Teaching Translation: Exploring the Interplay of Pedagogical and Didactic Frameworks

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Abstract

Discussing teaching, regardless of its type, inevitably leads us to talk about the two fundamental pillars upon which it relies: pedagogy and didactics. Through this article, we aim to explore the pedagogical and didactics frameworks of teaching translation, drawing on the opinions of some translation scholars in educational publications related to this field, along with the conditions that should be considered in teaching translation in general to achieve the desired goals of training in translation specialty. Our goal is to highlight critical considerations for translation instructors in Algeria, guiding them to reassess translation training programs and enhance teaching methodologies by incorporating strategic pedagogical and didactics insights.

Keywords : Teaching translation, pedagogical framework, didactics framework, educational publications, conditions for teaching translation, translation didactics lesson, teaching improvement.

1. Introduction

The process of teaching translation is essentially a communicative process that only occurs with the presence of three elements: the instructor, the teaching, and the student. This process can be represented by the following schematic:
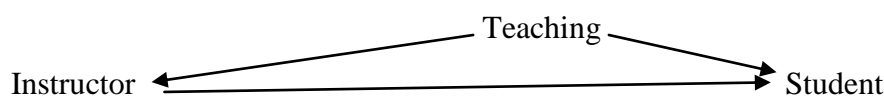
In any serious educational process, such as the process of teaching translation, it is imperative to rely on two scientific pillars:

➢ **Pedagogy:** It is a term that refers to the scientific methodologies that extend beyond the lesson structure to addressing its content, the process of teaching and acquisition, as well as creating a suitable teaching environment.
➢ **Didactics:** This field is situated within pedagogy, aiming to apply pedagogical concepts to enhance teaching. It focuses on both content and teaching methods simultaneously, as well as on strategies that enable students to be more effective in their learning.

The works of theorists Jean Vinay and Paul Darbelnet (1958), as well as the works of Jean Delisle (1980), serve as exemplars in the field of pedagogy and the didactics of translation, marking significant and effective milestones in the domain of translation teaching. The aim of these theorists' work was to identify and analyze the elements of translational competence in order to rationalize its learning. Starting from the concept of "good translation," these theorists proposed pedagogical suggestions. (Fiola, https://www.erudit.org).[1]

These individuals view translation as a process that allows for the interplay of languages, and asserting that the approach adopted in the translation process is inherently diversified. Thus, translation enables highlighting differences in lexical details and grammatical structures between the two languages, thereby contributing to the learning of the foreign language.

As language and culture are intertwined, words encompass cultural truths that may be challenging to transfer from one language to another and from one culture to another. This implies that learning foreign languages assists learners in general, and translators in particular, in acquiring a cognitive repertoire, skills, and linguistic resources that enable them to gain translation skills and master its principles. From this point, we pose our question to understand the mechanisms and methods that govern the process of teaching translation, and the challenges that need to be addressed in this regard, or rather, the methods and approaches that enable it.

Teaching translation and imparting its techniques to students effectively represent the crux of our inquiry in an attempt to understand the current challenges related to research on translation teaching, and whether the method is regulated by pedagogical or didactic methods.

2. The Concept of Pedagogical Framework

The term "pedagogy" is used in two complementary concepts: theoretical and practical.

➢ **The theoretical concept:**Pedagogy is a cognitive field based on analyzing the nature of the content of related disciplines and identifying the audience it is directed towards. It also reflects on the goals of actions, their orientations, and regulating the activities that shall be practiced in the educational context.

➢ **The practical concept:**Pedagogy is a collection of practices and actions carried out by both the teacher and the students within the classroom. This means that pedagogy, in the practical sense, manifests itself during work through the pedagogical approach adopted by the teacher to convey knowledge to the students, as well as how he deals with acquisition difficulties and finds solutions for them.

Pedagogy constantly seeks to reconsider the contents of teaching, its curricula, and the methods of implementing it in reality in order to achieve a good quality of teaching that keeps pace with the various developments in society in all its educational, ethical, scientific, economic, and other aspects.

