for specific purposes (LSP)

Interest in languages for specific purposes (LSP) dates back to the middle of the 1960s and is mirrored in the proliferation of LSP subjects offered in universities and in specialised journals all over the world. Nowadays, a wide array of perspectives in teaching languages for specific purposes is on offer (Laborda and Litzler, 2015).

A clear definition of LSP would be expected of this long history within the field of teaching foreign languages. However, it is a little cliché to offer a definition, as the scope and delimitation of LSP constitutes one of the most hotly debated areas in this field. LSPs are, above all, languages that are developed in society. Better still, society develops them. As society changes and undergoes transformations in its structure, its expressive needs also change: "Special languages develop in direct response to socio-economic change. They are dependent on user groups and their needs" (Sager et al., 1980, p. 38).

Scientific, technological, industrial, and economic developments, among others, give rise to new realities that must then be communicated. Simply by satisfying the new communicative needs of different specialisms, society creates these

languages. Therefore, this is a dynamic process which needs to be taken into account when preparing and updating our course syllabus.

It all began in the middle of the 20th century with the emergence of a scientific, technological and industrial maelstrom like no other in history. Naturally, this had repercussions on the economy that had been globally dominated by the United States since World War II, making the learning of English a necessity for international communication. This was a specific need, given the high degree of disciplinary specialisation, especially in terms of scientific and technological aspects. It also had a strong impact on education, which had to match these social needs and raise the population's general knowledge, involving greater specialisation among professionals in all areas wishing to survive in the increasingly competitive market.

The teaching of second languages for specific purposes began to develop in the mid-1970s. Its theoretical references are similar to those of the communicative approach in teaching foreign languages. The first language to which it was applied was English (English for Specific Purposes) and the first symposium on the subject was held in Vienna in 1977. This was the exact moment when the controversy emerged between scholars who described ESP teaching simply as teaching English for particular vocational or professional purposes, and those who saw it as teaching English in academic contexts.

To overcome this controversy, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) propose a broader definition of ESP, which can be generalised to LSP, in which they make a distinction between the absolute and variable characteristics of the concept. The absolute characteristics include: (1) The aim of LSP is to respond to students' specific needs; (2) LSP follows the methodology and techniques of the specific area being worked on in order to fulfil its objectives; (3) LSP is concentrated on adapting the language used, as well as the techniques and activities of teaching, to grammar, lexicon, register, and speech skills and techniques that are pertinent to the specific area being worked on. As variable characteristics, they propose the following: (1) LSP can be related to specific disciplines; (2) In LSP, methods and techniques different to those used to teach general language may be employed; (3) LSP is usually aimed at adult students, mainly in higher education institutions or in the professional world; (4) LSP is usually aimed at intermediate or advanced-level students; (5) Consequently, LSP courses usually assume a certain base knowledge about the functioning of linguistic systems.

The emphasis laid by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) on absolute and variable features of LSP is clearly influenced by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), as well as Strevens (1988), thus reaching the conclusion that "[LSP] is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 19). Consequently, it is of utmost importance to design a curriculum that is based on an analysis of students' specific needs, motivation and their possible professional

paths. Having that in mind, LSP perspective is closely linked to the need of focussing learning on the student's needs.

Although language teaching for translators and interpreters is not considered among the specific purposes outlined by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), we would rather follow Cerezo's recommendation when he states that "language training in translation programs must have at its core the teaching of foreign languages for specific purposes" (2019b, p. 85). In this regard, it involves a branched distribution encompassing the following scopes: scientific and technical languages, languages for academic purposes, languages for economics and business, and languages for other professional purposes. A simple analysis of the institutional framework where the language is to be taught shows that students' specific needs and the use they will make of the foreign language in their studies or field of work is carefully considered, thus leading teachers to design specific curricula and identify the appropriate tasks that they are more likely to perform in their professional future, as well as the texts they will be required to translate.

