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Contemporary approach to terminological competence, management and terminology teaching on the basis of courses for translators offered by Polish higher education institutions

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Abstract. The paper presents a brief review of the situation in Polish higher education institutions offering courses for translators. In the first part, a modern approach to terminological competence of translators is presented. Then several curricula of Polish higher education schools offering BA, MA or postgraduate studies in translation are reviewed to examine their approach to teaching translation-oriented terminology management. On this basis, conclusions concerning the current situation and some suggestions to improve efficiency of terminology training are formulated and some suggestions for a terminology management training course for translators in relation to its contents are proposed.

Keywords. Terminology management, terminological competence, translator competences, European Master's in Translation (EMT), European Norm EN-15038, teaching terminological competence, translator training.

1. Introduction

Terminological work constitutes central part of any translation project and may consume up to 60% of translator's time devoted to its completion. Efficient terminology management may considerably facilitate translator's work and significantly contribute to the delivery of a high quality translation product.

Terminological competence has acquired recently more attention and has been recognized as one of the key competences a modern translator should possess to be able to function successfully and efficiently on the contemporary translation market. Terminological competence, apart from linguistic and translation skills, is considered to be a requisite for translators if they want to comply with their future clients' and employers' requirements and expectations.

Thanks to technological developments and research in the field of linguistic engineering the contemporary market offers translators a wide array of translation tools which can be used to facilitate the translation process and terminology work. Yet, despite all these technological conveniences translators still seem reluctant to commence terminological work with the use of dedicated applications. This unenthusiastic approach may result from the tight time constraints within which translators have to work and from the conviction that learning how to operate terminology management tools is too time-consuming. On the basis of a survey into Polish translators attitudes towards translation technologies and usage of CAT tools (Sikora 2013) it is concluded that translators' courses offered by higher education institutions may have a decisive role in teaching translation-related terminology management, building terminological competence of translators and promoting proper usage of terminology management tools. However, if translators are to build and develop their terminological competences during their studies, a revised and updated approach to the issue of translator education in this respect is needed.

This paper is an attempt to investigate the situation in Poland and the way terminology management training is treated at Polish higher education institutions offering courses for translators. To do so, first a contemporary approach to terminological competence will be discussed on the basis

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of the existing standards and then several study programs for translators at BA, MA and post graduate levels in respect of terminology training will be reviewed to check whether and to what extent training in this field is included in the university programs' curricula. Finally, some suggestions for a translation-oriented terminology course will be formulated.

2. Educational and market norms and translator training

Translator and/or translation competence has been discussed and analyzed for over forty years so far and there exists a plethora of translator/translation competence definitions and models. Actually, the abundance of concepts and definitions blurs the vision and makes it difficult to define it precisely. Literature reviews of competence models can be found among others in Kelly (2002) and Pym (2003). In this paper, though, no attempt to redefine translator competence will be made. Rather we are going to look at translator competence from the perspective of the already existing educational and market standards which have been already created and which look at translator competences from the practical market-oriented perspective. The two norms which can be considered significant when defining translator competences and which can already serve as guidance are the EMT (European Master's in Translation) project commenced in 2009 and the European norm EN-15038 first published by the European Committee of Standardization in 2006. These two documents have been operating already for some time and have already gained some recognition and proponents both in the educational sphere and among translation service providers. Moreover, any attempt to define translator competence should be based on professional realism and take into account real market requirements set for the future translation service providers.

2.1. European Master's in Translation

European Master's in Translation is a partnership project between European Commission and European higher education institutions which was commenced in 2009. The main goal of this project is improving the quality of translator training throughout Europe in order to provide the market with highly skilled professional translators who would be able to respond to the needs and requirements of the contemporary information era and knowledge society (European Master's in Translation Strategy 2009). In other words, universities should train translators able to provide translation services in a number of formats and with the application of the state-of-the-art translation technologies to suit the requirements and quality standards of the translation market. The EMT project establishes professional and quality standards in terms of translator education which can be treated as a common framework of reference for university translation programs and can serve as guidance in designing translation courses. These standards are described as professional translator competences which constitute at the same time the training objectives to be achieved and acquired at the end of translator education at the MA level (Gambier 2009). Therefore the EMT project establishes a quality standard at master's level for all institutions training translators and should be treated as point of reference when designing translator training programs. At present there are 54 universities and programs admitted to the EMT network, among which there are two Polish universities entitled to use the EMT label: Jagiellonian University in Kraków, UNESCO Chair for Translation Studies and Intercultural Communication – M.A. studies with major in culturology, specialty in linguistics, specialization in “intercultural translation and communication” and Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Institute of Neophilology – M.A. studies in specialized and professional translation (Universities and programmes in the EMT network).