Ali Rashed defines pedagogy as "A planned system of actions intended to lead to the growth and learning of students in their various aspects. This system includes a set of purposeful activities performed by both the teacher and the learner and comprises three elements: a teacher, a learner, and a curriculum. These elements are dynamic in nature, and the system includes a linguistic activity as a primary means of communication alongside silent communication methods. The aim of this system is to impart to students the appropriate knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and inclinations." (Ali Rashed, cited in Taouini).[2]

Françoise Clerc defines pedagogy as "The totality of scientific and practical knowledge, relational, and social skills mobilized to design and implement teaching strategies.«The entirety of scientific and practical knowledge, as well as interpersonal and social skills, that are mobilized to conceive and implement teaching strategies».[3] (Françoise Clerc: 2013)

2. 1 Translation Pedagogy

Lederer believes that translation pedagogy starts from the premise that languages are acquired and aims to train translation professionals by instilling methods of researching the meanings of texts and finding equivalences. She states:«Translation pedagogy, on the other hand, starts from the assumption that languages are known and aims to train translation professionals by imparting methods for understanding the meaning of texts and creating equivalences.» [4] (Lederer 1994, p.145).

The aim of translation pedagogy in her view is to establish a method that does justice to the original by finding equivalences. «... Translation pedagogy, on the other hand, aims to establish a method that does justice to the original through the creation of equivalences.» [5](Lederer, Ibid)

Pedagogical translation is an instrumental kind of control, as it allows for controlling understanding and solidifying structures and acquisitions. Therefore, the primary function of translation activity in this case is to test the skill and efficiency of those who practice it, and the teacher's decision is decisive in judging the deviation from the proposed model.

Elisabeth Lavault points out that pedagogical translation does not only involve exercises but also encompasses all situations in which the teacher resorts to using learners' native language. This happens when the teacher feels the need to translate a word, expression, or part of the phrase just presented. There are cases where the teacher sees that translation within the language is not possible or sufficient, or when they need to explain new syntactic difficulties and comment on them by resorting to literal or word-for-word translation. This approach is not an absolute necessity but rather a convenient means to save time and support efficiency and accuracy. (Lavault, 1998).[6]

2.2 Principles of Pedagogy According to Amparo Hurtado Albir:

According to **Albir**, pedagogy entails three principles:

➢ **Learning through Practice**

Acquiring knowledge and learning are deemed effective through active and practical training, i.e., through practice. Practice is a fundamental principle in modern teaching pedagogy, as stated by **Confucius**: «I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand».

➢ **Learning to Navigate Contexts**

Albir illustrates the role of translation in the process of learning a foreign language, emphasizing its dual educational function. Firstly, translation serves to assess the learner's acquired knowledge, ensuring that they have effectively mastered vocabulary and grammar rules and can employ them correctly. Secondly, translation acts as a support for the teacher, aiding in the recall of information. Through evaluating learners' translations, the teacher gains insight into the effectiveness of the teaching method and the students' learning process. (Albir, 2008: 17- 64)[7]

➢ **Learning Comprehensively**

This pertains not only to the training of professionals but also to individual training, namely individuals capable of learning, communicating, collaborating, empathizing, critiquing, self-motivating, and independently building their knowledge. What's most important is acquiring emotional, relational, and behavioral capabilities, as well as dealing with information tools. (Albir, Ibid)[8]

The question posed regarding textbooks on translation, and the lessons provided in translation schools and institutes, grounded in sophisticated pedagogy, no longer requires revisiting at present. The answer lies in Jean Delisle's article titled: «Translation Manuals: Attempt at Classification» (Delisle,1992)

Delisle mentions in his article six general observations on educational textbooks in translation published between 1952 and 1992, totaling forty-nine books. In his fifth observation, he states:«Several textbooks are aimed at a very broad and often poorly defined audience».[9]This implies that many educational textbooks are directed towards an overly diverse and frequently undefined audience.He justifies this in his sixth observation by saying:«Manuscripts often lack homogeneity, which is the inevitable consequence of the previous point». (Delisle, Ibid)[10]. This observation suggests that educational textbooks lack consistency, a deficiency that is an inevitable consequence of the aforementioned point.