Therefore, with regard to language teaching in faculties or schools of Translation and Interpreting, there is hardly any doubt that it aims to respond to students' specific needs, as expressed by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998). Furthermore, it becomes obvious how broad LSP really is and it raises another question: What is the difference between an LSP and a more general language approach? Hutchinson and Waters (1987) give a simple answer to this question, referring to the difference between ESP and General English: "in theory nothing, in practice a great deal" (p. 53). The line between where general language courses stop and LSP courses start has become very vague indeed.

However, concerning teachers who work in translator training institutions, at least in Spanish higher education contexts, it has become quite clear since the Faculties of Translation and Interpreting were created that they have based their syllabi on a learner needs analysis, on their own specialist's knowledge or their peers', and on other specialists in the field of translation and interpreting. For this reason, it is a necessity to analyse the language that is required in the profession. The main difficulty might be that language teachers in translator training programmes cannot depend on published textbooks available and must imperatively and continuously evaluate the suitability of the texts they use in class and verify their specificity in order to better respond to their students' needs as future professional translators or interpreters.

3.2. Characteristics of specialised texts

From a locutionary perspective, a text is a set of oral signals. By addressing the concept of specialised language, it has been noticed the absence of a clear and

precise definition. In parallel, the proliferation of terms that refer to this reality can be observed: specialised languages, special languages, or specialism languages, among others. This proliferation of terms has often led to confusion and has revealed a series of characteristics that differentiate specialised communication from general communication. According to Cabré (1999), these characteristics refer in particular to the subject, the speakers and the situations in which communication unfolds.

Interest in studying the concept of specialty in knowledge, language and text has increased in recent years thanks to three key factors, as outlined by Cabré and Gómez (2006):

> Este importante incremento obedece […] en primer lugar, a la importancia que en la sociedad actual tienen las especialidades en general y al valor de la acumulación de información sobre ellas. En segundo lugar, a las necesidades sociales del mundo de hoy en materia de plurilingüismo, generadas por las exigencias ineludibles de transferencia constante de productos y conocimiento. Y en tercer lugar, al nuevo papel que juega hoy la lingüística aplicada en el marco de la lingüística general en el que ha conseguido hacerse un lugar importante gracias a la reivindicación constante de su importancia social por parte de sus seguidores y al reconocimiento de su utilidad por parte de los gestores del conocimiento y la investigación (p. 9).

In practice, it is difficult to define clear borders between specialised texts and general texts. Continuous transfers occur, meaning that what is considered specialised at a given time may become general in a short span, and an uninterrupted, constant exchange of terms is seen to take place between the different disciplines.

In an attempt to put an end to this ambiguity, Cabré (2007) proposes an integral theory that describes the reality of specialised communication and its resources for representing knowledge. To define a text as specialised or not, Cabré (2002) suggests analysing the elements that configure the starting point of text elaboration, focusing on the production conditions: producer or sender, recipients, general organisation of its structure and selection of lexical items. This analysis should be developed from the perspective of cognitive sciences, linguistics and social communication sciences, which explain the specificity of specialty languages as subsets pertaining to and affected by the nature of the general language.

In terms of linguistics, specialised texts constitute subsets of a certain language. Therefore, in order to define these texts, an analysis of the units pertaining to the different levels of language must be carried out: phonology, morphology, lexicon, syntax and discourse (Cabré, 1999).

With regard to cognitive sciences, terminological units must be studied in their natural context. In other words, "the oral or written texts produced by specialists or their communicative mediators" (Cabré et al., 2001, p. 303). In effect,

the sole difference between the terminological units used in the scopes of specialty and unspecialised lexical units lies in the content and use, or in other words, in their cognitive and pragmatic conditions (Fernández Silva and Tercedor Sánchez, 2019).

From a communication science approach, specialised texts are a form of social and cultural expression; the meeting point between language and a changing reality. In this regard, communication sciences have focused their attention on the real-world knowledge that specialty languages convey, as well as on the social rules of language use reflected in specialised texts. Not only are they of a cognitive and linguistic nature, but they also demonstrate their communicative nature through their pragmatic characteristics (Cabré, 1999).