2.2. European norm EN-15038

European norm EN-15038 is another document worth consideration as it also defines the set of translator professional competences considered essential in the contemporary translation industry. While the EMT project focuses on setting educational standards, the European norm can be

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treated as its counterpart concentrated on establishing translation market standards. As specified in the document the main purpose of EN-15038 is “to establish and define the requirements for the provision of quality services by translation service providers” (EN-15038 2006: 4). The norm defines the subsequent stages in the translation process (preparation, translation, checking, revision, review, proofreading and final verification) and indicates stages obligatory for ensuring a good quality service (translation, checking, revision). Additionally, the standard defines the roles of translation service providers who take part in the translation production process (i.e. translators, revisers, reviewers, proofreaders, terminology managers and project managers) and specifies formal education and experience requirements which they should fulfill to be able to provide high quality services. The document specifies also the range of professional competences future translation service providers should acquire during the course of formal education to meet market requirements. The goal of this standardization of the translation process as well as education and experience norms is raising the profile of the translation industry and enhancing the quality of translation services (EN-15038 2006).

3. Translator competences according to the EMT project and EN-15038

In general both documents admit that educational programs should be adapted to professional reality and contemporary market demands and therefore translators should possess a range of skills and competences which are not longer limited to linguistic and translational knowledge. The standards unanimously indicate that translators need also other competences which will enable them to function and work efficiently in the multimodal and technology-controlled environment. The range of competences defined in each of the norms is presented in Tab. 1.

EMT project	EN-15038
overall translation „supercompetence“	
translation service provision competence (translating competence, including also customer relationship management and business-oriented skills),	translating competence – the ability to translate texts to the required level of specialization and to meet customers’ requirements;
language and intercultural competences (proficiency in S and T languages, text summary skills and the ability to understand information containing cultural allusions),	linguistic and textual competence in the SL and the TL – the ability to understand the source language and translate it into the TL by following its textual conventions and rules;
thematic competence (knowledge in specialist fields).	cultural competence – ability to apply knowledge of ST and TT conventions, behavioral standards and values;
technological competence (the ability to use a range of computer tools for various purposes),	technical competence – the abilities and skills required for the professional preparation and production of translations regarding technical aspects;
information mining competence (the ability to search for information, by looking critically at various information sources),	research competence, information acquisition and processing – the ability to efficiently acquire additional linguistic and specialized knowledge necessary to understand the source text and to produce the target text, experience in the use of research tools and the ability to develop suitable strategies for the efficient use of the information sources available.

Table 1 Translator competences according to the EMT project and EN-15038 (Gambier 2009; EN-15308 2006)

As can be seen, competence models delineated by both documents are quite similar and in general agree on the range of the most essential skills and competences. There are slight differences concerning, for example, the scope of the translation competence which in the EMT project is described as translation provision competence and apart from translational skills includes

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also business-oriented and interpersonal skills such as: ability to negotiate and approach clients, ability to manage one's time, stress and work, ability to comply with instructions and knowing the standards applicable to the provision of the translation service, etc. (Gambier 2009). Moreover, the EN-15038 does not mention the thematic competence which is also referred to as domain/subject/or subject-specific competence (Biel 2011) and means specialized knowledge in a particular domain. In case of the EN-15038 the thematic competence is to certain extent included and covered by the research, information acquisition and processing competence of which "the ability to efficiently acquire the additional linguistic and specialized knowledge necessary to understand the source text and to produce the target text" (EN-15038 2006: 7) is one of its core components.

