

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL  
SISTEMA DE ESTUDIOS DE POSGRADO  
FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS  
ESCUELA DE LITERATURA Y CIENCIAS DEL LENGUAJE  
PLAN DE MAESTRÍA DE TRADUCCIÓN

**PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES TO DETERMINE LEVELS OF  
COMMUNICATIVE TRANSLATION COMPETENCE IN  
TRANSLATION TRAINING**

Trabajo de graduación para aspirar al grado de  
*Magíster Profesional en Traducción*  
(Inglés – Español)

presentado por

Catalina Domian Sánchez

2007

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my special gratitude to Rocío Miranda Vargas, M.A. and Francisco Vargas Gómez, M.A. for their patient support, their talent for transforming the overwhelming into the manageable and their perpetual good nature. The completion of this graduation project would not have been possible if it had not been for their devoted guidance.

I am grateful to Sherry Gapper Morrow, M.A. who has been very supportive of my project by helping me define it in its earliest stages and providing me with invaluable bibliographical resources, for her prompt and insightful feedback and detailed comments.

My special thanks to friends and to those fellow classmates who gave up their precious time to participate in this study by completing the questionnaires and doing the translations without receiving anything in return but my gratitude; to Allan Pineda Martínez, M.A., Magaly Chaves Solano, M.A. and Dr. Victor Drescher for allowing the students in their courses to participate in my study and for the help I received from them at all times. Never did any of them say no to any of my requests.

Last but not least, my very special thanks to my husband and daughter for always believing in me and giving me the best of their support and encouragement, but most importantly for waiting patiently for me to finish this project.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework</b> .....	8
Introduction .....	8
Defining and Describing Communicative Language Competence	10
Defining and Describing Translation Competence .....	23
Model of Communicative Translation Competence for the Project	36
<b>Chapter 2: Evaluation in Professional and Trainee Translation</b> .....	39
Three Areas of Evaluation .....	39
Evaluation in Professional Translation .....	40
Evaluation in Translation Teaching .....	43
<b>Chapter 3: Method of the Research</b> .....	54
Description of ACTFL and CEF Scales .....	55
The Type of Research .....	59
Measuring Instruments .....	67
Subjects .....	69
Experimental Task .....	69
<b>Chapter 4: Guidelines to Determine Levels of Communicative Translation Competence in Translation Teaching</b> .....	71
Proficiency versus Achievement Testing .....	73
Norm-reference versus Criterion-reference Assessment .....	74
Assessment Criteria in Translation Training .....	74
Five Stages of Skill Acquisition .....	78
Methods for Developing Assessment Scales .....	81
Translational Communicative Language Scale.....	88
Transfer Competence Scale .....	91
Strategic Competence Scale .....	94
Cultural Competence Scale .....	97
<b>Chapter 5: Conclusions</b> .....	100
Drawbacks of the Scale .....	103
Problems Adapting Existing Language Proficiency Scales .....	105
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	108
<b>Appendix 1: ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines</b> .....	137
<b>Appendix 2: Measuring Instruments</b> .....	139

## Abstract

The aim of this paper is to present a proposal of guidelines, intended for use in Academia, against which to measure learner's functional competency in translation; that is their ability to accomplish translation tasks representing a variety of levels. In a teaching-learning process it is necessary to have guidelines which can point out to a student that he has acquired certain knowledge, abilities and skills that situate him at a certain level of competency and that in order to go up a level he would need to acquire other knowledge, abilities and skills. This guidelines in the form of scale were designed to help the trainer decide on elements that need to be taken into account when assigning and evaluating a student's task and to enable students to understand where their strengths and weaknesses lie and thereby improve their performance. The guidelines are intended to enable the experienced rater to identify with a particular stage of development. They are only representative rather than exhaustive of what an individual can do at a certain stage.

This study starts with the assumption that translating is "an act of communication which attempts to relay across cultural and linguistic boundaries another act of communication..." (Hatim & Mason 1). Consequently, the translator as a communicator must "possess the knowledge and skill that are common to all communicators but, [...] in *two languages* (at least)" (Bell 36). Given this premise, the ACTFL/ETS (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages/Educational Testing Service) Proficiency Guidelines, the Common European Framework of

Reference for Languages and other scales serve as a point of departure to design the scale.

An analysis of translations done by students from the Master's Translation Program at *Universidad Nacional*, professional translators and bilingual persons, studies already done in translation competence and evaluation and Translation Studies theories were used to write the descriptors for the scale. The result was a five level scale (novice, apprentice, competent, proficient and expert translator) divided into four competences: translational communicative competence, transfer competence, strategic competence and cultural competence.

**Key Words:** scales, translator training, assessment, translation evaluation, translation competence

## Resumen

El propósito de este trabajo es presentar una propuesta de escalas para medir competencia funcional traductora en aprendientes de programas académicos de traducción. Lo que se pretende es diseñar un instrumento evaluar la capacidad de un alumno para llevar acabo tareas a diferentes niveles. Es necesario todo proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje disponga de guías que puedan señalarle a los estudiantes que han adquirido ciertos conocimientos, habilidades y destrezas que los sitúan a cierto nivel de competencia y que para poder subir un nivel tendrían que adquirir conocimientos, habilidades y destrezas adicionales. Las escalas se diseñaron con el propósito de ayudar al instructor en la decisión de los elementos que se deben considerar cuando se asigne y evalúe una tarea y para permitirle a los estudiantes entender cuales son sus fortalezas y debilidades para que así mejoren su desempeño. La intención de estas escalas es brindar al evaluador experimentado un instrumento que le permita identificarse con un nivel específico en el proceso de aprendizaje de un alumno de traducción. Los descriptores en las escalas no son exhaustivos, sólo son representativos de lo que un individuo puede hacer a un cierto nivel.

El estudio parte del principio de que la traducción es “un acto comunicativo que intenta transmitir a través de fronteras culturales y lingüísticas otro acto comunicativo...” (Hatim & Mason 1). De manera que, el traductor como comunicante debe “poseer los conocimientos y las destrezas comunes a todos los comunicadores pero, [...] en *dos idiomas* (por lo menos)” (Bell 36). Dada esta premisa, las guías del

Consejo Americano para la Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras (ACTFL, por sus siglas en inglés), el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas y otras escalas utilizadas en la adquisición de idiomas extranjeros se usarán como punto de partida en el diseño de la escala.

Para el desarrollo de los descriptores se analizaron traducciones realizadas por estudiantes de varios niveles del Plan de Maestría en Traducción de la Universidad Nacional, traductores profesionales, tanto empíricos como con Maestría en Traducción, personas bilingües y se hizo una investigación bibliográfica sobre estudios en evaluación de la traducción llevados a cabo en los últimos diez años. El resultado fueron cuatro escalas con cinco niveles (novato, principiante avanzado, profesional competente, profesional destacado y experto). Se diseñó una escala para medir competencia comunicativa de la lengua en traducción, competencia de transferencia, competencia estratégica y competencia cultural. Las escalas se pueden utilizar tanto individualmente como para evaluar de forma global una traducción

**Descriptores:** escalas, programas académicos en traducción, evaluación de la traducción, competencia traductora

## Introduction

### Background

Numerous disciplines have carried out studies to determine what constitutes competence in different fields, how it is acquired and how to measure the acquisition of this competence. In the field of Translation Studies several proposals have been made to understand what constitutes competence in translation and how it is acquired; however, as far as measuring proficiency of translation competence, there is no general accepted model. The goal of this study is to develop a scale that can be used to measure levels of proficiency at the different stages of an individual's acquisition of translation competence in an academic setting.

Evaluation is an extremely important issue in the context of translation and translator training; however, this complicated and problematic subject "...is one which is under researched and under discussed" (Hatim & Mason 197). The reason for this may be because it is often a very subjective exercise, even though there is little room for subjectivity in the translation classroom. Translation teachers have an academic responsibility to evaluate their students' work, but personal experience and discussion with other colleagues have shown "that the kind and quality of any assessment has depended and still does depend to a large extent on the individual teacher" (Bowker 347).

When it comes to translation evaluation, literature on Translation Studies deals mostly with translation quality assessment which evaluates the translation product independently from the process used to obtain it. Evaluation methods in translator



training programs have also traditionally focused on the student's end product: the translation, concentrating mainly on correcting and rating scales and translation errors. It is usually centered on the word or phrase as an isolated unit. Such a focus can encourage dependency on the part of the learner—the teacher always has the correction for every error. Learners demand a model answer, want the result and are not interested in how the result is arrived at. Furthermore, students very often feel confused when their teachers assess their translations and correct their mistakes, because teachers do not make them aware of a distinct set of criteria used for evaluation (Kusssmaul13). A description of clear guidelines as to what knowledge, skills and abilities are expected of individuals at different stages of their training is important to help them develop a framework within which to place their work for the purpose of speeding the learning process and the quality of their translations.

A more holistic approach to the assessment of students' translations could produce better results. One does not translate words and structures but text or discourse. In order to do so, trainees must acquire skills to understand the communicative intention of the original text or discourse and reproduce it in the target text. That means, not only do they need a solid linguistic knowledge (knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, extralinguistic elements) in both languages but also a good knowledge on how to express these linguistic resources. Trainees need to have the knowledge and skills to decide which resources are used to express which function, in what kind of situation or text, with what effect and to which culture. The ability to transpose the source language text into an appropriate target language text according to client's specifications, the use of technology, Internet savvy, world knowledge,

specialized terminology, research skills, identification of a translation problem and the ability to rationalize decision-making and problem-solving processes are also important components of the translator's set of skills students need to have. Learners acquire these skills and abilities at different stages of an academic translation training program and then further develop them through professional experience. This research project aims precisely at designing guidelines that can help in the decision of what skills and know-how should trainees have acquired at different levels of their training process in translation.

The metric designed in this project uses both the process to arrive at a product and the translation product to determine translator communicative competences and proficiency. It could help answer such questions as: What should a student be able to translate after one, two, four or more semesters of study? What goals are realistically attainable in a translation program? What levels of proficiency can a learner obtain? Should some skills be emphasized more than others at different levels of a learning process? When should a student master the technological tools available to translators? At what stage of the learning process does a learner start to alter style, tone and format according to the specific requirements of the readers and their culture?

In contrast to translation quality assessment that evaluates the product, the guidelines developed in this research make use of the product as an indicator of the skills acquired by a translator trainee. For example, from the point of view of translation quality assessment a spelling error can be a very serious problem, especially if it leads to misunderstanding of meaning; however, from the point of view

of evaluating translator communicative competence and proficiency, it may be less serious, if in fact it is only a spelling error. Translator trainers require some type of resource which can be used to help them assess and provide accurate and objective feedback on student translations. Kiraly (111) states that when teachers are able to pinpoint the competences that students are weak in they “can provide guided practice to improve the acquisition of intuitive skills and then teach conscious strategies as methods for problem resolution and the production of translation alternatives.”

### **Hypothesis**

Starting from the concept of translation as a communicative activity directed towards achieving goals that involves decision-making and problem-solving, and requires expert knowledge, like learning a second language, the assumption in this research project is that a student’s level of translational communicative language competence, transfer competence, strategic competence and cultural competence can be assessed through tasks that are evaluated using an adaptation of proficiency guidelines used to describe communicative language competence in second language acquisition. Some variables need to be considered to adapt these guidelines to assess translation skills in an individual. First, similarities between the elements that encompass communicative translation competence and communicative competence in second language acquisition must be established. Second, a difference needs to be made between what it means to be *proficient* in a second language and what it means to be *proficient* in translating. In other words, what does a trainee need to have acquired in terms of rules of language use, terminology,

sociolinguistic appropriateness, text-types, cultural understanding, transfer techniques and translation strategies to be able to translate effectively at different levels of a training program and for real world purposes? Third, developing proficiency guidelines means developing concrete criteria so that the learners being evaluated can demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities at a particular level by performing tasks at that degree of difficulty. These criteria would indicate what individuals can do—not how they score in relation to the scores of other persons of a particular group.

### **Objectives**

The main objective of this research project is to design a yardstick based on proficiency guidelines for second language acquisition against which to measure proficiency of individuals' translational communicative language competence, transfer competence, strategic competence and cultural competence which can be assessed through tasks in an academic translation program. The following are the specific objectives while In the process of designing the scale:

- To describe the components of communicative language competence and communicative translation competence.
- To establish similarities and differences between communicative competence in translation and communicative competence in second language acquisition to then coin a working definition of translation competence for this project.
- To establish the difference between proficiency in second language acquisition and proficiency in translation.

- To develop a translation skills model to select the characterizing features of each proficiency level in the guidelines.

### **Structure of the project**

The introduction gives the background, aim, motivation and structure of the graduation project. Because translation is considered to be an act of communication, the theoretical framework described in Chapter One is based on the concept of communicative competence introduced into applied linguistics. The models proposed by Dell Hymes (1972), Michael Canale and Merrill Swain (1980), Sandra Savignon (1983) and Lyle Bachman (1990) will serve as basis to develop a model of communicative translation competence upon which the scale proposed in this project will be developed.

Chapter Two is a historical account of evaluation in the professional and translation teaching setting. Scoring scales and other assessment models that have been developed are presented. This chapter also includes a summary of the essential elements for translation trainee evaluation from a general pedagogical point of view.

Chapter Three addresses the methodology of the study. It also gives a brief description of the scales used as a base to develop the scale presented in this project. Following this description, the design of the research is explained: measuring instruments, subjects, task and other data collected from already existing studies.