In this regard, specialised texts are considered inextricable from the reality external to the language. Each area of specialisation presents specific, distinctive communication structures that, in turn, develop different realisations due to the diversity of the language's writers and orators. The experts may only function and act as such if they learn to use the language suited to the thinking habits linked to the specialty.

For all of these reasons, the following considerations regarding the concept of specialised text can be established for the purpose of this research paper: (1) Firstly, the necessity to support the sublanguage model, since specialty languages form part of the general language; (2) In this vein, specialised languages must be understood as a variety, a product of a specific selection and combination of certain linguistic means; (3) Finally, a respect for the stance of those who base the 'special' nature of sublanguages on selecting and combining linguistic means for a 'specific purpose', not on the characteristics of the linguistic means contrary to the general language, in view of the above mentioned.

In view of the above, a first teaching consequence can be extracted: the sublanguage model involves a highly defined teaching model and a particularly clear attitude with regard to teaching methodology, as the differential aspect of teaching for specific purposes in relation to general language teaching must not be addressed in opposition to it.

In essence, it can be concluded that human society distinguishes various types of texts as products of different "discourse practices". In accordance with this criterion, a conventional classification of texts has been established: scientific texts, administrative texts, legal texts, journalistic texts, humanistic texts, literary texts, advertising texts and digital texts. An attempt has also been made to characterise texts based on the function they fulfil in communication, or the intention of the speaker/s (informative, directive and expressive texts) and, at the same time, in accordance with their textual sequences (narration, description, argument and presentation).

Specialised texts enable communication between specialists or experts via a certain set of linguistic mechanisms within a particular field of specialisation. Therefore, the characteristics of specialised texts that are worth noting can be summarised as follows: (1) They provide information on a very specific subject; (2) They are difficult to understand for those who are not familiar with the subject; (3) They are created by specialists and are aimed at recipientd who are experts in the subject matter; (4) They are conveyed via specialist languages that include specialist terminological and knowledge units; (5) They use specific terminology; (6) They are highly objective.

3.3. Conclusions with regard to foreign language teaching for translator trainees

Language teaching for translators is framed within language teaching for specific purposes and this study strongly advocates for the specific nature of its teaching as it holds a noticeable place in the translation process. It can be regarded as an example of language teaching for specific purposes where the educational contents vary according to the learning objectives. In this case, these objectives mainly revolve around developing reading comprehension and written production skills, without neglecting documentation skills and the linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge necessary to optimise reading comprehension and written expression, both for general texts and specialised texts. Thus, language teaching for translators represents one educational means to achieve translation competence. For this reason, we should move towards integrative teaching, meaning teaching in which the development of a particular linguistic skill is included among other competencies, such as extra-linguistic competence (socio-cultural and specialised skills) or professional and strategic competencies (documentation, contrastive analysis).

Although some translation and interpreting programmes do not have foreign language subjects, as language knowledge is considered inherent to the translator trainees' background prior to their studies, there are always subjects that seek to develop a linguistic competence as well as other sub-competencies of the translation skill, which is, ultimately, the true aim of translator education.

4. GENERAL AIMS AND COMPETENCIES OF TEACHING LSP IN BACHELOR'S DEGREES IN TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING

Bachelor's Degrees in Translation and Interpreting generally cover a wide range of subjects, from the language classes (A/B/C languages) that focus on language and intercultural competences to the more professionally-oriented subjects that include specialised translation or even translation technology.

Despite the difference in foreign language level students possess when accessing studies in translation and interpreting, the general aim of foreign language subjects is not the acquisition of the instrumental competence in the foreign language, but rather a linguistic reflection that positions them in optimal conditions to tackle the tasks of translation and interpreting.

This general aim is based on the eminently professional nature of the Bachelor's Degree in Translation and Interpreting in which teachers must be aware that they are not educating linguists (language theorists), but instead translators and interpreters (practical language professionals). However, in order to better understand why LSP subjects must respond to the professional profiles of future graduates and before setting forth the general competencies that students must achieve in their working languages, it is important to highlight the general aims and competencies as described in Bachelor's Degrees in Translation and Interpreting in Europe. What is listed below particularly highlights those in place at the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain, following the general and specific aims and competencies noted in the Dublin Descriptors for first-year teaching, the *Libro Blanco: título de grado en Traducción e Interpretación* (Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación [ANECA], 2004), in addition to those that appear in the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES, using its Spanish acronym).