Delisle suggests that it would be remarkable if the content of a technical translation course were identical to that of a literary translation course in a translation school. He states:«It would be surprising if in a translation school, the content of the technical translation course was identical to that of the literary translation course» (Delisle, Ibid).[11]
   Delisle emphasizes the utmost importance of fundamental pedagogical vocabulary. He considers it essential for acquiring translation skills rationally—a crucial element often overlooked by many authors of specialized translation textbooks. In this regard, he cautions against confusing these terms with general linguistic concepts:«It thus appears necessary to

impart the basic metalanguage of translation pedagogy, which must not be confused with the concepts of general linguistics». (Delile,1993) [12]

The crux of the matter is that pedagogy does not stop at the structure of the lesson, as we have indicated, but goes beyond it to address its content, the process of teaching, and acquisition. It also prepares the suitable teaching environment, aided by didactics. So, what is didactics?

2. 3 Didactics

This field is situated within pedagogy, aiming to apply pedagogical concepts to enhance teaching. It focuses on both content and teaching methods simultaneously, as well as on strategies that enable students to be more effective in their learning.

The teaching of translation in the West has been associated with language teaching since the Middle Ages. The aim was to impart grammar rules to learners, a practice that continued during the Renaissance. This method was known as: The Method-Grammar-Translation, which is where grammar was acquired through translation. This method saw remarkable success during the 19th century and was adopted by European countries and North American nations until the 1950s, when a new method emerged called: The Method-Reading-Translation, which is the aimed at acquiring reading skills through translation. Often, this method was confused with its predecessor.

With the advancement of science and the evolution of teaching curricula and methods, that method underwent substantial revisions. The emergence of translation studies had a significant impact on the field, yet linguistic acquisition remained relevant in the latest curricula and even in translation studies because there is no translation without language. James Stratton Holmes, a pioneer in translation studies, emphasized linguistic acquisition alongside translator training, considering translation as an educational task classified within applied translation studies.

Michel Ballard asserts that contrastive linguisticsis highly beneficial and productive within the broader framework of translation (Ballard,1995).[13]Undoubtedly, the significant breakthrough in translation didactics was brought about by the book:«Comparative Stylistics of French and English», authored by **Jean Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet**. Vinay announced the birth of a new science called "Comparative Stylistics" in 1957, and in 1958, the first edition of the referred book was published. It is the first book in translation based on a pedagogical analysis, as acknowledged by Ines OsekiDépré (1999).[14]

As **Vinay and Darbelnet** stated, their book aims to facilitate the translator's understanding of the difficulties encountered and to classify them into specific categories, supported by concrete examples. This endeavor is considered one of the main efforts of contemporary translation pedagogy.It is the central objective of the content of the second chapter of Delisle's book entitled:«Analysis of Discourse as a Method of Translation» (1981)[15]

The appearance of **Vinay and Darbelnet's** book caused a significant stir and enjoyed remarkable success. Georges Mounin praised it in 1960, considering it the first treatise on

translation, despite acknowledging the existence of other works on translation. He stated:«This work is undoubtedly the first treatise on translation» (Mounin,1960)[16]

Michel Ballard responded to Mounin's statement, saying about the book:«It is true that at the time, it appeared as something new and revolutionary, especially in the eyes of students (including ourselves), who for the first time were confronted with an orderly presentation of problems that had previously been encountered in a disorderly manner, randomly in the translation of texts, and not always identified because description and naming are necessary for identification». (Ballard, Op.cit)[17]

The essence of **Ballard's** commentary is that **Vinay and Darbelnet's** book is the first to provide students with a systematic overview of translation problems they had previously encountered scattered and identified only by chance while translating texts, as phenomena cannot be identified before they are described and named.