Technological competence according to EMT	Technical competence according to EN-15038
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knowing how to use effectively and rapidly and to integrate a range of software to assist in correction, translation, terminology, layout, documentary research (for example text processing, spell and grammar check, the internet, translation memory, terminology database, voice recognition software) ○ Knowing how to create and manage a database and files ○ Knowing how to adapt to and familiarise oneself with new tools, particularly for the translation of multimedia and audiovisual material ○ Knowing how to prepare and produce a translation in different formats and for different technical media ○ Knowing the possibilities and limits of MT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ [...] the abilities and skills required for the professional preparation and production of translations. ○ the ability to operate technical resources [...]
Information mining competence according to EMT	Research competence, information acquisition and processing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Knowing how to identify one's information and documentation requirements ○ Developing strategies for documentary and terminological research (including approaching experts) ○ Knowing how to extract and process relevant information for a given task (documentary, terminological, phraseological information) ○ Developing criteria for evaluation vis-à-vis documents accessible on the internet or any other medium, i.e. knowing how to evaluate the reliability of documentary sources (critical mind) ○ Knowing how to use tools and search engines effectively (e.g. terminology software, electronic corpora, electronic dictionaries) ○ Mastering the archiving of one's own documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ [...] the ability to efficiently acquire the additional linguistic and specialised knowledge necessary to understand the source text and to produce the target text. ○ [...] experience in the use of research tools and the ability to develop suitable strategies for the efficient use of the information sources available.

Table 2 Technical and information mining competence according to the EMT project and EN-15038 (Gambier 2009; EN-15308 2006)

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As can be also seen, both standards include research and information mining competence as well as technical skills in their competence models and consider them to be indispensable for translation service providers. They also specify in detail what specific skills and abilities build up the above-mentioned competences. They are enumerated in Tab. 2.

4. Translator competence, market needs and terminological skills

The above-discussed competence models were created in response to various trends and changes affecting the translation industry (e.g. globalization, enlargement of the EU, growing demand for qualified (multilingual) translators, technological advances, diversification of translation profession and translation types and formats, technical resources available) (Gambier 2009) and in order to respond to translation clients' needs and preferences. Thus, from the above norms it follows that to meet market requirements professional translators should:

- possess good linguistic skills in both SL and TL,
- have domain-specific knowledge,
- be able to use computer tools proficiently for translation, document production, and business management purposes,
- possess various translation service provision skills (project management, revision, proofreading, correction, terminology management, desktop publishing),
- possess translation and technological skills in specialized areas (e.g. localization, AVT, conference interpreting),
- be versatile and adjust quickly to changing market and technological requirements.

4.1. Defining terminology management competence

Taking into account the skills and abilities enumerated in Tab. 2 and translator's practical experience, terminological needs, and also accounting for the market requirements referred to in point 4, it is suggested that terminological competence is a combination of several components:

- technical competence and
- research and information mining (acquisition and processing) competence

as translators to obtain terminological information and manage it for translation purposes have to develop and use certain terminology (and information) research skills, but also have to be able to use a variety of technical tools which enable efficient storage and management of terminology. Moreover, these two competences should be backed up with thematic competence in its traditional meaning – knowledge in a particular field. Our observation is also corroborated by the definition of thematic competence provided in the EMT project, where it partially overlaps with the information mining competence as both competences mention the ability to search for relevant information (Gambier 2009) Thus, terminological competence is here understood as a mixture of technical and research skills supported with subject specific knowledge and the ability to develop the thematic competence.

5. Translator's training in the Polish educational system

A survey into Polish translators' workstation on the usage and application of CAT tools including terminology management applications carried out in 2011 (Sikora 2013) revealed that there is some correlation between translator education and their willingness to use (and actual usage of) translation technologies. The results demonstrated that graduates of university courses for translators tend to use translation software in general more frequently than those who received general education in foreign language studies (Fig. 1). Moreover, the results also showed that translation memory systems are used by 65% of the surveyed translators and that the numbers

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are lower for terminology management software which is used by around 40%, whereas one fifth of the respondents never heard of such tools (Fig. 2). These results clearly indicate that translator education has a great role in propagating translation and terminology management technologies.