On one hand, sticking to the nature of this study (language teaching/learning for translator trainees), the basic aim of educating generalist translators and interpreters can be defined and better understood by developing the following specific educational aims:

— Applied educational aims that include: 1) to master practically and actively the native language and possess excellent skills in passive oral and written competencies; 2) to use all working languages correctly, identify linguistic variation and make distinctions between registers, specialised languages, jargons and dialects; 3) to adapt to diverse types of texts, analyse and produce all kinds of texts, possess the ability to instigate, deduce and summarise; 4) to master oral communication in all its forms; 5) and to focus on self-learning and teamwork.
— Technical educational aims that include: 1) to acquire the capacity to create, coordinate and control work processes in a team; 2) to develop professional competencies in the use of general and specialised dictionaries; 3) to master the skills and mechanisms of revising and correcting one's own and other texts according to standard rules and procedures.
— Notional educational aims that include: 1) to understand the levels of language analysis and communication in their application to translation; 2) to achieve basic notions of several fields of knowledge and enable correct interpretation of all kinds of texts.

On the other hand, the Bachelor's Degree in Translation and Interpreting guarantees that students will acquire general and specific competencies. The general competencies range from the ability to apply knowledge to work, the capacity to gather and interpret relevant information, to increased autonomy.

The specific competencies, on the other hand, are directly linked to the professional profiles of the qualification and claim to achieve mastery of the basic techniques in professional translation, which include contrastive linguistic analysis at all levels, textual analysis, interpretation of texts in different languages, documentation, terminology, and approximation techniques for certain specialist areas.

This list of specific competencies harmonises with the knowledge, capacities, skills and abilities that have been noted as inherent to graduates of Translation and Interpreting since such degrees appeared some thirty years ago, in both the academic and professional scope. It involves a set of competencies that students must acquire during their studies and which will be required in order to be awarded the qualification. Given that these specific competencies are derived from considering determined professional profiles, all curricular actions should be aimed at enabling students to acquire such competencies. Therefore, including them in the study plan is a bid to ensure students receive general training designed to prepare them for professional practice.

With regard to the foreign language subjects, the specific competencies include: 1) the oral and written mastery of foreign languages for social and professional purposes; 2) the knowledge of foreign cultures; 3) the ability to search for information and documentation; 4) extensive cultural knowledge; 5) the capacity to plan and manage projects; 6) the capacity to detect and correct what does not abide by linguistic standards in each specific register; 7) and expert handling of necessary linguistic concepts to practice translation and interpreting. It also goes without saying that the professional profiles for which the degree qualifies generate other cross-sectorial competencies, such as the capacity to organise and plan, to analyse and summarise, problem-solving, decision-making, ethical commitment, autonomous learning, interpersonal relationship skills, or teamwork, among others.

Drawing from what was set forth in the presentation of the aims and competencies of translation and interpreting studies, it is evident that linguistic reflection must not become an aim *per se*, but rather it must be intended for students' specific purposes. Future translators must be, above all, conscious of the general nature of the language systems they study at all levels and attentive to the differences and correlations between such systems and their mother tongue. This implies developing certain skills and providing knowledge that help students address translation and interpreting with sufficient preparation. These include the linguistic skills corresponding to the abilities outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and international language standards, the capacity to analyse the foreign language from an intercultural and contrastive

standpoint, and complementary skills, such as the capacity to use bibliographical sources and dictionaries.