Chapter Four presents reasons for the criteria, levels and descriptors used to design the scale and the theories and models that gave theoretical support to develop them. It also introduces the scale proposed in this research project. The scale is divided in four competences: communicative language competence, transfer

competence, strategic competence and cultural competence. Each of these competences in turn is subdivided into sub-competences or skills. The descriptors are not exhaustive or representative of what an individual can do at the different stages. Their purpose is to enable the experienced rater to identify with a particular stage of development. This study is a proposal of the elements that indicate different stages of the competences mentioned above, not an empirical study.

Chapter Five presents the conclusions arrived at after the research was done and the scale designed. The descriptors proposed are recommendations and are not in any way mandatory. Their aim is to be a basis for reflection, discussion and further action. Consequently, the scale needs to be used by translator trainers and other experts in the translation field and their input added to the scale, so that it becomes a calibrated instrument with stable, accepted standards of measurement and format.

## Chapter One

### Theoretical Framework

#### Introduction

Given that translation is considered to be an act of communication, the theoretical framework that will be used in this research project is based on the concept of communicative competence introduced into applied linguistics in reaction to grammar-focused theories of language competence. The concept became a symbol for everything that audiolinguism could not be: flexible, creative and supportive of learner needs (Savignon 7). The communicative competence models proposed by Dell Hymes (1972), Michael Canale and Merrill Swain (1980), Sandra Savignon (1983) and Lyle Bachman (1990) will serve as framework for the proposal of proficiency guidelines to determine levels of communicative translation competence presented in this project. All four authors have one premise in common—an integrative view of communicative competence with various components. They include in their theoretical model of the concept components slightly varying from each other, and they each view the relationship or importance of the components somewhat differently. Their definitions of communicative competence emphasize the users and their use of language for communication.

Canale and Swain's, Savignon's and Bachman's models of communicative competence are largely based on Hymes' theory of language use in society life. He maintains that social life affects not only performance, but also competence itself. Hymes argues that social factors interfere with or restrict grammar use because the rules of use are dominant over the rules of grammar. He claims that rules of speech

are controlling factors for the linguistic forms as a whole. According to Hymes, it is necessary to distinguish two kinds of competence: linguistic competence that deals with producing and understanding grammatically correct sentences, and communicative competence that deals with producing and understanding sentences that are appropriate and acceptable to a specific situation. (Hymes *On Communicative* 97).

Translation competence, that is the professional translator's competence, differs from communicative competence in that it is expert knowledge (Hurtado 338). That is why the concepts on translator competence proposed by Roger T. Bell (1991), Donald C. Kiraly (1995), Allison Beeby (1996), Albrecht Neubert (2000), PACTE (2000) and Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1997) will be drawn upon to develop the guidelines proposed in this research project. The reason behind choosing six different theorists to back this project is that unlike other fields in which a number of studies have been carried out to determine what constitutes expert knowledge in the field and how this knowledge is acquired, no generally accepted model of what translation competence is or how translation competence is acquired exists in the field of Translation Studies (Hurtado 382). However, the proposals of the theorists mentioned above coincide in describing translation competence as multi-componential, i.e. consisting of different sets of variables; that these variables interact with each other and with the context in which translation occurs and that translation is a dynamic process whose whole purpose is the achievement of interlingual and cross-cultural communicative goals.



Bell defines translator communicative competence as “the knowledge and ability possessed by the translator that permits him/her to create communicative acts—discourse—which are not only (and not necessarily) grammatical...but socially acceptable” (Bell 41). Why is translation a communicative act? Applied linguistics theory defines communicative competence as the ability to interpret, express, and negotiate meaning (Colina 25). In a similar way a translator has to interpret what the source text means, expresses this meaning in the target language and negotiates it between source and target linguistic and cultural conventions so that it satisfies the requirements of the readers.

The other model that will also serve as theoretical foundation to this research project is functionalism—also known as Skopos Theory. Because the main postulate of functionalism is that the translator should use the communicative purpose of the target text as a factor in decision-making and problem-solving, it becomes apparent that the Skopos theory is an appropriate framework to design guidelines to assess communicative translation competence (Kussmaul 64).

### **Defining and Describing Communicative Language Competence**

The proposal for evaluation of communicative translation competence presented here is based on a modification of proficiency guidelines to assess communicative language competence in second language acquisition. The reason for choosing this framework is that language competence as required in translation shares the many features of language competence in any communicative language use, but it also has its own characteristics. Language knowledge has many uses: to plan, to acquire,

develop and apply knowledge, to think and solve problems, to respond and give expressions to experience, but its ultimate goal is to communicate with others. Translation has the same goals, but it is a special type of communicative process that takes into consideration the reader of the translation within a particular situation within a specific culture and that it requires competence in two languages (Kusmaul 2).

According to Bell the translator is “a communicator who is involved in written communication” (Bell 17). He stresses that “the translator must, as a communicator, possess the knowledge and skills that are common to all communicators in two languages (at least)” (Bell 36). According to Pym, “Translators are people who are competent in two languages, and their work involves putting those two competencies to work” (3). To Bell and Pym’s concepts of what a translator is, we must add that translation is a special kind of communicative competence that requires communicative competences in L1 and L2 plus interlingual and intercultural communicative competence (Colina 24). But what is it that differentiates a translator from a bilingual person who is not a translator? What skills define translator competence? In order to try to arrive at an answer to these two questions I will analyze the concept of competence from the point of view of communicative competence. This chapter reviews prominent studies in communicative competence, which is particularly influential to support this research project.

Communicative competence is a widely used concept in applied linguistics and is still evolving in definition. The concept of competence was introduced into applied linguistics by Noam Chomsky (1965), the protagonist of the revolution in linguistic theory. Chomsky categorically rejected the notion that language is acquired by

children through a form of conditioning dependent on reinforcement and reward. He stated that children came into the world with the innate ability to learn languages. He believed children acquire a language by making hypotheses about the form of the grammar of the language they are exposed to. They then compare this with their innate knowledge of possible grammars based on principles of universal grammar. In this way, the child internalizes knowledge of the grammar of the native language which Chomsky calls competence, and this competence makes language use, or performance possible (Chomsky 24-30).

Chomsky makes a clear distinction between competence and performance. His concept of linguistic competence comprises the internalized knowledge of the system of syntactic and phonological rules of the language that an idealized native speaker-listener of a language possesses and that enable such a person to distinguish between grammatical and ungrammatical sentences. Performance was the actual use of language by an individual in concrete situations, which was not a faithful reflection of the individual's *competence*. In other words, competence is a state of the speaker's mind, what he or she knows, separate from *performance*, what he or she does while producing or understanding language. Sociocultural rules and appropriateness of an utterance to a particular situation or context are excluded from Chomsky's competence-performance distinction (Chomsky 56-77).

As a deliberate counterbalance to Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence, Hymes (1972) proposed the sociolinguistic notion of communicative competence. He expanded Chomsky's notion of competence into communicative competence by including both grammatical rules and rules of language use. He coined the term

communicative competence which he defines as “what a speaker needs to know to communicate effectively in culturally significant settings” (Hymes, *On Communicative* 15). Hymes integrates linguistic theory with a more general theory of communication and culture. He emphasizes the social, interactive, and negotiating process of language. According to Hymes, a child learning a language acquires, along with a system of grammar, “a system of its use, regarding persons, places, purposes, other modes of communication; patterns of the sequential use of language in conversation, address, standard routines” (Hymes, *Competence* 22). Hymes believed that a theory of communicative competence should encompass different elements, so he suggested four levels of analysis in language use that are relevant for understanding people’s use of language. The first level is the grammatical level—“whether (and to what extent) something is formally *possible*” (Hymes, *Competence* 12); in other words, whether an idea can be expressed with the linguistic means available. At the next level, “whether (and to what extent) something is *feasible*” (Hymes, *Competence* 14); in short, what an individual can produce or understand in terms of time and processing constraints—the psycholinguist aspect. The next level introduces appropriateness of language, “whether (and to what extent) something is *appropriate* (adequate, happy, successful)” (Hymes, *Competence* 16) in relation to the social and situational context in which it is used and evaluated—the sociolinguistic aspect. Finally, language use is shaped by “whether (and to what extent) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails” (Hymes, *Competence* 18) —the reality aspect. Part of the language knowledge of speakers is knowledge about norms, conventions and habits of a given community of speakers. Some utterances are commonly used by a certain population

of speakers and others do not use them, even if they are grammatically correct and their meaning could be understood.

Hymes included in his notion of communicative competence some of the variables Chomsky had not considered directly relevant to grammar such as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, errors, false starts, subtle nuances of meaning, deletions, and repetitions. He holds that “grammaticalness is only one factor of the many factors that interact to determine acceptability” (Hymes, *On Communicative* 25). People vary in both knowledge and ability for use of language. Consequently, a linguistic theory, according to Hymes, must be able to deal with a *real* speaker-listener in a heterogeneous speech community, not an idealized speaker-listener in a homogeneous community. He also argues that social factors interfere with or restrict grammar use because the rules of use are dominant over the rules of grammar; furthermore, he claims that rules of speech are controlling factors for the linguistic form as a whole (Hymes, *Competence* 13).

Perhaps one of the best-known studies on the concept of communicative competence was conducted by Sandra Savignon. She defines communicative competence as “the ability to function in a truly communicative setting—that is in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors” (Savignon 39). Savignon outlines the following characteristics (Savignon 40-50):

1. Communicative competence depends on negotiation of meaning between two or more people who have the same code system.
2. Communicative competence applies to both spoken and written

language.

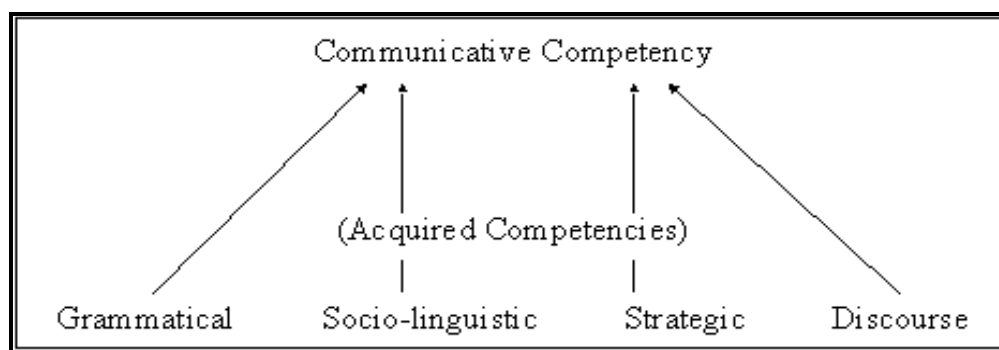
3. Communicative competence is context-specific. Communication occurs in many different types of situations and success is dependent on a person's comprehension of the context and the prior experience that individual has had with a similar experience. Register and style are chosen according to the context and the interlocutors.
4. A distinction needs to be made between competence and performance. Competence is what one knows and performance is what one does with that knowledge. Communicative competence can only be developed, maintained and evaluated through performance.
5. Communicative competence is relative and it depends on all the parties involved. "It makes sense, then, to speak of degrees of communicative competence" (Savignon 49).

Hymes' notion of communicative competence was examined by a number of practice-oriented language educators. This examination culminated in 1980 with Canale and Swain's elaborate definition of the term. They define communicative competence as "the underlying systems of knowledge of vocabulary and skill in using the sociolinguistic conventions for a given language" (Canale & Swain 15). They insisted that communicative competence comprises both knowledge and skills in using acquired knowledge when interacting in actual communication. Knowledge for them is what one knows about the language and about other aspects of life and the world and skill refers to how well one can perform. Canale and Swain proposed a modular framework for describing communicative competence that included grammatical

competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence (Canale & Swain 25). Subsequently Canale updated the model and proposed a four-dimensional model comprising linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursal and strategic competences; the additional distinction being made between sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence (Canale 76).

**FIGURE 1**

**Model of the Elements of Communicative Competence**



Taken from: Canale, Michael. "From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy." Eds. J. Richards and Richard Schmidt. *Language and Communication*. (London: Longman, 1983) 18.

1. Grammatical competence refers to mastery of the language system, graphic or phonic. It is the ability to recognize such features as vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling and linguistic semantics together with the ability to manipulate these features to form words and sentences.
2. Sociolinguistic competence includes knowledge of the socio-cultural context in which language is used. It emphasizes expressing, interpreting and negotiating meaning appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants and purposes, norms of

interaction.

3. Discourse competence comprises mastery of how to combine a series of propositions to form a meaningful whole and to achieve coherent spoken or written texts that are relevant to a given context or different genres. In both cases the writer/speaker and the reader/listener should share knowledge of the real world, knowledge of the linguistic system, knowledge of the discourse structure, and knowledge of the social setting.
4. Strategic competence encompasses mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be used to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to insufficient competence in one or more of the other areas of communicative competence (grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, or discourse competence) and to enhance the effectiveness of communication. It is the way we manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals.

Canale and Swain's most valuable contribution to communicative competence theory is that they integrated into their model communication strategies that people often employ to cope with the problems arising in the course of communication. They pointed out that such strategies should be considered as an essential aspect of communicative competence. However, just as Hymes says that there are values of grammar that would be useless without rules of language use; Canale and Swain maintain that there are rules of language use that would be useless without rules of grammar. They strongly believe that the study of grammatical competence is as



essential to the study of communicative competence as is the study of sociolinguistic competence (Canale & Swain 38; Canale 80).

