Technology Integration in Translator Training in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract: *Although translation students at the college of Languages and Translation in Saudi Arabia take two courses in computer applications in translation, these two courses are inadequate in preparing translation graduates for the translation job market. Results of an interview questionnaire have showed that the content of these courses is inadequate. In the introductory course, students are introduced to the components of computers, computer hardware and they are trained to use the MS WORD, POWERPOINT and EXCEL programs. In the advanced course, the students are introduced to theoretical issues in machine translation. They never have a chance to use machine translation systems. In order for the students to be able to meet the demands of the translation labor market in the 21st century, they need to practice using advance translation software such as Trados and speech recognition software. They need to be introduced to online specialized dictionaries and terminology databanks, online resources, online translation tools, translation directories, translation associations, translation journals online translation job sites, and how to communicate with other translators in other parts of the world.*

Keywords: *translator training, computer-aided translation, translation technologies, translation tools.*

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the major recent developments in the translation industry is the introduction of computer technology. In the past 25 years, more than 80 computer-aided translation (CAT) systems were developed by companies in different countries for different purposes and different language pairs; more than 600 multinational corporations use computer-aided translation systems to solve their language problems; and more than 150,000 people are currently working as computer-aided translators in Europe and the Americas (Sin-wai, 2009). The number of institutions offering computer-aided translation training to students has also dramatically increased. For example, Chung, (2009) indicated that the Translation Department at the Chinese University of Hong Kong was the first translation department in the world to establish a Master of Arts Program in Computer-aided Translation (MACAT) in 2002. In this MACAT program, the students are introduced to computer applications in translation, including the use and design of specialized translation software to enhance students' skills in translation technology, to meet the challenges of the future. The program courses such as (i) Introduction to Computer-aided Translation (ii) Translation Theory and Methodology (iii) Editing Skills for Computer Translation (iv) Computer-aided Translation Project (Computer Translation Project). The students may specialize in one of the following three areas: (a) Translation Practice (b) Computer-aided Translation (c) Computer Science. Sin-wai (2009) added that The Chinese University also provides translation students enrolled in the MACAT Program with several electronic facilities such as the Translation Software Library, the Digital Library of Computer-aided Translation, the Computer-aided Translation Search System, the Remote-access System, the Video Archive for the Operation of Computer-aided Translation Systems, the Manual Archive of CAT Systems, and the Translation Project Archive.

In addition, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University offered a new course called "Computer Assisted Translation" for the MA program in translation. This course aims to help students acquire fundamental knowledge and useful skills in the application of computer tools and resources for Chinese, English and multilingual translation. The students learn to take advantage of automatic computer translation by effective editing of source and target texts. They take laboratory training in applying computer tools and developing software resources. The course is assessed by three assignments in translation-oriented computer application, including a group project to find or select a problem in language translation and to create an effective software tool/resource to help solve the problem. The project also requires the students to write a brief research report (Xiaoheng, 2009).

The Yaxin Computer-aided Translation Teaching System has five major components:

- A platform that helps students study, complete assignments and take tests. The platform has an assignment marking tool, a resource searching tool, and a tool for statistical analysis of resources.
- A platform for helping teachers to manage translation teaching resources, prepare lectures, manage student affairs, and develop translation resources.
- A platform for creating specialized corpora and concordancing.
- A platform for translation training. It provides pre-translation analysis, use of translation units, and provision of terms and sentences.

- A platform for interactive translation teaching management to meet the needs of multimedia online teaching. It is a multifunctional system that provides screenplay, remote instructions, teacher-student dialogue, document transmission, electronic whiteboard, and other similar functions (Mei (2009).

Duoxiu (2009) reviewed the teaching of Computer-aided Translation as a course at Beihang University in China over the past five years. The course is an integration of theory and practice. Its components include the history of machine translation and computer-aided translation, principles of computer-aided translation research and development, translation aids of various types, corpus and computer-aided translation, terminology and termbank, alignment and translation memory, and others.

In 2007, the School of Translation and Interpretation (STI) at the University of Ottawa developed a Collection of Electronic Resources in Translation Technologies (CERTT) to help trainers and students explore and use over 25 computer tools for translators, in addition to a collection of tutorials, exercises, corpora, sample files and other resources is available online. The aim of CERTT was to highlight the usefulness and facilitate the integration of translation technologies in a range of applications in translation, terminology and other language professions (Bowker, 2009).

Between 2000-2004, the Savonlinna School of Translation Studies in Finland established a specialized three-year Computing for Language Careers (COLC) project, designed to update the translation and interpreting curriculum of its degree program. A total of 15 new computer-related courses were offered by the project. The researchers found that both students and teachers were aware of the need to familiarize themselves with the new translation technologies. But at the same time the project revealed several problem areas. The major challenges of the project were organization and scheduling, outsourcing teaching, transfer of knowledge and students' attitudes (Jaatinen & Jääskeläinen (2006).