Bearing in mind these general considerations and the previous reflection, the following general aims of Translation and Interpreting studies are but the evidence that languages for translators and interpreters can certainly be considered languages for specific purposes. In each of these general aims different, specific objectives can be distinguished, according to the particular aspect to be prioritised and addressed in class. Specific aims allow teachers to address partial aspects with greater precision as they help focus on especially significant factors through suitable activities. Specific aims can be grouped as follows:

4.1. Developing linguistic competence and communicative abilities, and making the future translator and interpreter an expert in language

If the language is envisaged as a linguistic system for communication in different situations of "social interaction", linguistic competence is therefore not simply limited to knowledge of its morphosyntactic, lexical and phonological aspects, but rather it involves the capacity to apply it to specific circumstances. This perspective implies learning by using the language for the purposes for which it is required: translation and interpreting. Consequently, foreign language teachers must provide students with the necessary competencies and skills to carry out specific tasks in a particular social context in an efficient way.

Specification of the contents that refer to such competencies in each language subject must be interpreted as a constant in which communicative skills, reflection on language and socio-cultural aspects are constructed progressively and cyclically, recycling the previous contents at any given time, as progression in learning does not occur linearly, but rather more generally.

Specific competencies to develop linguistic competence and communicative skills include:

- Developing reflection on the language in its different aspects or levels (morphosyntactic, lexical and phonological) and its communicative transcendence (general, semi-specialised and specialised).
- Improving students' competence in the different communicative skills (oral expression, written expression, listening comprehension, reading comprehension, audiovisual comprehension, oral interaction, written interaction).
- Developing discourse or textual competence, meaning the capacity to relate phrases to produce coherent, cohesive messages in different genres (narratives, descriptions, essays, etc.), in various types of writings and in oral and conversational interventions.

- Developing text production competence, achieving suitable communicative purposes.
- Developing text analysis competence (text analysis adapted to translation).

4.2. Developing socio-cultural competence and making the future translator and interpreter an expert in culture

Language, society and culture are inextricably linked. Indeed, they all serve to express determined realities, and a lack of competence in this regard may distort or impede communication. Therefore, students must acquire knowledge of the society and culture of the communities where the languages they study are spoken.

It may be assumed that students who are studying a degree in Translation and Interpreting possess general knowledge of the world. However, the development of socio-cultural skills requires knowledge of the cultures associated with the languages they study. Such knowledge must be acquired via tasks in which authentic materials are used and adapted to each level, allowing students to come into direct contact with the uses and characteristics of the target cultures.

This extra-linguistic knowledge constitutes a complementary but extremely important aspect in mediation given that a statement often cannot be understood if it is removed from its context or the situation in which it takes place. The way to interpret the situation is directly linked to cultures and habits themselves.

Specific competencies to develop socio-cultural competence include:

- Understanding that language is a communication and social interaction tool whose linguistic structures are a vehicle to convey culture.
- Developing knowledge of language conventions, appropriate registers, dialects, and the capacity to interpret cultural references.
- Analysing the connotations and cultural weight of semiotic entities.
- Analysing the connotations and cultural weight of certain lexical items.
- Analysing the cultural weight of the morphosyntactic aspects of the language.
- Analysing the characteristic traits of text genres.

4.3. Developing contrastive competence to be exercised by the future translator and interpreter when performing their tasks of mediation between languages and cultures

It is sometimes necessary to focus the study of a foreign language on a contrastive perspective. It involves the contrastive study of the foreign language, using the mother tongue as a reference point. This allows the most common comprehen-

sion and language usage difficulties to be standardised and addressed with special attention.

Additionally, from an intercultural standpoint, it is not enough to simply understand the foreign culture and language to mediate correctly. One must also understand one's own culture and language system. Students cannot make abstractions of their own cultural perspective. They should also take notice of their culture and the specific mechanisms that rule it, and learn how to correctly assess foreign cultural phenomena. A good translator or interpreter is, above all, a good linguistic and cultural mediator.