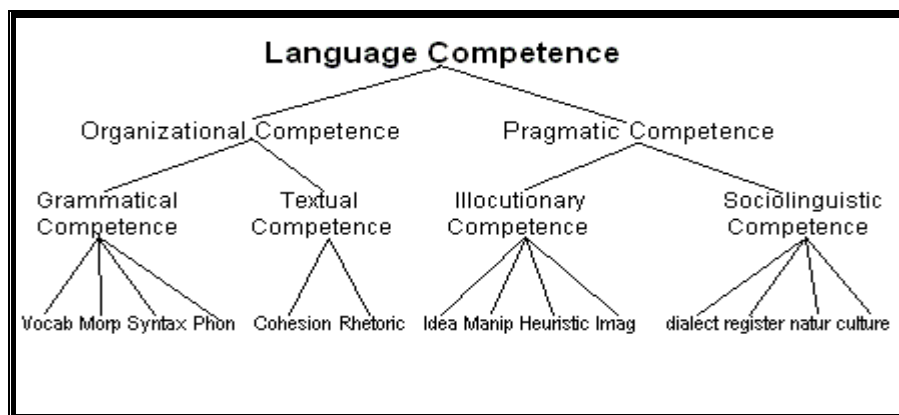
Hymes, as a sociolinguist, was concerned with the social and cultural knowledge which speakers need in order to understand and use linguistic forms. His view, therefore, encompassed not only knowledge but also ability to put that knowledge into use in communication and for that reason other terms thought to be more effective in describing what it means to know and to be able to use language knowledge have been developed (Bachman 1-5). One of these terms is Bachman's (14) communicative language ability (CLA). Building on Canale and Swain's notion of communicative competence, Bachman and Palmer proposed one of the most comprehensive models of language ability, which is a further development of Bachman's communicative language ability (CLA). In this model, Bachman and Palmer basically retained the same components as Canale and Swain's, but expanded the role of strategic competence, which Canale and Swain had considered being limited largely to compensatory communication strategies for dealing with breakdowns in communication or for enhancing communication. Bachman and Palmer consider use of language as interaction between users of language and their context (Bachman & Palmer 61-73).

Bachman and Palmer's notion of communicative language ability consists of two parts, language knowledge and strategic competence. Language knowledge to them is static while strategic competence is active and dynamic. Strategic competence is comprised of three metacognitive strategies, (1) goal setting: what the individual intends to do; (2) assessment: the individual evaluates the setting and the resources

available to cope with it and (3) planning: the person decides how to use what he/she has.

There are two main categories to the model each divided into two components which in turn are divided into other elements as shown below (Bachman & Palmer 87):

**Figure 2**  
**Components of Communicative Language Ability**



Taken from: Bachman, Lyle. *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. (Oxford, OUP, 1990) 87.

Organizational competence comprises knowledge of how utterances or sentences and texts are organized. The two areas of organizational competence that Bachman and Palmer distinguish are grammatical knowledge, which includes vocabulary, syntax, phonology and graphology, and textual competence, which focuses on cohesion and rhetorical or conversational organization (Bachman & Palmer 87).

Pragmatic competence concentrates on the relationship between the forms of language (utterances, sentences, texts) on the one hand and the user's communicative goals and the setting of language use on the other. In other words, it is the choices people make, "the constraints they encounter in using language in social

interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication” (Bachman & Palmer 80). Pragmatic competence is subdivided into illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. Illocutionary competence is the ability to use language to express ideas and get things done, the functions of the language, and it encompasses (Bachman & Palmer 90-92):

- knowledge of ideational functions: language used to form ideas and express people’s experiences of the real world
- knowledge of manipulative functions: language used to manipulate others and affect the world around them
- knowledge of heuristic functions: language used to widen people’s knowledge of the world around them and to solve problems
- knowledge of imaginative functions: language used to imagine out loud, express one’s and other’s imaginations, and for aesthetic and humorous purposes.

In Bachman and Palmer’s model sociolinguistic competence is defined as the appropriate use of registers, dialects or varieties, cultural references, and figures of speech. Additionally, the ability to use natural or idiomatic expressions is considered part of sociolinguistic competence. This component is very close to one of Hyme’s dimension of language users’ knowledge, that of knowing how the language is habitually used by the community that uses it (Bachman & Palmer 92-98).

Bachman and Palmer reject the notion of reading, writing, listening and speaking as skills, and argue that they should be seen as language use activities. Their concept of language competence comprises components of knowledge that are relevant to all

modes of language use (Bachman & Palmer 61-84). In fact, their concept of language ability is very useful as a guiding framework for assessments where linguistic competence plays a role, especially for assisting developers with definitions of what is and what is not intended to be assessed in a particular assessment procedure. The only drawback is that their definition of grammatical competence is still limited to grammatical form.

The above definitions by no means exhaust the complexity of attempting to describe communicative competence; indeed, it is just a first step into a very vast area. However, there are key components of communicative competence as identified by the researchers Chomsky (1965), Hymes (1972), Savignon (1971), Canale and Swain (1980) and Bachman (1990) in their theoretical models outlined in this chapter that will be fundamental to the development of the guidelines for measuring communicative translation competence proposed in this research project. These components and their description will aid in establishing a working definition of communicative translation competence for the descriptors of the guidelines. The categories chosen from the different models on communicative competence are:

1. Linguistic competence, which involves knowledge of spelling, punctuation, pronunciation, vocabulary, word formation, grammatical structure, sentence structure, and linguistic semantics. This is an important component because it is difficult for an individual to be communicatively competent if the person does not know the rules of the language system.
2. Pragmatic competence, which comprises two kinds of ability. The first one is knowing how to use language to achieve certain communicative goals or

intentions—the functional approach to language. In other words, knowing how to perform a particular function or express an intention clearly. The second one is knowing how to select the language forms to use in different settings, and with people in different roles and with different status. This ability can relate to non-verbal as well as verbal communication. Part of communicative competence is knowing what is appropriate, what is incongruous, and what might cause offense. Judgments of appropriateness involve not only knowing *what* to say in a situation but *how* to say it.

3. Discourse competence, which focuses on knowledge of how discourse works in terms of the common cohesive devices used in the language. It involves knowing the typical discourse markers in a language which signal the direction of discourse such as introducing an incidental remark, returning to consider an earlier argument or challenging an argument. Discourse competence also includes knowledge of text types, how these are put together, what grammatical forms co-occur frequently in a particular text type (processes, cause-effect analyses, comparison of systems, etc.) and the effect it has on an individual when certain forms are rare for a specific type of text.
4. Strategic competence, which consists of using strategies to express what needs to be said because of a lack of the resources to do so successfully. This lack of resources is compensated by changing the original intention or by searching for other means of expression. The inclusion of strategic competence as a key component is important because there is no such person that regardless of

experience and level of proficiency knows the language perfectly and uses it appropriately in all social interactions and contexts.

Multicomponential models of language ability are very useful for the design of metrics against which to measure communicative language competence because of the usefulness of their different categories. These models “can provide the basis for criterion-referenced testing and improved professional standards” (Bachman 4-5) because they describe a broader view of communicative language competence, whose distinguishing characteristic is its recognition of the importance of context beyond the sentence to the appropriate use of language. This context includes the discourse of which individual sentences are part and the sociolinguistic situation which governs, to a certain extent, the nature of that discourse, in both form and function. A common thread in these models is that “an empirically based definition of language ability can provide the basis for developing a ‘common metric’ scale for measuring language abilities in a wide variety of contexts, at all levels, and in many different languages” (Bachman 5).

### **Defining and Describing Translation Competence**

Unlike Applied Linguistics in which numerous studies have been carried out to determine what constitutes communicative competence and how this knowledge is acquired, Translation Studies has not established a generally accepted definition and model of what constitutes translation competence. In fact, the concept has had several denominations. It has been called transfer competence (Nord 161), translational competence (Toury 250-51), translator competence (Kiraly 108), and

translation ability (Pym 6). Of all the proposals, translation competence is preferred because the concept competence already has a research tradition in other fields such as Applied Linguistics.

There are six explicit definitions of translation competence that will be examined below for the purposes of establishing a working definition of translation competence for this project. The first one is Bell's (1991); he defines translation competences as "the knowledge and skills the translator must possess in order to carry out translation" (Bell 43). The second one is Kiraly's (1995) definition of translational competence and he defines it as the ability to interact appropriately and adequately with a source text and its context, the translation brief, and the participants (author of source text, intended audience, who is paying for the translation, etc.) in the process in order to produce a target text that is adequate to the needs of the brief and the target context (Kiraly 13-18). The third definition that will be discussed is Beeby's (1996); she believes that professional translator communicative competence is different from that of the average communicator. Ideally it comprises specific grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and transfer competences (Beeby 92). The fourth definition is from Neubert (2000), who suggests that translational competence is a "hierarchical configuration of clearly distinguishable component competences—largely related to language, text, encyclopedic, cultural and transfer knowledge and skills" (Neubert 17). The fifth definition is that of PACTE (2000) which defines translation competence as "the underlying system of knowledge and skills needed to be able to translate" (101). Finally the sixth definition comes from Hatim and Mason (1997). Their definition is completed with four affirmations, mainly that (1) translation competence is realized in

different ways in different situations; (2) it consists basically of operative knowledge; (3) strategies play a basic role in translation competence and (4) as in any kind of expert knowledge, most translation competence processes are automatic (204-205).

Just as detailed models for linguistic competence have been developed, so have componential models been proposed for translation competence. As they are all based on observation of the translator's behavior, there is agreement about some basic components, such as bilingual competence, transfer competence, world or subject knowledge. The models discussed in this section will serve as basis for the model to be used for the development of the guidelines to measure translation competence in this research project.

Bell (1991) considers that there are three possible approaches to describing translation competence. The first is the notion of ideal bilingual competence following Chomsky's proposals for the specification of the competence of the 'ideal speaker-listener'. The second approach is a translator expert system. Translation competence is described in terms of generalizations drawn from the observation of translator performance. The system has two basic components (Bell 40):

- (1) a knowledge base consisting of:
  - (a) source and target language knowledge: syntactic rules, lexicon and semantics and text-creating systems
  - (b) text-type knowledge
  - (c) domain knowledge
  - (d) contrastive knowledge of each of the above
- (2) an inference mechanism which permits:



(a) the *decoding* of texts: reading and understanding source texts

(b) the *encoding* of texts: writing target texts

The final approach follows the multicomponential model for communicative competence proposed by Canale and Swain (1983). Bell adapts Hymes' (1971) definition of communicative competence and defines translator communicative competence as “the knowledge and ability possessed by the translator which permits him/her to create communicative acts – discourse – which are not only (and not necessarily) grammatical but... socially appropriate” (Bell 42). According to Bell, the translator must have linguistic competence in the source and target languages and communicative competence in both cultures consisting of:

- (1) knowledge of the rules of the code which govern usage and knowledge of and ability to utilize the convention which constrain use,
- (2) knowledge of the options available for the expression of all three macrofunctions of language and knowledge of and ability to use the options available for making clauses count as speech acts in conformity with the community ground-rules for the production and interpretation of a range of communicative acts (Bell 42).

Kiraly (1995) proposes an integrated model of translator competence based on his psycholinguistic model of translation processes. Its main components are (Kiraly 102-105):

- Information sources that include (1) long-term memory which contains world knowledge, knowledge of source and target cultures, and knowledge of lexico-semantic elements and morpho-syntactic patterns in both the source and

target language. It also holds knowledge of translation: norms, learned strategies, criteria for self-assessment, and the possible sources of errors and experience with similar texts; (2) source text input which are the morphemes, words, phrases, sentences, sentence groups (the signs and sign configurations) processed by the translator as he/she reads and rereads the text. These signs trigger structures or frames stored in long-term memory and; (3) external resources (reference books, dictionaries, parallel texts, experts in the field, data bases) which is additional information not available from the source text input or the long-term memory; (4) the relatively uncontrolled workspace, which is mostly intuitive and subconscious; and (5) the relatively controlled workspace, which involves strategies and is conscious.

- The intuitive workspace and the controlled processing center is the part of the translator's mind where data from the long-term memory is taken and combined with information from the source text input and external resources without conscious control. Two different products result from this fusion: tentative translation elements and translation problems. Tentative translation elements do one of two things: "bypass the controlled processing center or go on to one of the two types of monitoring: target language monitoring and textual monitoring" (Kiraly 104).

Kiraly's integrated model of translation competence comprises three types of knowledge and skills: (1) knowledge of the situational factors that may be involved in a translation brief; (2) translation-relevant knowledge which covers linguistic

knowledge (syntactic, lexico-semantic, sociolinguistic and textual) of both source and target texts, cultural knowledge in the native language and the second language and specialized knowledge of the field being translated; and (3) the translator's ability to initiate appropriate intuitive and controlled psycholinguistic processes to formulate the target text and control its adequacy as a translation of the source text (Kiryaly 13-16). This model of translation competence, specifically, translation-relevant knowledge and skills share some of the same components of second-language competencies contained in concepts of communicative language competence.

Translator communicative competence for Beeby (1996) consists of four competences (92):

- Ideal translator grammatical competence. Knowledge of the linguistic rules (vocabulary, word formation, pronunciation, spelling and sentence structure) of both languages—"that is, the knowledge and skills required to understand the literal meaning of utterances" (Beeby 92).
- Ideal translator sociolinguistic competence. Knowledge of and ability to understand and produce appropriate language in the context and situation it is used in both cultures—"that is, as constrained by the cognitive context, the general socio-historical context, the mode, the field, the tenor, the status of the participants, the purposes of the interaction, the skopos of the translation, and so on" (Beeby 92).
- Ideal translator discourse competence. "The ability to combine form and meaning to achieve unified spoken or written texts in different genres in both languages" (Beeby 92). This unity depends on cohesion, the way statements

are linked grammatically for ease of understanding of a text, and on coherence in meaning, the relationships among literal meanings, social meanings and intertextuality of texts.