Balard also spoke in 2006 about the remarkable success that the book achieved with its creative approach, stating:«This method has experienced remarkable success, as more than forty years after its publication, it undoubtedly remains the most widely accepted and frequently cited and discussed reference work. It even received an English translation by Sager and Hamel, published in 1995 by Benjamins» (Ballard,2006).[18]

The implication of this statement is that Vinay and Darbelnet's book with its approach has enjoyed remarkable success. After more than forty years since its publication, it has remained unquestionably the most widely accepted and frequently referenced reference work. It even had the privilege of being translated into English by Sager and Hamel, published in 1995.

The book later faced numerous criticisms, with Danica Seleskovitch describing it in harsh terms. A comparison in the pedagogy and teaching of translation is now made between two approaches: the comparative or differential approach of Vinay and Darbelnet, which is criticized for focusing on language and neglecting the meaning, and the interpretive method of Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer, based on the theory of meaning.

The truth is that **Vinay and Darbelnet** did not neglect the meaning at all, as they explain on page 173 of their book that in some cases, translation is not evident from the structure or context, but rather from the overall meaning, which is only perceptible to those who are aware of the situation.«There are cases [...] where the translation does not emerge from either the structure or the context, but where the ultimate and overall meaning is perceptible only to those who know the situation».

Vinay and Darbelnet assert that situations do not exist in dictionaries.«The situations are not found in dictionaries»On page 175, they explain the importance of contexts in comparative stylistics, stating:«The study of situations is [...] essential in comparative stylistics, as it alone allows one to decide, ultimately, the meaning of a message». (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958)[19]

Whatever the case may be, no one denies the merit of this book in teaching translation. It suffices that it achieved a balance between theory and practice, which is a significant gain. Delisle acknowledges that the comparative stylistics approach is one of the approaches that

can be beneficial in the field of translation pedagogy, and thus in translation education. (Delisle, 1980)[20]

As we know, Delisle is a pioneer in pedagogy and an advocate for education through acquisition goals. He doesn't speak in vain, and his research in the field of pedagogy and translation education serves as an exemplary model.

3. The Didactics Framework

The concept of the didactic framework refers to the elements that should be taken into consideration in teaching a subject, especially during curriculum development. These elements include the pedagogical measures applied in the classroom, as well as the factors involved at the beginning of the lesson, and the purpose and objectives of the formation ultimately.

According to Elisabeth Lavault (1998), the didactic framework, consists of four categories:

> **Learners Category:** his category specifically includes their prior training, motivations, and training needs.
> **Acquisition Duration:** This encompasses the duration of lessons, sessions, and training programs.
> **Acquisition Space and Methods:** This refers to both physical and virtual classrooms and relates to the overall teaching environment, including the material tools and equipment that aid instruction. It also considers the number of learners and the relative homogeneity among them.
> **Instructors Category:** The impact of instructors significantly influences the didactics framework in any field. Their influence on programs is tied to their interests and pedagogical background, as well as their personal motivations.

Daniel Gile sees translation didactics manifested in two professional and scientific aspects.

> **On the Professional Front**: Didactics is evident in processes of program description and analysis, as well as in what these programs contain in terms of issues and exercises. It also appears in the exchange of ideas among teachers.

