TRACING PEDAGOGICAL INFERENCES IN COMPUTER-ASSISTED TRANSLATION CLASSES

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Abstract

It needs to be accepted that information technologies have an important place in translation world nowadays. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of academic publications which focus on computer assisted translation teaching (CATT) field. This study aims at finding out whether the academic articles which focus on CATT deal with learning difficulties encountered by student translators, learners' prerequisites before taking part in CAT classes and translation teachers' background information about CAT applications. To carry out the targets of the present study, three main research questions were made up, and randomly selected twelve research papers were examined under the light of the research questions. The findings of this survey are limited to the articles examined deeply throughout this research but further studies can illustrate the issue better if more expanded inquiries are done with different criteria.

Keywords: Computer Assisted Translation Teaching, Learning Difficulties of Student Translators, Translator Trainers' Background, Critical Review.

1. Introduction

Today, there is a consensus among translation scholars that technology needs to be integrated into translation studies curriculum (see: Kiraly: 2000; Bowker: 2002; Gil & Pym: 2006; Yazıcı: 2007; Ersoy& Balkul: 2012). It needs to be accepted that translation education cannot turn its face to the technological developments in translation industry, which is changing and progressing rapidly day by day. Although translation departments in many parts of the world encounter many problems such as insufficient technical equipment, limited number of experienced trainers on translation technologies and lack of budget supported by university administrations to equip translation classes with CAT tools, it is a must for translation departments to keep up with ongoing progress in translation market so as to meet the needs of translation industry (Bowker & Marshman: 2009). In the literature, one can see some E.U. funded projects such as Optimale, Letrac and EcoLoTrain aiming to display the needs of both translation sector and academic institutions.

Unfortunately, there is a misunderstanding among translation teachers that teaching translation technologies is just training student translators how to use CAT tools. To effectively support our thesis, we must lay stress on the fact that technology in general and translation technology in particular change very rapidly and translation institutes usually fall behind the market requirements. To this end, translation teachers had better teach working mentality of CAT tools in general rather than tackle with specific language technologies which will be replaced with more modern ones in a near future. In any kind of educational or vocational

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training setting, it is vital to prepare training curriculum according to learner profile, teacher profile and educational objectives which are set by program developers according to some set of principles. Another face of the medal is to get feedback from the learners whether learning process is internalized. By completing this very process, it is wiser to shape learning environment with keeping students' learning problems in mind.

The current research aims at finding out whether academic papers including classroom applications of CAT tools deal with the above-mentioned issues. Therefore, three research questions were prepared to critically review the above-mentioned academic papers. Research questions are as follows:

1- What kind of prerequisites should the learners have before participating in CAT classes in the examined papers?
2- Is there specific information about translation teachers' background about CAT applications in the examined papers?
3- Do the examined papers about CATT deal with learning difficulties encountered by student translators during CAT applications in the courses?

In the research to find out academic publications about CATT, a lot of articles that pinpoint the issue were detected (see: Archer, 2002; Kalantzi, 2002; Williams, 2003; Jekat & Massey, 2003; Gil & Pym, 2006; Alcina, 2008; Bowker & Marshman, 2009; Dejica-Cartis, 2012). However, these studies were not included in the current research owing to the fact that they do not aim at providing the readers with CAT applications in an academic setting. Instead, the academic papers dealing with teaching CAT tools in an academic translation education were examined in this modest research. This study is somehow a critical review of the research papers in CATT, which is a research gap in translation studies.

Batovski (2008) states that critical reviews supposedly analyze the strengths, weaknesses, and open questions of a research paper after studying its problem statement and scientific content. The critical reviews should properly describe, then analyze and finally discuss the research findings which would hopefully result in a critical evaluation and a resultant constructive interpretation of the selected paper. Parallel to the statements of Batovski (2008), the current research aims at tracing pedagogical inferences in the selected papers in order to display the strengths and weaknesses of teaching / learning processes and suggest tips for a more effective translation technology teaching.

The organization of this paper is as follows: Firstly, introduction part is presented which will be followed by methodology section afterwards. Then, the results of the critical review of the research papers and discussions about them are given under the lights of research questions in the third section. Last section presents conclusions and insights for future research.

2. Methodology

During the research to find out academic publications about CATT which focus on classroom applications of CAT tools; 'Google Scholar' academic search engine, 'Science Direct', 'ERIC- EBSCO' and 'Cambridge Journals Online' databases were used. The author paid attention to choose the research papers including classroom applications of CAT tools in different universities to see the pedagogical differences of instructors while leading CAT courses. Although there are some arguments in the literature about the classification of CAT technologies, teaching machine translation to trainee translators in academic settings was regarded as a part of computer assisted translation teaching in this research. Table 1 below gives information about the 12 papers to be critically reviewed in this study.