- Ideal translator transfer competence. The ability to use communication strategies to compensate for breakdowns in communication or insufficient competence in one or more of the other communicative competence components when transferring meaning from the source language to the target language.

According to Neubert (2000) in order to answer the question of what constitutes translation competence, seven contextual characteristics that distinguish translation from other academic professions should be considered (Neubert 3-10):

1. Complexity. Translation involves several different complex tasks that the cognitive system of the translator should perform. Translators are expected to have specialist knowledge in all areas in which they translate as part of their professional work.
2. Heterogeneity. Skills that are very different from each other have to be acquired for translation purposes. Not only does a translator have to be an expert in a certain field, but he/she also has to be a writer in both languages in that certain field.
3. Approximation. Because translators cannot be fully competent in all the fields they deal with, they develop the capacity to approximate the subject areas to achieve transfer of content and form in such way that

concepts are easily understood by the average reader and the expert as well.

4. Open-endedness. Translators continually need to search for new ways to express concepts. They constantly look for advice from experts in the different fields, search for parallel texts in the source and target languages and have to do a lot of research in both printed and unprinted material.
5. Creativity. Translators must always have a way to express something. The source text has to be transferred to a new setting where very different or new conditions of linguistic elements and discourse exist. Translators can never stop learning because they are forced to be up-to-date in the different fields they work with.
6. Situationality. Translators with a lot of experience very often “have internalized a typology of situations” (Neubert 5), but they have to be prepared to adjust to changing situations.
7. Historicity. One of the elements that have characterized the history of translation is changes in the ways translators do their job. Translators should be open to change in order to adapt to new ways of seeing translation.

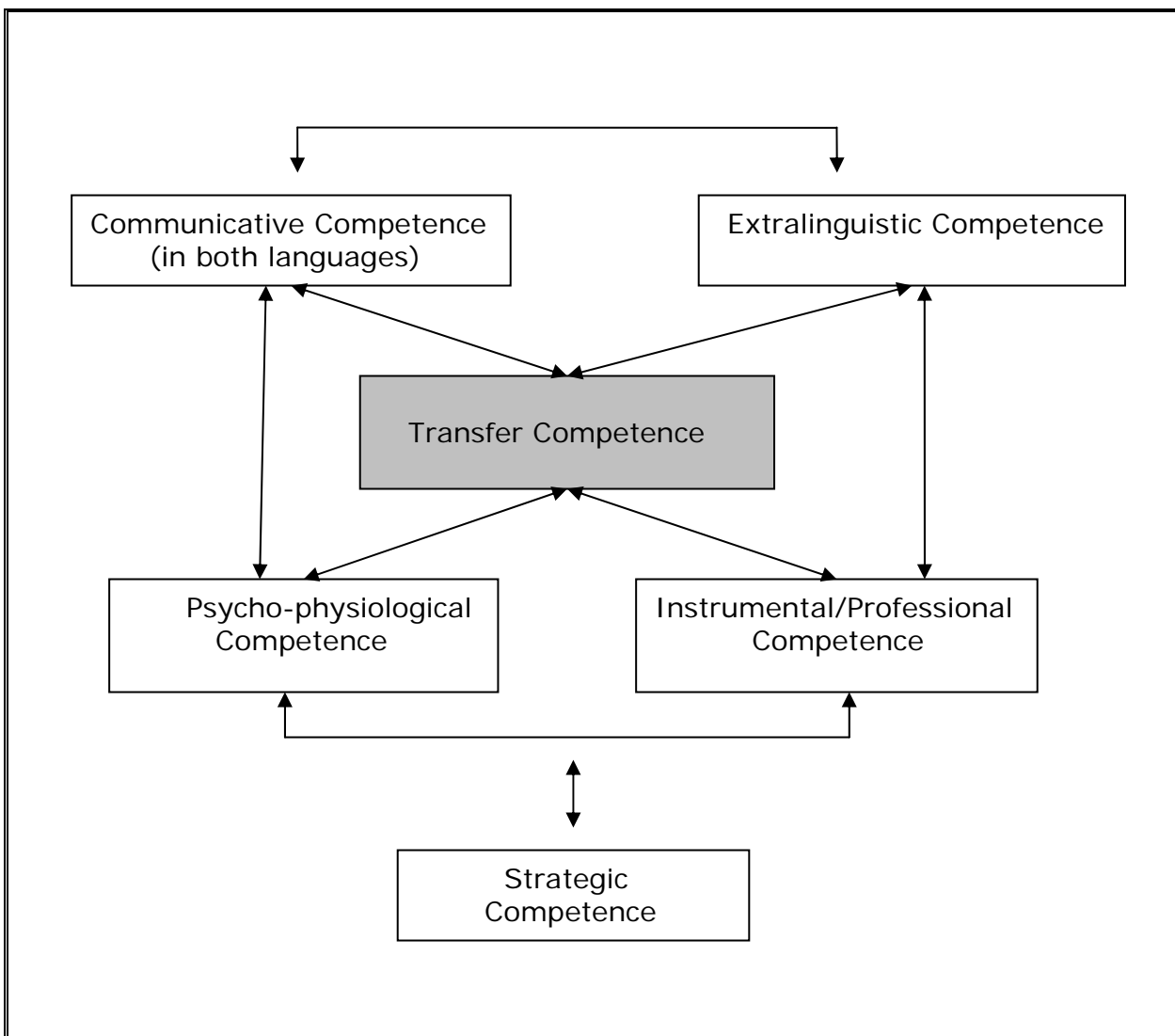
Neubert believes that translators require expertise that sets them apart from other language users. He considers the above characteristics as secondary elements of translation competence, but the five major primary features that should be considered as parameters and that need to be present in translators for translation to work are:

(1) language competence, knowledge of the grammatical and lexical systems of the source and target language; (2) textual competence, knowledge of the norms of discourse in the source and target language; (3) subject competence, highly specialized knowledge of the field a translation is about or the ways and means of how to search for this specialized knowledge when needed; (4) cultural competence, the ability to be a go-between the culture of the source text and the target text; and (5) transfer competence, the ability of building a target text from a source text (Neubert 7-10).

A holistic model of translation competence was developed in 1998 by the research group PACTE (Process in the Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation). This model was constructed taking into account: (1) research into notions of competence, expert knowledge and learning processes in other fields such as pedagogy, psychology and language teaching; (2) models of translation competence and translation competence acquisition currently available in the field of Translation Studies; and (3) empirical research on written translation in Translation Studies. PACTE defines translation competence as “the underlying system of knowledge, abilities and attitudes required to be able to translate—a system of competencies that interact, are hierarchical, and subject to variation” (Orozco 197). A distinction is made between competence (“the underlying system of knowledge”) and performance (translating). Translation competence is considered qualitatively different from bilingual competence, and it is considered expert knowledge, primarily procedural knowledge, where strategies play a very important role and most processes are automatic. Consequently, and as a result of empirical studies in

written translation performed by PACTE two components are added to already existing models of translation competence: the strategic and psycho-physiological as can be seen in figure 4 (Orozco 200).

Figure 3  
Holistic Model of Translation Competence



Taken from: Orozco, Mariana. "Building A Measuring Instrument for the Acquisition of Translation Translation Competence in Trainee Translators." *Developing Translation Competence*. Eds. Christina Schäffner and Beverly Adab. (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000) 200.

The subcompetencies of translation competence considered in the model proposed by PACTE included in figure 4 are (PACTE *Building* 90-96):

1. Communicative competence, which comprises the underlying systems of knowledge and abilities necessary for linguistic communication in both languages. Following Canal (1983) and Bachman's (1996) communicative language competence model, it includes grammatical, textual, illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence.
2. Extralinguistic competence, which includes implicit or explicit world knowledge in general and in the specific fields in which translation work is done, bicultural knowledge, encyclopedic knowledge and knowledge about translation processes.
3. Instrumental/professional competence, is defined as the knowledge and abilities associated with the use of all kinds of documentation sources; knowledge and use of new technologies, knowledge of the work market (prices, types of briefs, etc.) and how to behave as a professional translator, especially in relation to professional ethics.
4. Psycho-physiological competence, comprises the ability to use: (1) all types of psychomotor skills for reading and writing; (2) cognitive skills such as memory, attention span, creativity and logical reasoning; and (3) attitudinal or psychological resources like curiosity, perseverance, rigor, a critical spirit and self-confidence.
5. Transfer competence, which in this model is the central competence that integrates all the others. It is the ability to understand the source text



and re-express it in the target language taking into consideration the intended communicative function of the translation and the characteristics of the receptor. The subcomponents of this competence are:

- comprehension competence, the ability to analyze, synthesize and activate extra-linguistic knowledge in order to understand a text;
- the ability to stay away from one language interfering in the other;
- and the re-expression competence, the ability of organizing the text creatively in the target language;
- competence in choosing the most adequate method to carry out the translation project.

6. Strategic competence includes all the individual strategies, conscious and unconscious, verbal and non-verbal used to solve problems during the translation process. Some of these strategies are: distinguishing between main and secondary ideas, establishing conceptual relationships, searching for information, paraphrasing, back translating, translating out loud and establishing an order for documentation. This subcompetence plays an important role in relation to all the others, because it is used to detect problems, make decisions and make up for weaknesses in the other subcompetencies.

Hatim and Mason (204-205) discuss translator abilities, basing their description on Bachman's (1990) analysis of communicative language ability model. As mentioned

above, Bachman's model identifies three categories of knowledge and skills: organization competence, pragmatic competence and sociolinguistic competence. Hatim and Mason arrive at the set of translator abilities in Figure 5 by combining Bachman's model and translation-specific elements.

Figure 4  
Translator Abilities

<i>Source Text</i> PROCESSING SKILLS	TRANSFER SKILLS	<i>Target Text</i> PROCESSING SKILLS
Recognizing <b>intertextuality</b> (genre/discourse/text)	Strategic <b>renegotiation</b> by adjusting:	Establishing <b>intertextuality</b> (genre/discourse/text)
Locating <b>situationality</b> (register, ects)	<b>effectiveness</b> <b>efficiency</b> <b>relevance</b>	Establishing <b>situationality</b> (register, etc.)
Inferring <b>intentionality</b>		Creating <b>intentionality</b>
Organizing <b>texture</b> (lexical choice, syntactic arrangement, cohesion) and <b>structure</b>	to: <b>audience design task</b> (brief, initiator, etc.)	Organizing <b>texture</b> (lexical choice, syntactic arrangement, cohesion) and <b>structure</b>
Judging <b>informativity</b> (static/dynamic)	in fulfillment of a: <b>rhetorical purpose</b> (plan, goal)	Balancing <b>informativity</b> (static/dynamic)
in terms of estimated impact on: <b>source text readership</b>		in terms of estimated impact on: <b>target text readership</b>

Taken from: Hatim, Basil and Ian Mason. *The Translator as Communicator*. (London: Routledge, 1997) 205.

Hatim and Mason distinguish three stages in the translation process: source text processing, transfer and target text processing, and they assign different skills to each stage; however, these skills interact during the translation process.

### **Model of Communicative Translation Competence for the Guidelines**

Most of the models on translation competence that have been discussed in this section describe translation competence as a set of components: linguistic knowledge, cultural and subject knowledge, documentation ability, transfer ability, discourse competence, strategic and psycho-physiological competence. Drawing on the different contributions mentioned above, the basic premises for the model of communicative translation competence that will be used in this research project include:

1. Because translation is an act of communication, translation competence shares elements of communicative language competence such as: the linguistic, psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, discorsal and strategic components.
2. Communicative translation competence is the underlying formal system of knowledge needed to translate.
3. Communicative translation competence is expert knowledge, consequently different from bilingual competence.
4. Communicative translation competence is made up of a system of sub-competences that include:
  - a. Linguistic competence that comprises: *lexical competence* (knowledge of, and ability to use general and field-specific vocabulary; *grammatical competence* (the ability to understand and express meaning by producing and recognizing well-formed phrases and sentences in accordance with the rules of the grammar system of the source

language and the target language); *semantic competence* (awareness of and ability to control the organization of meaning); *phonological competence* (knowledge of and skill in the perception and production of syllable structure, word stress, word tones, sentence stress and rhythm and intonation); and *orthographic competence* (knowledge of and skill to perceive and produce the proper spelling of words, including contracted forms, punctuation marks and their conventions of use, typographical conventions and varieties of font).

- b. Sociolinguistic competence is knowledge of the socio-cultural context in which language is used and it includes linguistic markers of social class, ethnicity, occupational group, norms or conventions of interaction, register differences, dialect and accent.
- c. Organizational competence includes the ability to arrange sentences and phrases so as to produce coherent stretches of language, knowledge of how information is structured according to the functions: descriptions, narrative, expository, etc; how texts are laid out, signposted and sequenced.
- d. Subject competence comprises not only encyclopedic knowledge but also knowledge of where to look for and find highly specialized knowledge, and knowledge about translation processes.
- e. Professional competence which includes knowledge and the ability to use new technologies (software and hardware), knowledge of the work ethics and market.

- f. Strategic competence encompasses strategies that the individual can use to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to lack of competence in one or more of the above competences or to enhance communication, i.e., manipulation of language to meet communicative goals.

The general aim of the scale proposed in this project is to provide guidelines against which trainers, trainees and professionals can compare translator skills and roughly evaluate theirs and others position while avoiding the “spurious suggestion of precision given by a scored scale” (Lüdi 2). Given such an ambitious objective, attention is focused in this project on the first step towards achieving this goal: provide translation proficiency descriptors for four levels based on the concept of communicative translation competence described above and on work done by researchers.

## Chapter Two

### Evaluation in Professional and Trainee Translation

Translation evaluation is of central interest among different groups: from language learning in schools, university translation courses, researchers, agency testing of translators, quality control in companies, users of translation to translation critics. This interest is motivated by academic, economic and professional reasons: the need to evaluate students' work and the translation providers' need to ensure a quality product.