Specific competencies to develop contrastive competence include:

— Being aware of the nature of languages as independent systems and of the necessity to analyse and compare them with one another.
— Learning to view this comparative analysis as a way of discovering difficulties and distinctions that must be considered in the translation process.
— Developing contrastive textual competence, meaning the ability to analyse the cultural specificities of textual conventions and other types of communicative conventions in the two languages and cultures.
— Analysing writing conventions: the use of uppercase and lowercase letters, punctuation, the use of acronyms and abbreviations, etc.
— Analysing lexical difficulties: compound terms, false friends, etc.
— Analysing morphosyntactic difficulties: the use of prepositions, verb tenses, adjectives, etc.
— Analysing textual difficulties: linking words, text markers, textual cohesion, and coherence, etc.

4.4. Developing strategic competencies to achieve more efficient, personalised communication and learning

It is essential for student to take note of the importance of developing strategic competence as it is what mobilises all resources available to achieve more efficient, personalised communication and learning.

The teacher must help students to identify and apply the strategies they already use in their language learning process and to develop new ones. To do so, specific communicative activities may be employed. It is also essential to encourage self-learning.

Specific skills to develop strategic competencies in order to achieve more efficient, personalised learning include:

— Developing oral and written expression strategies.

- Developing oral and written comprehension strategies.
- Developing oral and written interaction strategies.
- Developing mediation and plurilingual strategies.
- Developing metacognitive, cognitive, affective, and social learning strategies.
- Valuing interpersonal communication.
- Respecting linguistic and cultural plurality and valuing one's own cultural identity.
- Valuing the learning of a foreign language.
- Developing attitudes that favour successful learning.
- Ensuring students feel comfortable with the vehicular use of the foreign language in class, with a view to improving their motivation and self-esteem.

4.5. Developing self-learning competencies in order to adapt to different and changing situations

The competence of learning to learn, aimed at fostering students' capacity for self-learning and autonomy, is another key aspect. In this vein, not only must the student's innate capacities be developed, but learning strategies adapted to self-training must also be cultured, in addition to positive attitudes towards the teaching/learning process. Students must be led to recognise the huge significance of this aspect in language learning, in which the use of efficient strategies must serve as a base for future language learning.

Specific skills to develop self-learning competencies include:

- Developing autonomy through a conscious reflection on the learning process itself and what it involves.
- Developing use of the instruments required to be able to work responsibly, knowing at all times what the learning objective is, planning work to achieve it, consciously applying learning strategies, and constantly assessing both the process and the result of learning practices.
- Using learning resources promoted on the University Intranet.
- Using documentation sources rationally, showing awareness of their possibilities and limitations.
- Learning to differentiate between different types of dictionaries and to determine their suitability.
- Learning how to use dictionaries and other reference works for different communicative skills.
- Learning how to use other reference works.
- Mastering multimedia resources in language learning (CD-ROM, Internet, apps, etc.).

5. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: LANGUAGE B ENGLISH PROGRA-
MMES AT THE FACULTY OF TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING

A number of issues have been covered by research in LSP for the last twenty years, including discourse analysis, needs analysis, the comparison between LSP courses and general language courses, and obviously syllabus design and programme description. However, very little has been done concerning LSP in the field of translation and interpreting studies (Cerezo, 2019a, 2019b, 2020). Many have started recognising the fact that teaching languages to translation students is different from general language teaching (Bernardini, 2016; Kiraly, 2000), but nothing much seems to have happened since Kiraly (2000) pointed out two decades ago that "[t]he wealth of articles, monographs, and conferences on translation studies [...] is marked by a virtual absence of contributions dealing with the role of second language learning and teaching in translator education" (p. 181).

Kiraly (2000) is probably one of the first authors to clearly state the importance of linking foreign languages to professional fields and contexts in translation and interpreting studies, although he does not explicitly refer to foreign languages for translator trainees as languages for specific purposes. Yet, his recommendations concerning the education of translators in a collaborative approach is very much in line with the views expressed in this study:

> Implementing truly communicative foreign language instruction in translator education programmes would be an excellent first step towards turning translator education into a practice-oriented enterprise. It would encourage students to begin taking responsibility for their own learning [...] [i]t would help create a spirit of community within the institution and break the mould of the transmissionist model of teaching, with students no longer being treated like empty vessels that need to be filled with knowledge (pp. 184-185).