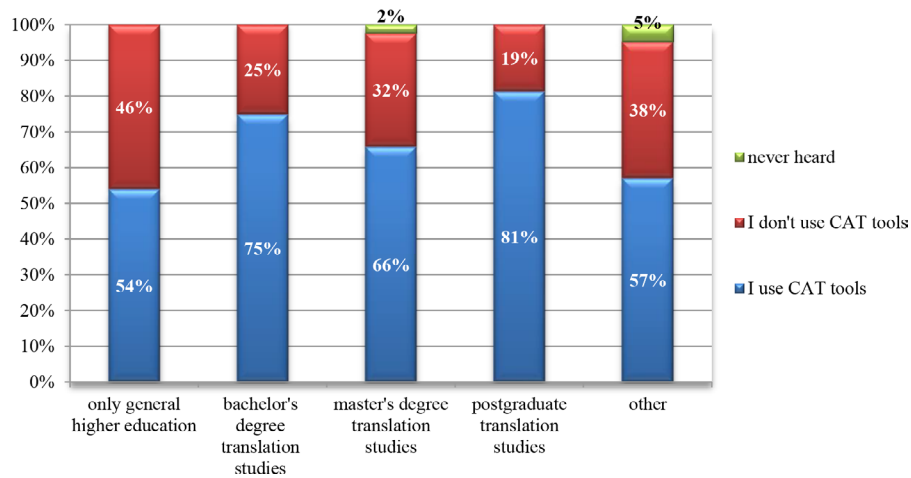


Figure 1: Professional qualifications and CAT tools usage

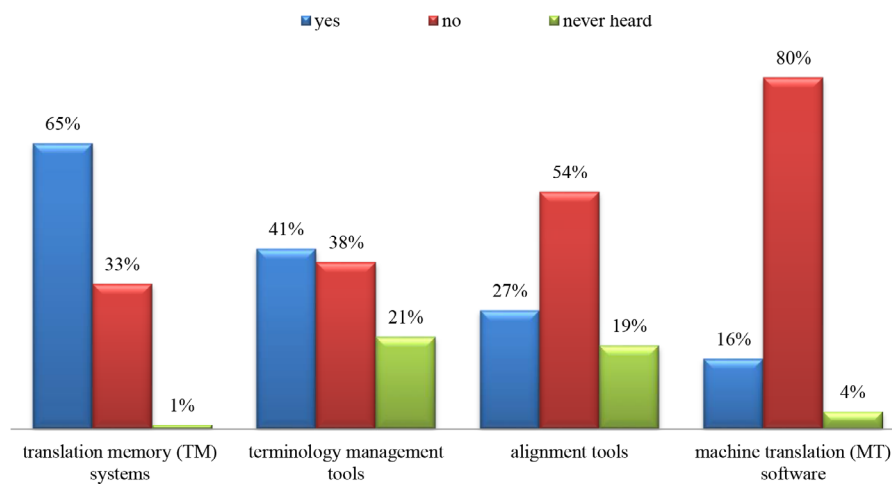


Figure 2: Usage of CAT tools

6. Translator training in the Polish educational system

Translation Studies are in Poland a sub-component of traditional philologies and do not have a status of an independent academic discipline. Therefore, they function usually as specializations chosen under a major in, e.g., English or German studies. Translator training is, thus, offered at the bachelor's and master's levels, where students choose a major in the language they want to study and further they decide on the specialization they want to choose (usually teaching, translation and/or interpreting specializations are offered). Translator education can be further continued at the post-graduate level on one-year specialized courses for translators or interpreters.

6.1. Terminology management training within tertiary studies – review of syllabi

Tab. 3 below presents the results of a short research into the situation at Polish higher education institutions offering translator training, the purpose of which was to check how the issue of terminology management training is approached by translator education institutions and to what extent this subject is covered in their curricula.

LEVEL OF STUDIES	CAT training	TERMINOLOGY MANAGEMENT training
BA STUDIES – 10 courses reviewed	4	1
MA STUDIES – 11 courses reviewed	7	4
POST-GRADUATE STUDIES – 28 programs reviewed	6	2
TOTAL – 49 COURSES	17	7

Table 3 Terminology management training within tertiary studies – review of syllabi

As demonstrated in Tab. 3, for 49 programs checked (major in “language studies”, specialization in translation) 17 (34%) offered training in CAT tools and only 7 (14%) provided some training in terminology management technologies. As can be easily observed a bigger number of university programs include CAT training courses, which is already a symptom of certain changes taking place and growing awareness that education in this scope is needed. However, fewer programs offer terminology management training in their curricula.

6.1.1. Courses for terminologists and terminographers

The 7 courses indicated in Tab. 3 are courses training future terminologists and terminographers and thus they concentrate more on theoretical issues such as: terminology as a scientific discipline, the notion of term and concept and term types, onomasiology, structure of dictionaries and lexicons, terminological systems and norms, principles of term formation, types of dictionaries and principles of their creation, etc. Thus, basically, these courses cater for the needs of future terminologists and terminographers (who may also be translators) but are not designed to meet the needs of translators (who do not have to be necessarily professional terminographers, but should be able to create a termbase for their own purposes) who have less complicated terminological needs. In general, it is agreed that translators due to time pressure tend to perform ad hoc problem solving and project-oriented terminology work and are less interested in systematic standardization of terminology (Galinski, Budin 1996). What they need is to obtain quickly specialized knowledge and resources in a specific field. Thus, translators are more interested in identifying and recording elements which pose translation problems and more concerned with storing linguistic and pragmatic information and less with semantic and grammatical data. Thus, if they create ‘termbases’, they tend to structure them by form (semasiological model) and not by concept (onomasiological model advocated by terminology management theories) (Bowker 2002). It has to be also added that these courses did not offer any practical training in terminology management tools but focused on theoretical issues.