The main difficulty surrounding translation evaluation is its subjective nature. What makes a good translation? What standards have to be met for a translation to be excellent, good or acceptable? These questions are difficult to answer within the field of translation because quality is context dependent. A translation which is considered appropriate in one context or by one evaluator may be considered unacceptable in other circumstances. There is a growing trend in translation studies that there is no right or wrong in translation. Pym, for example, maintains that there are "many ways of translating, many things can be said through translation" (8). In short, the notion of quality in translation is a fuzzy grey area.

#### Three Areas of Evaluation

Translation evaluation is relevant in three areas (Hatim 1997): the evaluation of published translations, the evaluation of professional translators' work and the evaluation in translation teaching. In the first case, the evaluation of published translations, the aim is to judge the translation of literary texts (poetry, novels, essays

etc.) and sacred texts without any explicit criteria. The result was a subjective evaluation consisting of lengthy discussions about the translator's faithfulness to the original.

In the case of the evaluation of professional translators' work, the translated texts are technical, economic, scientific, legal, commercial, etc., and account for the vast majority of translations in the world today. When it comes to judging these translations, in addition to the criteria of fidelity and quality, other factors such as effectiveness and profitability are important. Scoring scales and surveys on quality assessment would be the most important evaluation instruments in this context (Waddington 137). In the professional setting, the assessment must take into account not only the end product but also the knowledge, skills and aptitude of the translator.

In the third case, evaluation in translation teaching, the interest is in the student's translation competence, as well as the study plan and the program. Assessment of students by their teachers is concerned with the process and the product, in other words, assessment of the individual's performance. A translation trainer has the duty to help students improve their performance, and this includes giving not only a grade, but above all, giving adequate feedback on the errors and difficulties to raise students' awareness about their translation problems (Bowker 35).

### **Evaluation in Professional Translation: Historical Account**

There has always been a need to develop assessment instruments for all the three areas: published translations, professional practice and translation teaching. The first step to innovative assessment models in the context of professional translation

practice was taken by Canada in the 1970s (Orozco & Hurtado 376). Explicit and applicable correction scales to determine error types and rating scales to measure translation were designed: the CTIC scale (*Conseil des traducteurs et interpretes de Canada*) and the SICAL scale (*Systeme canadien d'appréciation de la qualité linguistique*) in its different versions. The SICAL scale is based on the studies carried out by Gouadec. This author proposes a complex scale according to which it is possible to identify 675 error types: 300 lexical, 375 syntactic. In this scale, once the distinction between a transfer error and a language error is made, the error is labeled as major or minor. In judging the acceptability of a translation, the major errors were the ones that counted. A major error was considered to occur when, translating an essential element from the ST, the translator would fail to render the exact meaning of the original, create confusion in respect to meaning or use incorrect or inadequate language. The major drawback of this scale is the fact the SICAL deals only with syntactic and semantic aspects and overlooks any aspect that occurs at the level of the text as a whole, in other words, relations among sentences (Williams, 2000).

The interest in the search for a workable evaluation scheme based on error classification continued and, following the SICAL model, translation organizations such as the ATA (American Translators Association) developed a scale which includes 22 error types which should be used as criteria for error marking and grading: [1] incomplete passage, [2] illegible handwriting, [3] misunderstanding of the original text, [4] mistranslation into target language, [5] addition or omission, [6] terminology, word choice, [7] register, [8] too freely translated, [9] too literal, word-for-translation, [10] false cognate, [11] indecision in word choice, [12] inconsistent, [13]



ambiguity, [14] grammar, [15] syntax, [16] punctuation, [17] spelling, [18] accents and other diacritical marks, [19] case (upper case/lower case), [20] word form, [21] usage and [22] style.

In this scale, the evaluator detects the error and assigns it error points (1, 2, 4, 8 or 16) to each error. This was a step forward in the development of evaluation instruments because an error was assigned a weight on a scale rather than just mark it as a major or minor error. The problem with this type of scale is objectivity. There are no criteria to determine what constitutes a 2-point error versus a 16-point error. Furthermore, the scale focuses on sentence-level errors, rather than text-level errors (Secarča 40).

Another assessment instrument used in the professional setting is the SAE J 2450 which is a quality metrics developed by the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE). The goal was to have a standard yardstick for the automotive industry that could be used to measure objectively linguistic quality regardless of language. The model is based on seven categories: wrong term, syntactic error, omission, word structure or agreement error, misspelling, punctuation error and miscellaneous error. It focuses on content problems rather than on style. Errors are classified as major or minor depending on the importance in the ST and each error has a certain weight. The final score is arrived at by adding the scores of the errors and dividing them by the number of words in the translated text. This model has been criticized because it is not appropriate for other fields, because it is strongly based on terminology and because of the lack of a defined threshold between an acceptable and an unacceptable translation, which once again raises the question of subjectivity. Its most valuable

feature is that it can be applied no matter in what language the source and target texts are written (SAE 2).

Another translation evaluation tool for the professional area, BlackJack, was developed by the British translation agency ITR. It is a software application developed to rate 21 error types with a description and a corresponding numerical value. The application scoring system rates 21 types of errors according to: the impact the error has on the acceptability of the translation, the impact the error has on the intelligibility of the translation and the amount of time it takes to improve the translation. The software automatically allocates the appropriate value to each error detected by a human evaluator and gives the total score at the end. The manufacturers of BlackJack claim that it “was developed for use on any translation project for all industries including customer-facing literature and marketing literature with a high public profile. Its primary function is translation evaluation with a view to performance improvement” (ITR Blackjack 2). The BlackJack and the SAE J2450 models are basically the same. The only difference is that seven overly general categories in J2450 were replaced by a set of 21.

### **Evaluation in Translation Teaching**

Translation trainees, professionals being recruited at international organizations and individuals applying for membership of some professional associations have traditionally been evaluated by taking an examination which consists of translating an unknown text, usually without any help from dictionaries or other documentary research resources, in an allotted time slot and in a typical test environment. The method of evaluation used in this type of scenario is based on counting errors,

deducting points for each error and/or occasionally adding bonus points for particularly good solutions. It is an evaluation method based on error analysis. Such marking practice usually measures the target text (TT) quality against some “perfect” model translation (McAlester 235). It is also common for the TT to be compared to the ST in order to see whether “the TT is an accurate, correct, precise, faithful, or true reproduction of the ST” (Schaffner 66).

Nord and Hurtado have developed evaluation methods based on error analysis. Nord’s design is based on her perspective of the functionalist approach, according to which translation represents interaction between different actors, sometimes from different cultures, whose behavior, expectations and way of thinking may be different. As a consequence, the translation has to act as a bridge between these two socio-cultural situations. The translator is seen as an expert who should always be aware of the translation purpose and as a result make decisions that will make the source text accessible and acceptable in the target context. The purpose of the TT is the most important evaluation criterion in any translation under this method (Waddington 160-161).

Based on this functionalist approach Nord classifies errors on a scale of more to less serious: the most serious are pragmatic errors, followed by cultural and linguistic errors. Pragmatic errors are those made by students when they do not follow the pragmatic instructions of the brief, consequently, affecting the purpose of the translation. An example of a pragmatic error, according to Nord, would be if a student is asked today, the year 2007, to translate the following phrase which was originally written in the 1980s: “the chocolate bars have been around for only fifty years;” s/he

could not translate it literally because up to the year 2007 the bars would have been around for almost 100 years. If the phrase is translated literally it would be faithful to the text but not functional, so this would be a pragmatic error. Cultural errors are those that have to do with specific target culture conventions like weights, measures, format, courtesy, etc. Nord distinguishes between two types of linguistic errors: those made by students due to a lack of linguistic competence in the target language and those made by the translator because of significant differences in the linguistic systems of the TL and the SL even when his/her linguistic competence in both languages is good (Waddington 198-204).

Hurtado's error-based scheme has been widely used in the *Universidad Pontificia Comillas*, Madrid, since 1993. Possible mistakes are grouped under the following headings (Waddington 286):

1. Inadequacies which affect the understanding of the source text: opposite sense, wrong sense, nonsense, addition, omission, unresolved extralinguistic references, loss of meaning, and inappropriate linguistic variation (register, style, dialect, etc.).
2. Inadequacies which affect expression in the target language: spelling, grammar, lexical items, text and style.
3. Inadequacies which affect the transmission of either the main function or secondary functions of the source text.

In each of the categories the errors are divided into serious (-2 points) and minor (-1 point). In the case of the translation exam where this method is used, the sum of the negative points is subtracted from a total of 110 and then divided by 11 to get a

grade from 0 to 10 (which is the normal system used in Spain). For example, if a student gets a total of minus 55 points, his result would be calculated as follows:  $110 - 55 = 55$  divided by  $11 = 5$  (which barely passes; the lowest pass mark is 5).

This kind of evaluation and error-based marking has been criticized by translation scholars because of a number of shortcomings (Kelly 140):

- The criteria used to select the text to be translated is often based on the degree of difficulty and sometimes the criteria is even unclear, or in the worst of cases, practically non-existent.
- Overall translation competence is attempted to be measured at once and errors are not always symbolic of which skills have not been acquired. Moreover, the written response only gives a partial view of the thought processes and decision-making that the individual went through to arrive at the final product.
- It has little to do with the real translation world. There is the difficulty of time, no prior knowledge of the text and the subject area, no possibility to do research, and the physical environment is usually not the most appropriate one.
- The idea of a perfect translation goes against any modern view of translation activity.
- A brief is not provided for the translation task to be done; consequently, the purpose of the test is unspecified and individuals are left to speculate on what the examiner's goals are. This also leaves room for evaluator subjectivity because s/he cannot explain objectively to the test taker what makes his/her

solution inadequate or what went wrong. The translation is assessed in terms of the comparative structural knowledge of the source and target language the test taker has.

- Error-based grading does not consider a student's positive work; furthermore, the positive aspects of his/her work rarely have an impact on marks. Emphasis is on what students do wrong, not what they have learned. The points off system allows only for an indirect relation between the points taken off and the person's ability to translate because often there is no consensus on what constitutes a very serious error as opposed to a minor error or a bonus point.
- Calculating the exact value of a particular error is difficult and can end up being arbitrary, hard to justify and not transparent.
- It is the translation, the product, which is evaluated, not student learning.

Kussmaul (1995) adds other shortcomings to the deficiencies mentioned above which he associates with the foreign language teaching approach to translation evaluation. He thinks this approach is deficient because "it is centered on the word or phrase as an isolated unit and it is also centered on the student as a learner of a foreign language" (127). As an alternative Kussmaul proposes the professional translator's view to the evaluation of translation trainees in which "error assessment is focused on the communicative function of the word phrase or sentence in question" (128). In other words, errors or any kind of meaning distortion will be assessed in the context of the whole text, and its likely influence on the target reader/receptor.

Kussmaul (129) also supports the notion of Pym's binary and non-binary errors. They define binary errors as those choices which are clearly wrong and are the

typical approach of foreign language teaching. In Kussmaul's opinion, the notion of non-binarism is part of a communicative approach to the evaluation of translations. It implies that a wrong answer is not opposed to a right answer, but that the choice made be seen also alongside at least one further choice which could also have been decided on but that was not, and alongside many possible wrong answers.

As Pym (282) puts it, "for binarism, there is only right and wrong, for non-binarism there are at least two right answers and then the wrong ones". Typical judgments are "Its correct, but..." Translation errors should be typically non-binary and should be graded along a scale. Kussmaul argues that the communicative approach provides the assessors more objective standards than the binary language teaching approach, which often considers the proficiency level of students and the error gravity from a pedagogical perspective. According to Kussmaul, the communicative approach should only focus on the effect the error has on the target reader, rather than on the process happening inside the student's mind (129).

Kussmaul's approach to evaluation is product-based in which pedagogical or learning considerations are disregarded in favor of textual effects. Contrary to Kussmaul's concept of a communicative approach to evaluation, the scale that will be proposed in this project is based on a communicative approach that includes a process-based method of evaluation and product-based considerations.

Bensoussan & Rosenhouse have designed an evaluation method based on discourse analysis (Williams 331). This pedagogical tool is based on the premise that translation operates on three levels of understanding: "surface equivalence, semantic equivalence (propositional content, ideational and interpersonal elements), and

pragmatic equivalence (communicative function, illocutionary effect) [...]. Thus a truly equivalent translation [...] would reveal the translator/student understands on all three levels" (Bensoussan & Rosenhouse in Williams 331). Accordingly a student's translation is graded in terms of its fidelity to linguistic, functional and cultural levels. Errors in this evaluation method are based on lack of reading comprehension and those due to other problems. Comprehension occurs at the macro and micro level. Errors are divided into misinterpretations of macro-level structures (frame, schema) and micro-level mistranslations which include errors in transferring explicit discourse content, word-level structures including morphology, syntax and cohesion devices (Williams 331-332).

To demonstrate the model, the authors subdivide a chosen literary text of approximately 300 words into units ranging from one to three sentences in length and proceed to identify and characterize errors at the macro and micro levels, giving points for correct translation of each unit. They then generate frequency tables for each category of error. Translations are not graded against a defined standard. Learners get a grade for the number of correct utterances given. The model is criterion-referenced. The learner is evaluated on whether he achieved a specific translation objective. Bensoussan and Rosenhouse conclude that mistranslations at the word level do not automatically lead to misinterpretations of the frame and schema. In other words, the overall message may be preserved in translation, despite microtext errors in it (Williams 332).