Following Kiraly (2000) and in order to support the hypothesis of this study, below follows an attempt at designing foreign language programmes embedded in the Bachelor's Degree in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, namely English for Specific Purposes.

Before doing so, two principles should be remembered: variety and flexibility. These are inherent to a realistic, efficient programme adapted to the needs of Translation and Interpreting students. Variety allows students to be involved in several types of activities, using a wide selection of materials, while flexibility plays a key role when implementing a programme in the classroom setting. Flexible teachers are capable of making their syllabus flexible and they can change and adapt their plan according to the circumstances and the students' needs, for ex-

ample, by altering the order of their thematic units or adapting the contents that may vary from one academic year to another, depending on constraints such as student level, especially in the first year.

Furthermore, within the context of the Bologna Process which has led to the convergence of national Higher Education policies toward a common model, teaching programmes have another important characteristic: one which refers to the allocation of credits to the different components of a study year based on a realistic estimation of the student workload. Following the indications of the Spanish Ministry of Education for the Bachelor's Degree in Translation and Interpreting, one credit is equivalent to 25 hours of student workload. These hours are then divided among theoretical classes, practical classes, laboratory work, tutorials, individual student work and preparation for exams and coursework. For the four English language subjects in the Bachelor's Degree in Translation and Interpreting (Language BI English, Language BII English, Language BIII English, Language BIV English), 40% of the time must be dedicated to classroom teaching, including theoretical classes, practical classes and laboratory work. This is because, during the process of learning/acquiring the English language for translators, contact between the teacher and learners, and interaction among peers, are essential to the development of highly communicative tasks.

Additionally, within classroom teaching, more importance is granted to practice than theory. Although we are aware that Language B English is clearly aimed at practice, it also requires a reasonable percentage of hours to be dedicated to work (basically presentations) related to all kinds of issues (grammatical, lexical, textual, etc.). In an eminently practical degree, such as Translation and Interpreting, theory and practice are closely interrelated: problems that arise in practice require theoretical explanations and these lead to practical exercises.

The allocation of hours allows us to organise different teaching and learning activities according to the aims and competencies that have been set previously. Depending on the general and specific competencies to be acquired by students of Language B English throughout their studies, teaching, and learning activities must mainly focus on those that the student must face in real communication scenarios –in other words, comprehension, production, interaction, and mediation activities– through tasks that involve these activities. The characteristics of the tasks that should be developed (material used, subject/topic, duration, number of participants, instructions, etc.) and their development conditions (when, how, and where) will essentially be based on the specific objectives to be achieved.

Classroom teaching is carried out in the language that is the subject of study to guarantee greater direct exposure to this language, and it will be organised in a way as to favour communication among students. To do so, it is important to propose different activities that promote group dynamics and that create a climate

of collaboration, empathy, respect, and interest. The means, methods and materials used must be as close as possible to those students may encounter during their professional careers and they must be selected based on their suitability to achieving such goals (Carrasco, 2019).

These principles also apply for work carried out outside the classroom, where the means, methods, and materials must be carefully selected by the teacher, bearing in mind all the aforementioned competencies and student interests. The resources required to develop different tasks must contribute to the process of internalising the contents of the programme. In this regard, the introduction of ICT and the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria's virtual Intranet platform help to make language learning more accessible to students outside the classroom.

The four English language programmes have been subdivided in thematic units to order the content that is believed to correspond to the profile of English language applied to translation. Such units are focused on basic conceptual outlines and in turn divided or organised into three main blocks. The first one is related to the contents linked to general linguistic competence, which may be grammatical, lexical/semantic, phonetic, phonological or orthographic aspects. The second block addresses practising and developing receptive, productive, and interactive skills. The third block has a cultural and professional focus in which aspects of socio-cultural competence, contrastive linguistics, the use of information sources, or aspects related to carrer development are considered.

All in all, from Language BI to Language BIV English, the aim is to gradually educate and train students to use the language with absolute confidence and flexibility at an advanced level, both receptively and productively, in both spoken and written form. They will also be taught to mediate between speakers of different languages, for social and professional purposes that require understanding and analysing different types of semi-specialised and specialised source texts and producing high-quality target texts.