6.1.2. Translation-oriented terminology courses

None of the reviewed programs (whose syllabi were available) included a comprehensive translation-oriented terminology management course which would be designed in line with the guidelines and up to the standards of the norms discussed above and which would accommodate the needs of future translators. In other words – courses which would introduce translators to the realm of terminology management tools and their functionalities and which would develop practical terminology management skills (terminology mining, terminology search techniques, term extraction, retrieval, storage, creating a termbase, information on available terminological resources etc.) in “real” translation projects, where students could get accustomed and learn how to use these tools effectively.

However, it was also observed that if there was no specific terminology-dedicated course included in the translation study program, then in some cases terminology management was in a way incorporated within other courses such as: specialized terminology course (learning specialized terminology in a specific field) or specialized translation course (e.g. legal, business – translating specialized texts containing specialized terminology) or within a CAT training course

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(presentation of terminology management tools and their functionalities). The learning outcomes of these courses specify that students should possess the knowledge of available information and terminology sources for translators, should have well-developed research skills, and should be able to use specialized knowledge and resources critically as well as constantly develop their own lexical resources. The observations show that, in fact, such courses concentrate on:

- developing lexical resources in a specific field by means of practical vocabulary exercises,
- developing information and terminology research skills,
- providing information on available terminological resources,
- but do not show the students how to use these tools in practice.

It is also possible that some CAT tools courses also included instruction in terminology management tools, however not all information concerning the content of every course was available.

Summing up, terminology management in the Polish tertiary education system is either taught as a specialized more theoretically-oriented course for terminologists and terminographers or within other translation-related courses (courses expanding specialized terminology, specialized translation or CAT tools training courses), but not as translation-oriented terminology management training aimed at developing practical terminology management skills useful in the translation process with the use of available on the market terminology management tools. It can be stated that there are some harbingers of transformation and progress; however there is still a lot to be done to adapt translation programs within the Polish higher education system to the European standards and market requirements.

7. Conclusions - suggestions for a translation-oriented terminology management course

A course in terminology management for translators should combine a few areas to be effective and to correspond to translators' and translation market's needs. Basing on own experience as a translation student and a practicing translator and summing up the above considerations, the author believes that a terminology management course for translators should:

- teach students to recognize and solve terminological problems,
- provide information on available Internet and electronic terminology and information resources,
- develop good research skills and strategies for effective searching of information and terminology resources,
- teach students how to extract, retrieve, evaluate, manage information and terminology and store it for future use,
- teach students how to use CAT tools for terminology management purposes,
- teach students general terminology management and termbases creation principles as they may work as terminology managers in the future.

As far as the contents is concerned, the author believes that the following topics should be covered by the course curriculum:

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1. Basic theoretical introduction to terminology, terminology management, translator's terminological needs, benefits of terminology management
2. Presentation of available terminology resources (dictionaries, glossaries, databases, termbases, linguistic corpora, parallel texts, source and target specialized texts)
3. Practicing various methods of specialized terminology and information search and evaluation
4. Presentation of available TM tools and their functionalities
5. Practicing term extraction, analysis, retrieval, storage and management methods with the use of TM tools
6. Practicing ensuring term consistency with the use of CAT tools
7. Compiling and management of a project-based termbase
8. Management of a translation-oriented terminology project
9. Practical application of TM tools in translation projects all over the course

Table 4 A proposal of a content of a translation-oriented terminology management course

The schedule presented in Tab. 4 should be only treated as a tentative proposal and it would certainly require verification, but it is the author's strong conviction that introducing such translator-dedicated terminology courses would improve significantly the efficiency and quality of translators' work. Moreover, translators who would receive such training in their university education would be less afraid and reluctant to use these tools in the future, as the training received previously would make them feel more comfortable with new technologies and in the new work environment.

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