II. NEED FOR STUDY

At the College of Languages and Translation (COLT), King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, students enrolled in the 5-year B.A. program take 18 translation courses in 18 subject areas, 6 interpreting courses, and 2 Computer Applications in Translation courses as part of their training as professional translators and interpreters. In this day and age in which computer technology has become one of the major recent developments in the translation industry, one wonders whether the Computer Application Courses offered to translation students at COLT meet future English-Arabic translators' and employers' needs in Saudi Arabia. Therefore the present study aims to describe and assess the experience of the COLT translation graduates and their overall satisfaction with and usefulness of the CAT training they received at COLT; to find out which computer skills were emphasized and hardware and software were introduced by the program; which translation websites, organizations, online dictionaries, directories, translation centers in Saudi Arabia, Arab World and Worldwide were introduced by the program; whether the graduates found the CAT skills practiced and acquired useful in performing the translation job; and which CAT skills are required by the translation job market.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

With technologies becoming more firmly and widely established in the language industries, translator training programs must produce graduates who are knowledgeable about and comfortable with today's translation tools (Bowker (2009). The Internet and cyberspace are becoming important tools of learning as the traditional physical facilities of the classroom –the book and library (Chung, 2009). Therefore, the current study is significant as it will show translation instructors at COLT what translation graduates think of the content of the Computer Applications in Translation courses that they took, and whether they found the content useful for practice in the translation labor market. It will also show them which technologies and internet skills translations students need to acquire to help them in their future job.

IV. PARTICIPANTS

Seventy two female translation graduates participated in the study. All of the participants were working as English-Arabic and Arabic-English translators and/or interpreters. All of the participants have completed 172 hours of language courses, linguistics, translation and interpreting courses, Computer Applications in Translation I (2 hrs) and Computer Applications in Translation II (2 hours). Their work experience ranges between few months and 10 years.

V. INTERVIEWS

All the participants were interviewed by the author. They were asked open-ended questions about the content taught in the two computer applications in translation courses offered by COLT, computer skills emphasized, hardware and software introduced, translation software, websites, organizations, online dictionaries, organizations, translation directories, translation centers in Saudi Arabia, Arab World and Worldwide, whether the students found the skills practiced and acquired useful in performing the translation job, computer skills required by the translation job and which Internet and computer skills are required by the translation and interpreting job market in general and Saudi Arabia in particular.

Participant responses were analyzed qualitatively.

VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since the Computer Applications in Translation courses are taught by different instructors over the semesters who select their own course content, students' opinions in the present study only reflect the sample of graduates who participated in the present study and may not be generalizable to subsequent students who might have taken the course with different instructors and who might have studied a different content. As technology advances so fast, course instructors in subsequent semesters may introduce students to technologies not mentioned by the subjects in the present study.

VII. RESULTS

Results of the interview-questionnaire administered to the COLT graduates working as translators/interpreters showed that the content of the two courses in Computer Applications in Translation that they have taken during their preparation as professional translators is inadequate. They indicated that the introductory course in computer applications in translation is taught by T.A.'s with a B.A. degree in computer science that is not familiar with computer-aided translation. In this course, students are introduced to the components of computers, computer hardware and they are trained to use the MS WORD, POWERPOINT and EXCEL programs. They also indicated that they did not learn anything beyond what they have learnt in high school about MS WORD, POWERPOINT and EXCEL. They Have not even mastered basic word-processing and presentation skills such as using bullets, numbering, formatting headings and sub-heading, when to use bold and italic font styles, organizing the title slide, the font size appropriate for a slide title and slide content, what the different types of Powerpoint slides mean and which information goes where.

In the advanced Computer Applications in Translation course, the participants reported that students are introduced to general theoretical issues in machine translation but never have a chance to use machine translation systems online such as Systran.

Although the students take 18 translation courses in 18 subject areas, classroom instruction is still traditional and only depends on print texts and oral discussion of the translation using the white board. Many write their weekly translation assignments by hand. Some type their weekly assignments of the translation project by themselves. However, most participants type with one or two fingers and are slow in typing because they were not trained to touch-type.

Most participants indicated that they were not familiar with bilingual specialized online dictionaries and glossaries (English-Arabic and Arabic-English). In most specialized translation courses that they took, they checked paper dictionaries or a pocket electronic dictionary. They were not introduced to online terminology databanks such as the Saudi Terminology Databank hosted by King Abdul-Aziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) in Riyadh. This databank has about 400,000 entries in numerous specialized fields. They never checked the online specialized dictionaries of the Arabization Center in Morocco nor those hosted by the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo.