Other evaluation methods used in translation training are the holistic methods. These methods produce a set of holistic criteria against which the validity of a



translation task is evaluated. Often they depend on scales which describe different levels of translation competence or are established on the basis of objective criteria which define and assign a certain value to the error. There are two types of scales: correcting and grading scales and a distinction should be made between them. The correcting scale establishes and specifies the error types; it corresponds to a preliminary stage in the development of an assessment scale. The main characteristics of this type of scale are: [1] it serves as a basis to decide on the elements that are to be taken into account in the teaching context; [2] it allows the student to be aware of his/her errors and [3] it is an important measuring instrument in formative assessment. On the other hand, the grading scale assigns a value to each error identified in the correction scale. It is useful in awarding grades, and it is also an indispensable tool in summative assessment. Two variables are taken into consideration when these scales are designed. Some scales consider translation competence as undividable and present only global elements while others consider translation competence as componential and subcomponential. A final grade is arrived at by adding the grade given to each subcompetence and averaging them up (Waddington 302).

Christopher Waddington (234) considers that even though the analytical and holistic methods have very different characteristics, it is better, for the sake of a clear and objective evaluation, to define them as extremes in a continuum than to present them as dichotomies. A better judgment of the quality of a translation can be made if the analytical method is at one extreme of the continuum and the holistic at the other and the assessment takes place somewhere between both extremes. As a result

Waddington (304) creates a holistic scale which is unitary and treats translation competence as a whole, but requires the evaluator to consider three different aspects of the student's performance: accuracy of transfer of ST content, quality of expression in TL and degree of task completion. He avoids using linguistic terminology like coherence, cohesion, discourse, and limits himself to simple language in the descriptors. There are five different levels in the scales and two possible grades for each level; "this allows the corrector freedom to award the higher mark to the candidate who fully meets the requirements of a particular level and the lower mark to the candidate who falls between two levels but is closer to the upper one" (Waddington 315).

**Table 2 Waddington's Holistic Assessment Model**

Level	Accuracy of transfer of ST content	Quality of expression in TL	Degree of task completion	Mark
Level 5	Complete transfer of ST information; only minor revision needed to reach professional standard.	Almost all the translation reads like a piece originally written in English. There may be minor lexical, grammatical or spelling errors.	Successful	9, 10
Level 4	Almost complete transfer; there may be one or two insignificant inaccuracies; requires certain amount of revision to reach professional standard.	Large sections read like a piece originally written in English. There are a number of lexical, grammatical or spelling errors.	Almost completely successful	7,8
Level 3	Transfer of the general idea(s) but with a number of lapses in accuracy; needs considerable	Certain parts read like a piece originally written in English, but others read like a translation. There are a	Adequate	5,6

Level 3	revision to reach professional standard.	considerable number of lexical, grammatical or spelling errors.	Adequate	5, 6
Level 2	Transfer undermined by serious inaccuracies; thorough revision required to reach professional standard.	Almost the entire text reads like a translation; there are continual lexical, grammatical or spelling errors.	Inadequate	3, 4
Level 1	Totally inadequate transfer of ST content; the translation is not worth revising.	The candidate reveals a total lack of ability to express himself adequately in English.	Totally inadequate	1, 2

Taken from: Waddington, Christopher. *Estudio comparativo de diferentes métodos de evaluación de traducción general (inglés-español)*. (Madrid: Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2000) 304.

Scales like the ones described have five basic advantages (Waddington 89-109):

1. They give information on students' behavior and can, therefore, help him/her understand test results.
2. They do not give the false impression of precision and exactitude that numerical grading gives, for example 87.5%. Learners are graded according to levels of skills and knowledge acquired.
3. They can also guide the teaching process, defining the principles for the construction of both assessment and classroom tasks and providing teachers (and students) with achievable goals.
4. They are a common yardstick that back evaluator's decisions, thus, increasing reliability of subjective global evaluation.
5. They help test designers limit themselves to a determined competence level within a learning process.

The most important contribution of these models is that “they have changed the focus from translation as text reproduction to text production” (Schäffner 1). They have been designed on the tenet that it is not words or grammatical structures that are translated but communicative utterances. The evaluation of a translation is no longer dependent on a correct rendering of the linguist structures of the ST; but on a linguistic format which is directly determined by [1] the text-typological conventions in the target language and culture thus meeting the expectations of the TT audience in a particular communicative situation; [2] aspects of the communicative situation in the target culture in which the TT effectively fulfills its function; and [3] the intended purpose of the text in a specific situation (Schäffner 17).

## **Chapter Three**

### **Method of the Research**

#### **Aim of the Study**

As outlined in the introduction, it is generally accepted that translation is the process of transferring text from one language into another, reproducing the style and the explicit and implicit of the source text into the target language as fully and accurately as possible. This process involves a combination of both linguistic and non-linguistic factors requiring several abilities. Competence in two languages is necessary. The translator must have the ability to read and comprehend the source language and write comprehensibly for the target audience. The translator must also be able to choose the equivalent expression in the target language that not only fully conveys but best matches the meaning intended in the source language. A translator's performance also depends on familiarity with the cultural and sociolinguistic context of both languages. Knowledge of subject matter and terminology in specialized fields also has an impact on performance. Moreover, analytical and research skills along with the ability to use translation tools and resources (such as monolingual dictionaries and glossaries, on-line aids, cutting edge technology and consultation with experts) influence performance. The translator should have the ability to complete the product within time constraints and according to specifications. A translation fails when one or more of these factors do not play an important role in the process of translating.

The basic aim of the study presented in this research project is to try to design a scale based on the ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign

Languages) and the Common European Framework proficiency scales to assess the factors that are involved in different stages of a translator's professional training and life translation process, in other words, a translator's communicative translation competence in Academia. Secondly, the study aims to identify descriptors for the following stages: novice, apprentice, competent, proficient and expert translator to design a scale for assessing communicative translation competence proficiency. Finally, it will assist translator trainers in answering such questions as: What should a student be able to translate after one, two, four or more semesters of study? What goals are realistically attainable in a translation program? What levels of proficiency can a learner obtain? Should some skills be emphasized more than others? When should a student master the technological tools available to translators? At what stage of the learning process does a learner start to alter style, tone and format according to the specific requirements of the reader and his/her culture?

### **Description of ACTFL and CEF Scales**

Before addressing the methodology of the study, it is important to understand what the ACTFL and Common European Framework scales for assessing proficiency are. By the latter part of the 1970s, the language teaching profession began to study the issue of proficiency. As a result, in April 1978 the federal government of the United States of America formed the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies to work on a project which was named Common Yardstick whose main goal was to attempt to define language proficiency levels for academic contexts using a scale parallel to the one used by the federal government schools since World War II. The government scale was developed by linguists at one of the

major government language schools, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), in order to describe speaking abilities of candidates for Foreign Service positions (Omaggio 119).

The work begun by the *Common Yardstick* project was continued by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) under a federal grant. This project involved the development of more extensive verbal descriptions of the scales in the form of “guidelines.” These generic and language-specific guidelines for assessing language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, writing and culture describe a range of abilities beginning at the novice level, progressing through the intermediate and advanced levels and culminating in the superior to distinguished levels. The descriptions are intended to be representative of the ranges of ability, not exhaustive and all encompassing, and to apply to stages of proficiency, rather than to achievement within a specific curriculum. The guidelines, first published in November 1982, have been recently revised, and will continue to be revised in the years ahead to correspond to the needs of users. The most recent set of generic guidelines are given in Appendix 2 (Omaggio 2-18).

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was designed by the Council of Europe to provide a reference for language learning, teaching and assessment for all main European languages. It describes what language learners have to learn in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop in order to function effectively. The framework also defines levels of proficiency which allows progress to be measured at

each stage of the learning process (CEF 1). There are six scales divided into three larger bands as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - CEFR Global Scale**

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Taken from: Council of Europe (<http://culture2coe.int./portfolio//documents/0521803136txt.pdf>)



This type of scale provides a framework that allows for more restricted descriptions of language where only partial language knowledge is required (CEF 23). As shown in Table 1, the descriptors are all “can do” statements designed to indicate the positive aspects of the learner’s language. The descriptors in this scale do not have negative statements as with other scales. That is, there are no statements of the kind “because of hesitations, lack of vocabulary, inaccuracy or failure to respond appropriately; have difficulty linking ideas” or “speech is characterized by ineffective reformulations” (Hudson 217).

The CEFR scales were developed through a process of scientific research and wide consultation. A comprehensive survey of over 30 existing language scales was carried out. The contents of each of the scales reviewed were broken into sentences. Each sentence in these scales was analyzed to determine what category it seemed to be describing. From this study, six levels came about and were adopted. More than 2,000 potential descriptors emerged and were constructed into statements that could be answered *yes* or *no*. In a series of workshops, teachers evaluated the descriptors and indicated which were desirable and which were not. Finally, the descriptors were evaluated against videotaped performances of test takers (CEF 7).

The ACTFL and CEFR proficiency scales were designed to measure general language proficiency and performance. They were not devised for rating translation skills nor have they, to our knowledge, ever been used for that purpose. Furthermore, the main goal of these scales is to address both strengths and weaknesses in the assessment of the performance of the language user. On the other hand, assessment of translation skills in the Academia usually focuses on

errors. The fact that all translation is in written form allows for errors to be more obvious and thus strengthens an error-centered approach in evaluation. However, with modifications this study seeks to prove that the ACTFL and CEFR scales can be used as *starting points* to develop a scale that measures proficiency and performance in translation.

### **The Type of Research**

In the Introduction and Chapter One of this project a general overview on the background of translation quality assessment, translation competence and translation competence acquisition has been outlined. From the bibliographical research done for that part of the project, it can be concluded that Translation Studies have not yet arrived at an accepted comprehensive theory or model of what constitutes “translation competence” in written translation or to an all encompassing explicit definition of what translation competence acquisition is or *when* the different components of it are acquired.

As a result, the research presented in this project is approached from a holistic-heuristic perspective. Research that has a heuristic purpose describes the patterns to be identified in some aspects of the field of study. The purpose is to provide a description of what happens or to gather information and generate hypotheses about the phenomena being studied. When the aim of a research is heuristic, the investigator observes and collects data which is then categorized or analyzed and written up descriptively; furthermore, an effort is made to avoid preconceptions (Seliger 30). Even though some general ideas from the work of other researchers (Lowe (1987), Stansfield, Scott and Kenyon (1992) and PACTE (2002)) will be

considered, this study will be approached with as few preconceptions as possible. In sum, a research with a heuristic objective is data-driven, has no preconceptions and the product is a description of patterns, behaviours, and explanations for further research.

The research methodologies that will be used in this study are empirical and descriptive. Empirical research into written translation first began in the 1980s. Translation Studies are an empirical human field, like sociology or psychology; a behavioural science, whose object of study is a specific type of human behaviour and its goals are those of any other science: to describe, explain and predict (Chesterman 3). It seeks to describe particular instances of phenomena and it aims at generalizing to get away from the particular in order to understand the bigger picture. A classical statement of the aims of empirical research is given by Hempel:

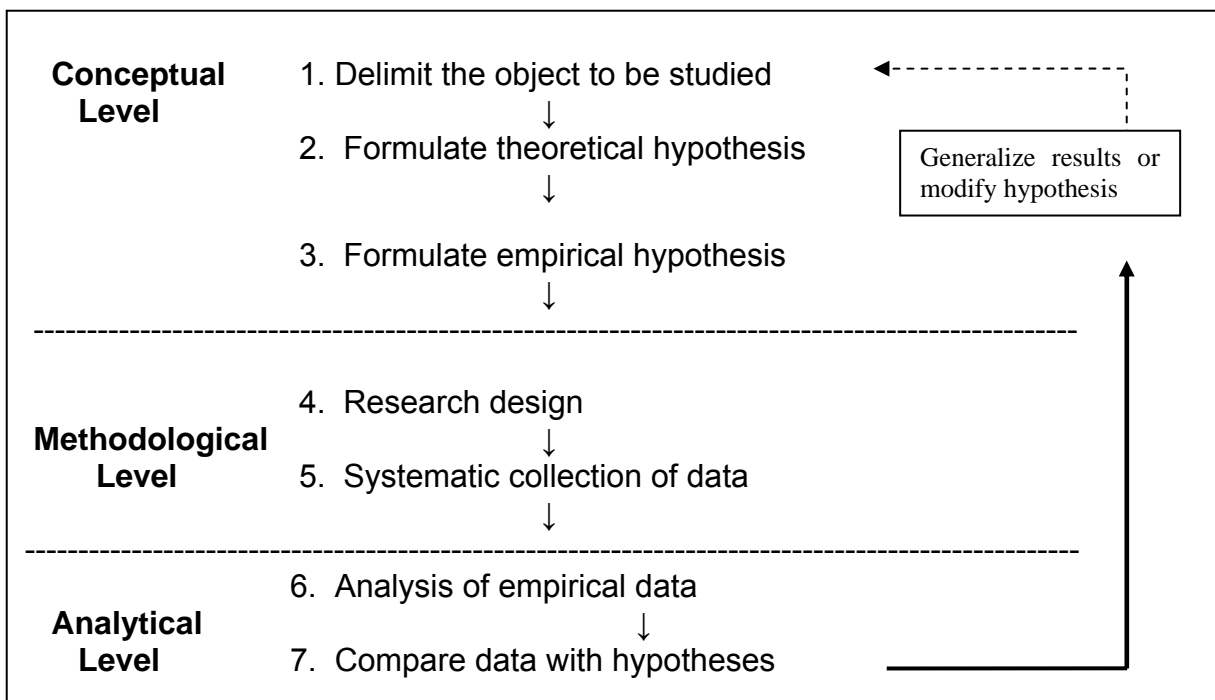
Empirical science has two major objectives: to describe particular phenomena in the world of our experience and to establish general principles by means of which they can be explained and predicted. The explanatory and predictive principles of a scientific discipline are stated in its hypothetical generalizations and its theories; they characterize general patterns or regularities to which the individual phenomena conform and by virtue of which their occurrence can be systematically anticipated (1952:1, cited in Toury 1995:9).