Table 1: General Information about the Research Papers

Research Paper Name	Year	Author (s)
Teaching translation memory: a case study	2006	Chung-ling Shih
Technology-enhanced translator training (possible pitfalls and problems-a case study)	2007	Jarmila Fictumova
Student Satisfaction with a web-based collaborative work platform	2007	Olvera-Lobo, Maria Dolores and et al.
Teaching the automation of the translation process to future translators	2003	Benoit Robichaud & Marie-Claude L'Homme
A Professional Approach to Translator Training(PATT)	2007	Maria Dolores Olvera Lobo and et al.
A-45 hour Computers in Translation course	2003	Mikel L.Forcada
Teaching Machine translation & translation technology: a contrastive study	2001	Dorothy Kenny & Andy Way
Introducing IT in translator training: Experiences from the COLC project	2006	Hannu Jaatinen & Riitta Jaaskelainen
Teaching machine translation to trainee translators: a survey of their knowledge and opinions	2001	Federico Gaspari
Making MT commonplace in translation training curricula-too many misconceptions, so much potential	2001	Elia Yuste Rodrigo
Investigating the experience of translation technoogy labs: pedagogical implications	2013	Stephen Doherty & Joss Moorkens
Translation Technology Skills Acquisition	2007	Amparo Alcina et al.

3. Findings and Discussions

In this part of the study, the findings and discussions about the research questions are presented. The first research question tackles with whether the above-mentioned research papers in Table 1 include information about the pre-requisites of the learners to be able to attend CAT classes. In the current study, 10 of 12 papers were found not to have given specific information focusing the students' prerequisites to attend CAT classes. Only two research papers gave some information for the students to participate in CAT classes such as basic computing skills but not sophisticated details.

In the depth of our inquiry, it is crucial to state that nearly all instructors in the mentioned case studies suffer from the heterogeneity of student body in terms of general computing skills. In Doherty & Moorkens (2013), it is said that there is a supporting class for the students with less computing skills at the beginning of the term to help them increase their general computing skills. There is no doubt that this is a good idea for the students with less computing skills to catch up with the students mastering advanced computing skills. Also, the students having advanced computing skills wouldn't get bored with simple instructions in CAT related courses in this way.

Also, it needs to be kept in mind that motivation is a key factor in all kinds of educational contexts. To conceptualize this issue for CATT, it can be said that the instructor should be a facilitator in the class to direct the students with less computing skills to have intrinsic motivation for willingly use of computers (Kiraly: 2000).

Alcina (2008) claims that background information and academic profile of the students must be taken into account in developing translation course content. In CATT literature, one can come across some studies indicating that translation students have phobia about translation technologies. They fear that computers will replace human translators in

future (see: Bowker: 2002; Ersoy & Balkul: 2012). There is no doubt that translation teachers need to fight against the fear of students and find possible ways for students to have intrinsic motivation to use technology.

The second research question of this study focuses on whether the examined papers give us information about translation teachers' background in CAT technologies. It was found that 5 of 12 research papers in the existing study include information related to CAT background of translation teachers while 7 of them do not. Table 2 below gives us further insight about the details.

Table 2: Teacher Background in CAT technologies

Manuscript Name	Teacher Background in CAT technologies
Teaching translation memory: a case study	There is brief information at the end of the article indicating that the teacher published a book entitled *computer-assisted translation: MT&TM.* Also, it is stated that her recent academic research focuses on MT / TM.
Introducing IT in translator training: Experiences from the COLC project	There is brief information about CAT knowledge of the translation teachers inside the article.
Making MT commonplace in translation training curricula-too many misconceptions, so much potential	In the research paper, it is stated that the teacher is specialized in machine translation.
Investigating the experience of translation technology labs: pedagogical implications	There is brief information at the end of the article claiming that the teachers are keen on CAT technologies research.
Translation Technology Skills Acquisition	There appears no information about the teacher background in CAT technologies in the article; however, it is clearly stated that the authors have been teaching 'computing for translation' and 'terminology management' courses for several years.

Relying on the contents of the research papers, it was found that the authors of these papers are the translation teachers in these classroom applications of CAT tools. We believe that giving some information about CAT background of the teachers could empower pedagogical sides of these papers because the qualification of a teacher in any kind of educational setting is undoubtedly one of the key factors for students' success.

Due to the fact that use of technology in translation teaching departments is fairly new in many parts of the world, most translation institutions suffer from experienced trainers in CATT. Our main purpose to mention this situation is the fact that in academic papers about CATT, it would be much better to give information about CAT background of translation teacher in order to display who can teach CAT tools in translation studies departments and what kinds of qualifications s/he needs to possess. In this way, more naive translator training departments will seek for qualified translator trainers for teaching translation technologies.