The participants have not acquired efficient searching skills of search engines such as Google. Most of the time, they do not obtain relevant results when they search for certain information because they never received any training in selecting, narrowing, and broadening of search terms, not how to use Boolean operators and truncation searching strategies

Online courses were not used in translation instruction and online social networks were not part of their academic training either.

Many participants reported that they did not receive any training and were not familiarized with translation memories ™ such as SDL Trados and OmegaT or subtitling software. Some private companies in Saudi Arabia such as ARAMCO use CAT systems in translation, with which the COLT graduates working there were not familiar. The participants also wished they received training in subtitling T.V. interviews, movies and documentaries. They wished they were introduced to online translation job, online resources, translation directories, translation associations, translation journals and how to communicate with other translators in other parts of the world.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the present study and in order for English-Arabic and Arabic English translation students to be able to meet the demands of the translation labor market in the 21st century, the translation program at the College of Languages and Translation needs to integrate several technologies and computer-aided translation skills in translator training such as:

Touch typing and advanced word processing, document formatting and presentation skills.
How to use Google's Language Tools and to check language usage and collocations to get accurate results within seconds by using proper search methods, by restricting searches, broadening and narrowing of terms; using Boolean operators, truncation, wild cards, descriptors, keywords; and how students can efficiently and effectively check on usage and improve translation quality.

Arabic Online resources such as:
Arabic monolingual dictionaries: https://archive.is/lexicons.ajeeb.com
www.voiceofarabic.net/
www.ahlalhdeeth.com/vb/showthread.php?t=20417
www.arabichmat.jeeran.com/
 www.alukah.net/Audio_Books/0/15816/
www.qatarlinks.com/qatar-1893.html
http://www.majma.org.jo/majma/index.php/2008-12-21-12-07-30.html
Online English-Arabic/Arabic-English specialized dictionaries and English-Arabic/ Arabic-English terminology databanks such as:
Saudi Terminology Databank: http://basm.kacst.edu.sa/
http://www.almaany.com
http://www.lexilogos.com/english/arabic_dictionary.htm
http://dictionary.babylon-software.com
Online Dictionaries - Arabic Dictionaries: http://multilingualbooks.com/onlinedicts-arabic.html
Unified Terminology Databank from the Arabization Center in Morocco
http://www.arabization.org.ma/بنكالمصطلحاتالموحدة.aspx
http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-
URL_ID=22214&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
http://www.arabterm.org/index.php?id=3&L=1

      Computer Aided Translation Tool (CAT): A CAT tool is a computer program that helps a translator to work efficiently. This is achieved through three main functions: (i) A CAT tool breaks texts into segments (sentences or sentence fragments) and presents the segments in a convenient way, to make translating easier and faster. In some tools, for example MetaTexis, each segment is presented in a special box, and the translation can be entered in another box right below the source text. The translation of each segment is saved together with the source text. Source text and translation will always be treated and presented as a translation unit (TU). The translator can return to a segment at any time to check the translation. There are special functions which help to navigate through the text and to find segments which need to be translated or revised (quality control). The main function of a CAT tool is to save the translation units in a database, called translation memory (TM), so that they can be re-used for any other text, or even in the same text. Through special "fuzzy search" features the search functions of CAT tools can also find segments which do not match 100%. This saves time and effort and helps the translator to use consistent terminology (www.proz.com/cat). Examples of CAT tools are SDL Trados 2007, Wordfast, OmegaT and Déjà Vu X Software, Whitesmoke.

      Collaborative project management and operation platforms designed and developed to facilitate cooperation between translation teams such as the Transn Collaborative Translation and Management Platform. These platforms integrate advanced IT technologies, Internet technologies and project management technologies and make it possible to control project progress in real time through the Internet, share terminology databases remotely and in real time and translate, edit and proofread the work synchronously. Such systems can significantly improve translation teams' work efficiency and quality. The visualized process and management mode effectively integrates the terms and translator resources so that the production cost is dramatically reduced. Such platforms are useful for translation companies, translation work teams and the translation departments attached to small, medium and large enterprises (Zhantao (2009).