> **On the Scientific Fron:** Didactics is demonstrated as applied research, such as evaluating teaching curricula or assessing translation students' knowledge and skills. It also involves admission and progression exams, as well as final exams, aiming to activate them for the present. (From Bani Ameri's lectures, 2013).[22]

Katharina Reiss (1995) contends that the translation didactics lesson can be utilized to unveil the problematics of translation and elucidate the conditions that facilitate achieving the following three objectives:

1. Resolving translation problems and identifying the factors influencing the translation process;
2. Empowering students to provide persuasive arguments when critiquing translations, thereby ensuring constructive criticism;

3. Enabling students to intelligently apply translation comparison.

Rais elaborates on the process in seven points: the translator and the source text, the translation process, the original text author, the message, the language of the original text, the recipient, and the transformation process. Also, she sees the necessity of addressing these elements with explanation and analysis in the translation didactics lesson for the translation act to be fully comprehended. (Bani Ameri, Ibid.)[23]

4. Conclusion:

Pedagogy of translation concerns knowledge and competencies, and everything that aids in acquisition. Meanwhile, translation didactics is linked to teaching translation and aims to facilitate acquisition and competencies. In other words, pedagogy is concerned with what happens in the department, while didactics is concerned with preparing what should happen in the department.

The translation didactics discussed within the framework of translation studies has enabled the differentiation between teaching translation and language teaching, which have long been associated. This comes after dispelling the prevailing belief that translation is merely a transfer from one language to another. (Bani Ameri, Ibid.)[24]

If translation didactics is a fundamental subject in the training of translation students, it is also a fundamental subject in the training of its instructors. In addition to the necessity of teaching translation didactics to students in translation departments, both Delisle (2003) and Ballard (2013) emphasize the importance of teaching the history of translation, as it serves as a gateway to entering the field. They consider university studies in translation incomplete unless supplemented with a study of translation history.

Footnotes:

[1.]Fiola, Marco, Prolégomènes à une didactique de la traduction professionnelle Université du Québec en Outaouais, Gatineau, Canada marco.fiola@uqo.ca (https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/meta/1900-v1-n1-meta615/007594ar.pdf) le 08/11/2021 à 22 h 10 mn.

[2.]Taouini, Ali: Didactics and Pedagogy in Higher Education. University of Algiers.

[3.]Clerc, Françoise, (2013), In, Importance et contribution de la formation pédagogique dans la qualité de l'enseignement supérieur cas des enseignants de la faculté des sciences économiques de l'université de Saida:Yakoubikhelifa et Refafa Abdelaziz, site: https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/downArticle, consulté le 25-08-2023 à 22 :01

[4.]Lederer, Marianne (1994), La traduction aujourd'hui. Le modèle interprétatif, Paris, Hachette, « collection F », p. 224, p.129

[5.]Lederer, (1994), ibid

[6.]Lavault, Elisabeth (1998) Fonctions de la traduction en didactique des langues. Apprendre une langue en apprenant à traduire. Paris : Didier Erudition.

[7.]CNRTL, https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/didactique, le 23/06/22 à 10 h 25)

[8.] Albir Hurtado Amparo, (2008), la formation en traduction: pédagogie, docimologie et technologieI. Revue TTR, volume 21, numéro 1, 1er semestre 2008, p. p.17-64. Site :https: //www.erudit.org/fr/revues/ttr/2008, le 26/12/2021 à 21 h 24 mn.

[9.] Albir, (2008), ibid

[10.] Delisle, Jean, (1992),Les manuels de traduction : essai de classification, revue TTR, Volume 5, numéro 1, 1er semestre 1992, p.p.17-47, https://doi-org/10 le 30-06-2023 à 15h

[11.] Delisle, (1992),ibid.

[12.] Delisle, (1992),ibid.

[13.] Delisle, Jean, (1993). La traduction raisonnée : manuel d'initiation à la traduction professionnelle de l'anglais vers le français, les presses de l'université d'Ottawa, 484.p

[14.] Ballard, M, (1995), histoire et didactique de la traduction, TTR, 8(1),229-246

[15.] https://doi.org/10.7202/037203ar le 03-07-2023 à 10 h

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[19.] Ballard, M, (1995), Op. cit

[20.] Ballard, M, (dir.) (2006): Qu'est-ce que la traductologie? études réunies par Michel Ballard, Arras, Artois Presses Université, 302 p.

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[22.] Delisle, Jean, (1980), op.cit.

[23.] Élisabeth Lavault : (1998), op.cit.

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