Some scholars in Translation Studies are interested in looking at what makes particular translations unique; others look for generalizations, patterns and regularities, even universal features shared by all translations (Chesterman 10).

Empirical research relies on and derives from observation. It is guided by practical experience, not theory. Two important characteristics of empirical research are that the relevance of theory can be proven by the ability to work in a real world environment and it integrates research and practice. Thus, empirical research in

translation studies has to follow the same stages as empirical research in any other field (Beeby 46). These stages are shown below in Figure 5.

**Figure 5**  
**Steps to be taken in empirical research**



Adapted from: "Choosing an Empirical-Experimental Model for Investigating Translation Competence." *Intercultural Faultlines Research Models in Translation Studies I Textual and Cognitive Aspects*. Ed. Maeve Olohan (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2000) 46.

Descriptive research involves techniques used to describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation. It uses data which may be collected first hand or taken from already existing data sources such as data from

other studies. Descriptive research can either be qualitative or quantitative and it is used to study a specific aspect of complex phenomena by describing them (Seliger 124-126). The research presented in this project will attempt to describe what an individual should be able to accomplish at the different levels of communicative translation competence attainment. However, emphasis needs to be given to the fact that this study is a proposal; and therefore, it does not pretend in any way to be universally rigorous.

There are two ways in which descriptive research can be carried out: through case studies and/or group studies. The former will be used in this project. A case study is a form of qualitative descriptive research that is used to look at individuals, small groups of participants, or a group as a whole, and it is interested in describing some aspect of performance or development. They collect data about participants using participant and/or direct observations, interviews, protocols, tests, examinations of records, and collections of writing samples and draw conclusions *only* about that participant or group and *only* in that specific context. Researchers do not focus on the discovery of a universal truth, nor do they typically look for cause-effect relationships; instead, emphasis is placed on exploration and description (Seliger 114).

Case studies have their weaknesses and strengths. Among its strengths are:

1. Case studies produce much more detailed information than what is available through statistical analysis.

2. While statistical methods might be able to deal with situations where behavior is homogenous and routine, case studies are needed to deal with creativity, innovation, and context.
3. The case study approach is a more flexible method because it emphasizes exploration, and researchers are freer to discover and address issues as they arise in their experiments.
4. The looser format of case studies allows researchers to begin with broad questions and narrows their focus as their experiment progresses rather than predict all the possible outcomes before the experiment is conducted.
5. By seeking to understand as much as possible about a single subject or small groups of subjects, case studies specialize in information based on particular contexts that can help give research a more “human face.” This emphasis can help bridge the gap between abstract research and concrete practice by allowing researchers to compare their firsthand observations with the quantitative results obtained through other methods of research (Seliger 87).

There are those who think that case studies are difficult to generalize due to subjectivity, because the approach relies on interpretation of data and research done by the researcher. This means that data can only be generalized up to a certain point. Consequently, results are difficult to test for validity and rarely offer a problem-solving prescription.

As mentioned above, the empirical approach is relatively new in Translation Studies. Little experience available to build on, a lack of an established theoretical and methodological criteria and the absence of measuring instruments designed

specifically for the field of translation make it difficult to set up a research project. The natural sciences and the social sciences have these tools and can depend on them, whereas in Translation Studies we may not be able to. There is little agreement on “how to formulate hypotheses, design experiments, choose subjects, define experimental and control groups, and control random variables” (Hurtado 282).

There is a general tendency to use measuring instruments from other fields of study such as psychology or teaching. The lack of appropriate validated measuring instruments designed for the sole use of Translation Studies that allow for proper collection of reliable data poses difficulties for the design of a research project because an individual who wants to start new studies has to design his/her own instruments and has to validate them once they have been used or s/he has to draw conclusions from previous studies and bring them together to form a new mode (Orozco 377).

Despite these difficulties, some empirical studies have been carried out and some isolated proposals have been made with respect to translation competence in written translation. However, these studies do not focus on translation competence as a whole. They have only opened new perspectives to understanding *some* of the elements that make up translation competence and performance (Orozco 378). For example, there have been studies of the translator’s linguistic knowledge (Mondhal and Jensen 1992), linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge (Tirkkonen-Condit 1992, Dancette 1994, 1995, 1997, Alves 1996); abilities and aptitudes, such as creativity, emotional qualities and attention span (Kusmaul 1991, 1995, 1997, Tirkkonen-Condit and Laukkanen; documentation (Atkins and Varantola 1997); and strategies

(Krings 1986, Lörscher 1991, 1992, 1993, Kiraly 1995). According to the PACTE Group (*Exploratory Texts 2-3*), the work of Stansfield, Scott and Kenyon (1992) is the only study that has attempted an empirical approach to research into translation competence as a whole. The instrument they created, called *Spanish into English Verbatim Translation Exam* (SEVTE), was validated by reliability and validity tests. However, the results cannot be generalized given the limitation of the sample and the purpose of the design: to measure the ability to translate from Spanish to English the kinds of written documents that FBI language specialists, contract linguists, and special agent linguists typically are asked to translate (Stansfield 455).

Three different instruments have been used to elicit data in the above studies. Seventy-five percent of them have used the introspective and retrospective techniques known as *Think-Aloud Protocols* (TAPs). For this technique individuals are asked to verbalize their thoughts, which are recorded in protocols, as they translate, to obtain data about the translation process (PACTE *Exploratory Tests 2*). TAPs have been widely criticized, first because a great percentage of TAP experiments use language students as their subjects and are therefore not valid for the study of translation competence; second they only reveal conscious processes that can be verbalized and do not reflect operations controlled by short term memory; and lastly, they are taken from another discipline, psychology (Hurtado 183).

The second instrument is the translation task where a text is given to a subject who must translate according to a brief, sometimes followed by the use of specific questionnaires; and the third instrument is computer programs. Two programs have been developed for this purpose TRANSLOG, developed by Arnt Lykke for the TRAP



(Translation Processes) group in Copenhagen, and Proxy an adaptation of TRANSLOG done by PACTE) so that the translator does not notice anything unusual on his/her screen. These are commercial software programmes used for remote control of computer users logged onto a server. All the translator's activities—Internet search, encyclopaedia, dictionary, glossary and parallel text searches, pauses, corrections, additions, deletions, etc.—can be logged in real time and the translator's screen can be observed on another computer in another room (Beeby 51).

The research method that is used in this graduation project is partially based on the empirical-experimental research model designed by Mariana Orozco which has been used by the PACTE group in several of their ongoing experiments (Orozco 2000). It was decided on this research design because it is only a model and as such, could be modified and it assures the following:

- Objectivity: other researchers can use the same design and measuring instruments to investigate and learn more about individuals' process of translation competence acquisition.
- Repeatability: the experiment was made public so it can be repeated by other researchers.
- Generalizability: the results can be made universally applicable.
- Validity: the goal of the experiment is reflected in the results (Orozco *Building* 203-213)

Orozco tested and improved her measuring instruments over a three-year period (1996-1999) in three different universities with nine different evaluators (Beeby 48). However, in this research the software programme Proxy, used by Orozco as a

measuring instrument in her research model, will not be used because it is not readily accessible. The following sections give details of the measuring instruments, subjects and tasks used in this research project which is based on Orozco's empirical-experimental research mode, whose main aim is to develop a scale to evaluate communicative translation competence performance at different levels.

## **Measuring Instruments**

### **A. Texts**

Subjects are asked to translate a non-specialized authentic text of about 320 words. No alterations were made to the texts and they could well have been translated by professional translators. The texts did require some extralinguistic knowledge concerning subject matter, cultural and world knowledge. Part of the subjects participating in the study was asked to translate a text from English to Spanish and another set of subjects translated a different text on the same topic from Spanish to English (see Appendix 2). Each text included a brief of approximately 35 words. The choice of the text was based on the variable to be measured: the different translation skills an individual acquires while going from novice proficiency to expert proficiency. The text was one which the translator would plausibly have to use as many skills as possible. The goal was not to find a text which would pose translation problems to the subject, but to look for indicators that would require the individual to use a specific skill at some point in the text.

1. Indicators of language competence (lexical, syntactic, and textual problems (cohesion) which require activation of knowledge of two language systems):
  - (a) lexical: "headquarters", "language services company", "uncompromising

commitment to quality”, “seamless continuation”; “actually”; (b) syntactic: “Whether you are making the transition from local to international or establishing a market in a new country,...”; “...how much more willing we are to deal with someone...”; (c) “Additionally, we proofread our translations...”

2. Indicators of extralinguistic competence. These are problems related to subject matter, and world or general knowledge. These indicators are: “ATA”; “network of over 2,000 translators”; “CEO of Berlitz International, Inc”.
3. Indicators of cultural competence. These problems are derived from the translation brief itself. Individuals had to familiarize themselves with the Sunday edition of the daily *La Nación*, a Costa Rican newspaper.
4. Indicators of transfer. These are problems that deal with choosing the text type and function in accordance the norms of the target culture and the expectations of the target receivers: subjects in the study needed to understand that a different presentation format would be needed in the translation because it would be published in a newspaper.

## B. Questionnaires

Three questionnaires with the following characteristics:

1. A first questionnaire (see Appendix 2) based on the translation notions instrument designed by the PACTE group (Orozco *Building* 209-212) was given to subjects to elicit information about participants’ concept of translation and their general knowledge of translation theory and processes because depending on the ideas individuals have about translation that is how they will decide how to approach a text to be translated. Subjects were also asked what

steps they take when encountering translation problems, the tools they use while translating, and the process they follow when they are faced for the first time with a text to be translated. They were also asked their name and age.

2. A second questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was completed after the subjects had translated the text. The main goal of this questionnaire was basically to obtain information of translation problems the participants had had while translating the text and how they had overcome those difficulties.
3. A third short questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was used to expand information concerning subject's professional experience (types of texts translated, length and approximate number of translations done).

### **Subjects**

There are two types of subjects in the study: professional translators and translation students from the Master's Translation Program at *Universidad Nacional*. Four of the professional translators are empirical, official translators and the other six are translators with a Master's degree in translation. There are 30 translation students participating in the sample: twelve from the first level of the Master's Program, twelve from the second level and six students who are currently working on their graduation projects.

### **Experimental Task**

The subjects followed the following process in the order given below:

1. Completion of questionnaire one.
2. Translation of the text and a list of names of the reference sources used to carry out the task.

### 3. Completion of questionnaires two and three

Participants carried out the task in their own workplace, were allowed to use any reference sources available to them and were given a week to return the instruments. Students from *Universidad Nacional* in their first and third semesters of the Master's programs were not informed that the task was part of a study until after its completion. The teachers gave the task as an assignment. Advanced students in the program were told they were participating in a study and so were the professional translators.

The scale proposed in this project will be presented in the following chapter. The most positive characterizing features for each level derived from the analysis of data obtained from the questionnaires and the translated texts, empirical studies carried out by researchers in Translation Studies to compare the performance of professional translators and that of students (Kiraly 1995, Jääskeläinen 1987, 1989), aspects considered in different theories of translation competence and the descriptors of levels in the language proficiency scales will be considered to write the descriptors which make up each one of the scales.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Guidelines to Determine Levels of Communicative Translation Competence in Translation Training**

#### **Introduction**

Now that some background has been given on the ways that evaluation has been carried out in the professional and translation teaching settings, it is essential to consider translation trainee evaluation from a general pedagogical standpoint before attempting to design guidelines to assess communicative translation competence.

The aspects which will be discussed are the following:

- summative, formative or diagnostic assessment
- proficiency versus achievement testing
- criterion versus norm-referenced assessment
- assessment criteria in translation

#### **Summative, Formative or Diagnostic Assessment**

Before designing an evaluation method it is crucial to answer the following questions (Hatim & Mason 199):

- What is the purpose of the evaluation?
- What exactly is being evaluated?

A difference between formative and summative assessment must be established initially in any translator/interpreter training program (Hatim & Mason). Formative assessment is often done at the beginning and/or during the instruction period. Its main objective is to obtain information for the purpose of training. The information can

be found in the results or in the student's working process (Martínez & Hurtado). It is designed "to provide a source of continuous feedback to teacher and learner concerning the progress of learning" (Hatim & Mason 199). The purpose of this technique is to improve quality of student learning, to guide instructors to adjust their teaching, and it can also lead to curricular modifications when specific courses are not meeting the students' learning needs. Formative assessment is any marking, correction or comment which gives students feedback that consolidates and contributes to their learning. It is not, however, used as the only means to determine final grades. Ideally, formative assessment should be an ongoing process instructors and students use to judge their success in achieving course goals and objectives, the impact a course has on the program and to prepare for another type of assessment, the summative. In translation training when one of the main purposes for evaluation is providing continuous feedback on the development and acquisition of translator competence, formative assessment would be the ideal way to evaluate (Colina 130).

It is important not to confuse formative assessment with summative; even though, the two functions are not mutually exclusive (Kelly 133). Summative assessment is designed to measure student understanding and skills acquired following a period of instruction with emphasis on identifying the level of mastery rather than aptitude or effort. Achievement tests, final exams, oral or written, and research projects are examples of this type of assessment. From an instructor's perspective it "provides evidence for decision-making (fitness to proceed to next unit, to be awarded certification, a professional qualification etc.)" (Hatim & Mason 199). In translation training summative assessment is more concerned with translation products and

plays a role in determining level of proficiency and could decide whether a student has the comparable skills to those required by professional translators (Colina 131).