Translation memories:
- SDL Tradus Studio
- OmegaT
- MyMemory
- TAUS
- Linguee
- Glosbe
- TTMEM
- DGT-Translation Memory
- MetaTexis
- Wordfast Pro
- Deja Vu X3

Speech recognition software:
- iSpeech Translator
- Scribe Speech Solutions
- SESTEK Speech Recognition
- SmartAction Speech IVR System

- Speechmatics
- cue-me
- Braina
- Speechnotes
- LilySpeech
- Speechlogger
- Protokol
- Ameyo Engage

Text translation on the web such as:
https://translate.google.com
https://www.bing.com/translator
www.rosettastone.com
www.microsofttranslator.com/
http://translation.babylon-software.com
http://www.worldlingo.com/en/resources/arabic_dictionaries.html
http://www.arabtrans.com/
http://translate.reference.com
http://translation2.paralink.com
https://www.collinsdictionary.com/translator
Software for subtitling, captioning, teletext, and DVD:
Subtitler: http://www.afterdawn.com/software/audio_video/subtitle_tools/virtualdub_subtitler_plugin.cfm
Movie subtitles: https://isubtitles.net
www.eztitles.com/
subtitling Software: http://subtitling.com/products/subtitle-create/create/wincaps-q4-subtitling-software/
How to locate other English-Arabic translators in other parts of the world and communicate with them through email, mailing lists and social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Linkedin.
Online discussion forums for English-Arabic translators **such as:**
http://www.proz.com/forum/arabic-45.html
http://help.berberber.com/forum20/10498-english_arabic_translation_5000_words.html
http://www.atida.org/forums/
Arab Translators International: http://www.atinternational.org/forums/
http://www.translatorscafe.com/cafe/MegaBBS/forumthread27520.htm
English-Arabic and international translation associations such as:
http://atida.org/
Arab Organization for Translation: http://www.aot.org.lb/Home/index.php?Lang=en
Arabization of Health Sciences Network "AHSN": http://www.emro.who.int/ahsn/AboutAHSN.htm
Translation associations in USA: http://daytranslations.com/usa_translation_organizations.aspx
http://www.proz.com/translator_associations?group_type=is_an_association
FIT - International Federation of Translators (Canada)
http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=1611&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=-473.html
International Federation of Translators: http://www.fit-ift.org/
International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters: https://www.iapti.org
International Association of Conference Interpreters: https://aiic.net
Translators Without Borders: http://translatorswithoutborders.org
www.notisnet.org/
English-Arabic and international translation and Arabization journals such as META, BABEL, Arabization. Turjuman, Linguistica Communicato, Journal of Translation, the Arabic Language Journal.
The following translation journals/magazines are also available on the Internet:
http://www.accurapid.com/journal
http://www.sil.org/siljot
http://www.jostrans.org/index.php
http://www.translatingtoday.co.uk
http://www.bokorlang.com/journal
http://www.sil.org/siljot
http://www.jostrans.org/index.php
http://www.translorial.com
Translation directories such as:
www.proz.com
www.translationdirectory.com

www.translatorscafe.com
www.translatorfinder.com
www.linguistlist.org
Online translation job websites such as:
http://www.translatorsbase.com/projects.asp?url_entry=TranslationJournal
www.121translation.com/
http://www.proz.com/arabic-translation-jobs
 www.traduguide.com
www.trally.com/
www.translatorstown.com/
www.translatorstown.com/
http://www.verbalizeit.com
https://www.odesk.com/o/jobs/browse/skill/translation-english-arabic/
http://www.translationdirectory.com/translation_jobs.php
http://www.communicationdubai.com
Social media translation pages such as Facebook pages and Twitter accounts such as COLTies.
Mobile translation Apps such as mobile monolingual and bilingual dictionaries and mobile translators.

Translator training programs can also meet future English-Arabic translators' and employers' needs with limited time and resources by encouraging students to work with tools outside the "core" technology courses, independently and in practical translation and interpreting courses and workshops organized by COLT. Achieving this goal has some challenges, and it requires an investment of time and effort on the part of trainers and students as well.

IX. CONCLUSION

Future studies may replicate this follow-up study every five years or so to find out the changes that have taken place in the Computer Applications in Translation course content and which translation technologies have been added and practiced by the students and whether they found them useful to their career.

Training courses might be held in which translation instructors are introduced to Google's Language Tools, online Arabic resources, online English-Arabic and Arabic-English specialized dictionaries and terminology databanks, computer aided translation tools (CAT), project management and operation platforms designed and developed to facilitate cooperation between translation teams, translation memories, speech recognition software, text translation, software for subtitling, captioning, teletext, and DVD, how to locate other English-Arabic translators in other parts of the world, online discussion forums for English-Arabic translators, English-Arabic and international translation associations, translation and Arabization journals, translation directories, online translation job websites and others. Then experimental studies can be conducted to assess the effect of this training on translation students' skill development in the use of translation technologies and skills in searching for anything related to translation.

Since there are numerous translation programs offered by different Saudi universities, comparative studies of the computer technologies available and used by translation instructors and students might be conducted to find out which programs are more effective in developing students skill in using translation technologies.

Finally, a survey of the translation technologies which the translation labor market requires translators to use is still open for further investigation.

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&ei=A21NTKKMM9G6jAfAnZHZDA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=12&ved=0CE0Q6AEwCw#v=onepage&q&f=false
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