At the highest level, as seen in Table 1, the module structure has been devised in consideration of the different fields of specialisation in the Bachelor's Degree in Translation and Interpreting, namely audiovisual translation, economic/legal translation, commercial/tourism translation and scientific/technical translation. The main aim of each module is to educate students to develop skills and competencies that allow them to analyse highly specialised texts, both in terms of language and content, thus preparing them to develop their future tasks as translators or interpreters.

Table I. Module structure of LBIV English.

Module 1: ACADEMIC ENGLISH	Unit 1: Reading academic texts Unit 2: Note-taking, summarising and synthesising Unit 3: Reading critically Unit 4: Academic writing Unit 5: Speaking in academic contexts
Module 2: FINANCIAL ENGLISH	Unit 6: Invest your money Unit 7: Trust your bank Unit 8: Take control of your finances Unit 9: The Great Depression Unit 10: Poverty
Module 3: SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ENGLISH	Unit 11: Gadgets and inventions Unit 12: Man and tomorrow's world Unit 13: A scientific experiment Unit 14: Medical case reports Unit 15: A scientific lecture
Module 4: LEGAL ENGLISH	Unit 16: Death penalty Unit 17: Legal profession overview Unit 18: Defamation Unit 19: Court cases and law reports Unit 20: Understanding legal documents and contracts
Module 5: ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS AND TOURISM	Unit 21: Let's do tourism Unit 22: Advertising for holidays Unit 23: Fair trade Unit 24: Job satisfaction and motivation Unit 25: Culture shock: etiquette and protocol

Unlike programmes of General English, the specific aims of the different modules bear in mind the students' high degree of specialisation and their future needs as professional translators and interpreters.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this article was to provide the necessary background to strongly claim that foreign languages in translation and interpreting studies must be considered languages for specific purposes, as their teaching implies choosing a differentiated course design, selecting different material, and taking into account

students' needs and both students and teachers' characteristics. Even though there is a certain logic in separating the criteria of language acquisition from those of translator training, it has become obvious over the years that translator trainees need to develop language competencies that are relevant to their future areas of specialisation, hence the need for teachers to adopt a goal-directed approach aimed at preparing students for their future profession.

As such, language teachers should quickly move from a general language approach to a more professional and specific approach, tailoring course contents to their students' needs. The combination of general foreign language competencies, supposedly acquired before starting higher education studies, and professional competencies linked to the fields of translation and interpreting seems quite obvious in order to train students to communicate effectively both within and across professional boundaries. Teachers must always bear in mind that the ultimate aim of the teaching/acquisition process is to enhance the employability and professional development of their students.

This is precisely why this study advocates for the necessity of overlap between language and translation teaching, following Kiraly's suggestion of a strong connection between language competence and translation skills (Kiraly, 2000) and concurring with Carreres (2014) that "[w]ell-designed translation-based language learning activities can help both the general language learner and the future translator enhance both their language skills and their sensitivity to some of the challenges encountered in real-world translation" (p. 129). The author also adds that all teachers involved in translator training should "recognise the natural connection that exists between language and translation education" (p. 131).

In this respect, task-based activities are undoubtedly necessary to increase not only translator trainees' language competence, but also their autonomy, motivation and critical thinking. However, as Bernardini (2016) puts it, "there is also a risk, in a professionally oriented field like translator education/training, of excessive preoccupation with technical expertise" (p. 29), arguing that students need to be prepared for a life-long career and rapidly changing market conditions, hence the necessity "to strike a balance between academic and vocational priorities" (p. 29). This is particularly why "the enhancement of critical thinking during their studies will prepare students to make well-founded decisions and choices in their [...] careers" (Mitchell-Schuitevoerder, 2014, p. 241).

Summing up, foreign languages applied to translation and interpreting can only be claimed to be languages for specific purposes. This consideration has direct implications in the ways they should be taught in translator training institutions.

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