What's more, some qualification criteria can be adjusted among translator training institutions across Europe or globe for translation technology teachers. In this way; post-graduate translation students who will be translator trainers in a near future can be trained as well-equipped translation technology teachers and research papers dealing with CATT can be pioneer in this issue. Overall, mentioning about CAT background of translation teachers in academic research papers is really significant for all the reasons mentioned above.

Table 3 presents the results of the last research question which is about whether the examined papers deal with the difficulties encountered by student translators in CAT classes.

Table 3: Difficulties encountered by Student Translators in CAT classes

Manuscript Name	Difficulties Encountered by Student Translators
Teaching translation memory: a case study	The problems experienced by students during CAT classes were detected via a questionnaire and alternative suggestions were made to solve these problems by the teacher.
A Professional Approach to Translator Training (PATT)	The problems of student translators in CAT related project, Aula.int, are explicitly presented and possible solutions are offered by the researchers.
Investigating the experience of translation technology labs: pedagogical implications	In this research, the difficulties experienced by the students were detected via an online survey and reflective journals of the teachers, then possible solutions were offered by the teachers.
Translation Technology Skills Acquisition	A special part inside the research paper was devoted to the problems of student translators entitled "difficulties of the teaching /learning process of translation technology for translators". Besides, solutions were offered by the authors for the problems of the students.

According to Table 3, just 4 of 12 research papers focused on the difficulties experienced by student translators during CAT applications. There is no doubt that this rate is rather small. On the other hand, it must be keynoted that not all research papers about CATT have to include information related to the problems of trainee translators. Their research scopes might change.

However, our main focus here is to attract attention to the difficulties experienced by trainee translators in translation technology classes via these papers. In several studies except from the ones included in the existing inquiry, the reasons behind the difficulties encountered by student translators during translation technology instruction are listed as follows:

- Problems sourced from students' lack of general computer literacy,

- Problems originated from the complexity of translation technologies,

- Problems sourced from students' personal features such as apathy towards computer applications and attention deficit,

- Problems originated from lack of in-house CAT seminars, inefficiency of teachers about translation technologies, excessive student body in CAT classes and lack of technical support (see: Bowker, 2002; Williams, 2003; Christensen & Schjoldager, 2011).

If the academic papers about CATT give more detailed information related to the problems of trainee translators in translation technology classes, unseasoned translation technology instructors can be acknowledged about possible difficulties which might be experienced by their students in future. Thus, they can direct their classes and facilitate students' success in both lectures and hands-on practice sessions in a more conscious way. Besides, being aware of learning difficulties of student translators during CAT classes will definitely inspire further researches in CATT, which will tackle with different aspects of the issue and deepen pedagogical side of the research area.

Conclusion

The existing study aimed at developing pedagogical side of computer assisted translation teaching and presenting inferences on the literature by examining twelve research papers focusing on classroom application of CAT technologies.

Taking the analyses made within the study into consideration, it can be said that in nearly all case studies presenting CAT applications in educational contexts, the students are not expected to have prerequisites to attend CAT classes. In all case studies, there are students whose computing skills vary. However, having advanced computing skills seems an advantage for the success in CAT courses.

Another issue to be pointed out here is teacher background in CAT classes. Unfortunately, less than half of research papers give information about teacher background in CAT applications. This research strongly recommends that the papers about CATT include information about CAT background of translation technology teachers and the teachers who are responsible for tutoring CAT classes need to be well-equipped and experienced about CAT and MT. Also, it is an advantage for both them and their students if they keep up with the state-of-the-art technology in the field.

Besides, it is important to emphasize that translation schools must be patient to train their teachers about CAT technology, which is partially a new field in the discipline. And it is wise to keynote that giving information about students' attitudes towards CAT technologies and their possible problems to encounter in CAT related lessons in academic publications will certainly shed light on the institutions planning to implement CAT technologies into their curricula. For instance, in Turkish context, we suffer from experienced instructors who are both qualified in translation training and CAT technologies at the same time. In order to find pedagogical remedies for CAT related classes, it is a must to share ideas globally in this discipline.

Also, it would be appropriate to train the translation trainers about CAT technologies via in-service training and provide the translator training programs with effective relationship with translation technology sector, which will undoubtedly give valuable insights about the latest translation technologies.

Overall, it needs to be stressed that the findings of this survey are limited to the articles examined deeply throughout this research but further studies can illustrate the issue better if more expanded inquiries are done with different criteria.

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