Diagnostic assessment allows the evaluator to find out what an individual's weaknesses and strengths are and is performed before a learning process begins. It can be used as a level-placement tool, as a means of determining whether or not the student is able to enter a given course of study or to seek the cause of any deficiencies in the student's learning process.

### **Proficiency versus Achievement Testing**

Hatim and Mason (200) discuss another important dichotomy in translation training and which is related to purpose: achievement versus proficiency assessment. Through achievement testing an instructor tries to determine whether the goals and requirements specified in a particular curriculum or syllabus were achieved and it is mostly based on what has been taught. Proficiency testing measures an individual's skills and knowledge required for a particular task. Lee and Van Patten (74) compare the building of a gazebo to proficiency testing. You have decided to build a gazebo and you have all the construction materials at your hand: lumber, hammer, nails, paint, some kind of construction plan and the necessary tools. You know you have completed the task and reached your goal when the gazebo is completed and you can look at it and touch it. Achieving the goal depended on your construction knowledge and building skills. Similarly, proficiency tests measure what learners can do in the real world. They evaluate the learner's competences, knowledge and skills, to carry out a certain task. Achievement tests are concerned mainly with "course content relevance and proficiency tests more with meaningfulness (Savignon 222)."



## **Norm-reference versus Criterion-reference Assessment**

Another important dichotomy in evaluating practice is that between norm-reference and criterion-reference assessment. Norm-reference assessment judges a learner's performance by comparing it to a norm, for example, average, better than average, excellent, when compared to the rest of the students in their group. Criterion-reference assessment involves evaluating whether the student can perform a task or not—the translation of 20 sentences or a newspaper editorial, comparing, analyzing and/or revising different translations of a single original text, and so on. It is theoretically possible for all those who take the test to have a perfect score because instructors are not concerned with the comparison among students. Test scores are interpreted with reference to a previously established criterion. In translation training, criterion-referenced assessment is advocated to avoid the subjectivity involved in norm-referenced assessment (Kelly 142). “One challenge in translation performance assessment, then, is to define sufficiently objective terms for them to be usable by different testers in different situations” (Hatim & Mason 199).

## **Assessment Criteria in Translation Training**

Translation evaluation is one of the most difficult tasks facing a translator trainer. It is unlikely that there will ever be a ready-made formula that will make this task a simple one. Translation assessment is difficult because its object is not only the product, but also the process followed to arrive at the product and the translator's competence. Whether evaluating translation products or skills, assessment should be fair and objective. In order for this to happen the following basic principles should be observed (Martínez & Hurtado 2001):

1. Criteria should be devised before the evaluation and learners should be aware of them.
2. Criteria will depend on the assessment context (published translations, professional translation or translation teaching). In the case of translation training the criteria should be linked directly to the learning objectives or intended outcomes. Criteria are also dependent on the type of assessment: formative, summative or diagnostic. Reason and purpose for assessing plus for whom the assessment is being carried out should also be considered. In other words, assessment is the instrument to check whether learners have attained certain competences, course goals or to mark the end of a learning process. It is also the tool used for diagnosis, needs analysis, a recruitment process or seeking membership in an association.
3. What is being assessed (product, skills, or both) must be clearly established as well as the level at which it is being carried out.
4. Indicators selected by the tester should allow him/her to observe whether or not and to what extent learners have the skills and knowledge being evaluated.

Taking into account all of these various contributions to research on assessment, it is possible to have a greater picture of assessment in translation, and it becomes obvious that there is a need to develop a scheme to evaluate a translation from the point of view of translation competence as a componential set of skills and knowledge acquired at different stages of a student's learning process. That is the goal of the scale presented in the following chapter.

One of the aim of these guidelines is to help and encourage translation trainers and trainees, program administrators, course designers and examining bodies to reflect on such questions as:

1. What do we actually do when we translate?
2. What do we need in order to be able to translate?
3. How much do we need to learn to be able to translate?
4. What specific objectives and goals must be set in terms of learner needs to go from novice to professional?
5. How should progress be measured on the way from novice to professional?
6. What course books, works of reference (dictionaries, grammars, thesaurus, etc.), computer hardware and software are needed to obtain objectives and goals?
7. How much time can learners afford, are willing to or able to spend in their journey to go from novice to professional?

The criteria, categories and descriptors presented in this project do not claim to be exhaustive. As mentioned in the previous chapter the scale has been designed taking into account:

1. Existing proficiency scales for evaluation of language competence (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines, Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR)) for and translation competence (Office of Multicultural Health (OMH) Translation Quality Assurance Scale, ILR Skill Level

Descriptions for Translation Performance, STIBC (The Society of Translators and Interpreters of BC, Canada) Competency Charts, American Translators Association (ATA) guide to grade certification exams, Marking Guidelines from the Institute of Linguists).

2. Data obtained from analysis of the questionnaires and translated text of subjects participating in the study.
3. Findings from experts (Kussmaul 1991, Lörcher 1991, Kiraly 1995) who have done empirical research into written translation through Think-Aloud Protocols, questionnaires, direct observation, and/or video or computer recordings for the purposes of collecting information. The proficiency scales for language competence used are those designed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines.

According to Kiraly “translation is a unique form of interlingual communication” (16), and since communication deals with the complexity of human language, the scale will include language competences broken down into separate components plus the translation competence components discussed in the introduction of this project. Just as users and learners of language need the skills to act as members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to perform in particular situations, in a specific setting and within a particular field of action (CEF 9-10), so do translators need “the ability to interact appropriately and adequately as an active participant in communicative translation tasks” (Kiraly 108). Translation-relevant knowledge and

skills are closely tied to the same kind of competences described by the concept of communicative competence in the field of second language acquisition (Kirlyay, 1995).

### **Five Stages of Skill Acquisition**

Those who want to acquire a new skill are faced with two options. They can go about by imitation and trial and error, like a baby, or they can do it through instruction. Undoubtedly, the latter approach is more efficient for cases like learning a foreign language, and in the case of dangerous activities, such as learning to be an airplane pilot, essential. Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) studied how airplane pilots, chess players, automobile drivers and adult learners of a second language acquired skills to perform their tasks and concluded that there is a common pattern in all the cases which they called “the five stages of skill acquisition”. In their study they observed that not all people achieve an expert level in their skills. For example, most chess players at the beginner’s level can never master the domain. While almost all novice car drivers can eventually reach the expert level, some will have greater skills than others. Dreyfus and Dreyfus’ model is based on the premise that “skill in its minimal form is produced by following abstract rules, but that only experience with concrete cases can account for higher levels of performance” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus19). Dreyfus and Dreyfus refer to their levels as “stages”, first because a person will confront a task in his field of knowledge first as a novice, then as a competent individual in the domain, and so on through the five stages; and secondly because the most skillful person using the kind of thinking that characterizes a certain stage will have more skills than the most talented person at an earlier stage of their model. The five stages they propose are novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert (20).

A detailed understanding of the stages through which skillful performance develops is essential when designing training programs, materials and assessment. At each stage it is important to identify what skills the learner has acquired and which more sophisticated skills he is ready to acquire. Dreyfus and Dreyfus' five-stage skill model is used to design this scale because in their model being an expert, or being at any particular stage of the model, does not necessarily mean performing as well as everyone else at the same stage or level. This is advantageous for translation trainers because it gives them wiggle room to place a learner at a certain level. It also seems that a scale of five broad stages, which will be called levels in this scale, gives an adequate coverage of the competences to be acquired in the process of becoming a translator, as shown below. The stages, according to Dreyfus and Dreyfus' five-stage skill model that a learner goes through during the acquisition of new skills are described below.

### **Stage 1: Novice**

The novice, through instruction, learns to identify various context-free facts and features relevant to the skill which s/he can recognize without the benefit of experience. Based upon those facts and features the learners acquire rules for determining an action. Relevant elements of the situation are objectively and clearly defined so that they can be recognized without any reference to the overall task in which they occur. The rules that are applied are specific to particular circumstances of the overall task. Novices judge their performance by how well they follow learned rules. These first rules, like the training wheels of a child's first bicycle, allow the

individual to amass experience. The learner must eventually continue with the learning process without the help of the “training wheels” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 20).

### **Stage 2: Advanced Beginner**

Once the novices have had considerable experience dealing with real tasks, their performance improves to a moderate acceptable level. This encourages the learners to consider more elements that comprise the task and consequently start using more sophisticated rules and applies them to other contexts other than the ones they have encountered. The advanced beginner starts making decisions based on experience; consequently experience becomes “more important than any form of verbal description” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 23). At this level an individual does not have a sense of what is important and cannot prioritize. In sum, the novice and the advanced beginner, recognize learned components and then apply learned rules and procedures.

### **Stage 3: Competent**

As a learner starts accumulating experience, the number of facts and features present in real life situations become overwhelming. Individuals lack the ability to prioritize; a sense of what is important is nonexistent. To cope with these problems, learners at the competent stage base their decision making on conscious deliberate organized planning. A competent performer also standardizes and routinizes procedures (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 3).

### **Stage 4: Proficient**

The proficient performer sees situations holistically. He develops an intuitive ability to use patterns without breaking them apart into component features. Intuition

in this context refers to “the understanding that effortlessly occurs upon seeing similarities with previous experiences” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 27). Even though learners at this stage organize and understand their tasks intuitively, they will still think analytically about what to do. The individual assesses the most salient features of the present situation and recognizes them as similar to those experienced in past situations, but from a different perspective. The performer uses a memorized principle to decide on the most appropriate action (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 28).

### **Stage 5: Expert**

Up to this point the performer needed some sort of analytical principle, rule or guidelines to connect his grasp of the general situation to a specific action. Expert performers know what course of action to take based on deep mature and experienced understanding. They will only use analytic approaches in novel situations or when problems occur. At this stage the skill is so engraved in the mind that it “has become so much apart of the individual that he need be no more aware of it than he is of his own body” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 30). Experts will deliberate before acting when confronted with a crucial problem, but their deliberation does not require problem-solving techniques, but rather critical reflection and even so their decisions do not always work out.

### **Methods for Developing Assessment Scales**

The existence of a series of levels presupposes that certain things can be placed at one level rather than another and that descriptions of a particular degree of skill belong to one level rather than another. There are available methods of developing scales for assessment. These methods can be categorized in three groups: intuitive



methods, qualitative methods and quantitative methods (CEF 205-216). Intuitive methods of scale development are not based on data collection but on principled interpretation of experience, consulting existing scales, curriculum documents, teaching materials and other relevant source material, and then the information is reduced to draft descriptors at an agreed number of levels. In small scale contexts, the scale is piloted and revised, possibly using informants. Qualitative methods of scale development involve asking groups of experts to analyze data related to the scale. The material that they are asked to work on can be the scale level descriptors or samples of performances at different levels. Quantitative methods of scale development require a fair amount of statistical expertise. This method is usually applied in large testing or research institutions, although individual teachers or testers may also have the skills that are needed. The questions addressed in quantitative studies usually have to do with scale validation (Luoma 84-86).

In developing the scale for this research project, a combination of intuitive and qualitative approaches is used. As mentioned above existing scales for language proficiency assessment and translation assessment scales are used. The variant of the qualitative method used to develop this scale was to divide a set of translations according to the five levels that the scale has and a list of the features that distinguished them is made. The features were incorporated into the level descriptors.

An important decision that must be made in determining a system for scoring is what type of rating scale is appropriate. In second language literature there are three main types of rating scales (Cushing 110-121)—the primary trait scoring scale, the analytic scoring scale and the holistic scoring scale—which are worthwhile discussing

to understand why an eclectic type of scale has been decided on for the purpose of this research project

When using primary trait scoring, performances are evaluated by limiting attention to a single criterion or a few selected criteria. These criteria are based upon the trait or traits determined to be essential for a successful performance on a given task. The premise behind primary trait scoring is that it is important to understand how well students can perform within a defined specific aspect of a task. For example, in translation the discourse of medical research reports is characterized by a highly stylized format, known as IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion) plus a Summary or Abstract. Although this discourse organization is shared in Spanish and English, writers resort to different syntactic patterns in each language. In English, the starting point of the sentence is usually the grammatical subject; on the other hand in Spanish, a feature of medical writing for example, is the high proportion of sentences that start with a reflexive verb or a prepositional phrase (Vega 491). Scorers would attend only to that trait of the translation. The biggest disadvantage of primary trait scoring is that it is very time-consuming and requires a lot of intensive work, as a scoring guide must be developed for every specific task. This is the main reason why this type of rating will not be drawn upon for the scale in this research project (Weigle 110-112).

Analytic scoring is an approach to scoring or rating in which performances are evaluated for various selected traits, with each trait receiving a separate score. It also contributes towards making a decision on learners' strengths and weaknesses and in obtaining an overall summary of skills. Scores may be recorded as a check mark for

presence or absence of a feature, marked on a numerical or descriptive rating scale, or put in the form of a brief comment. For example, a translation may be evaluated according to register, attention to target audience, cohesion, terminology, language usage, style, format, mechanics, etc. This type of scoring provides more detailed information about a learner's performance in different aspects of a task. An analytic scoring scheme has two major advantages over other schemes such as the holistic scheme. It provides more useful diagnostic information about a learner's skills, and it is useful in those cases where the student has an uneven development of the different competences needed for a particular task. For example, in a translation a student may demonstrate a great control of syntax but has little or no understanding of the brief (Waddington 233-235).

Holistic scoring is a method of rating products and performances in which a single score is given to represent the overall quality of the product or performance without reference to particular aspects. Scores are defined by prescribed descriptors of levels of performance or scoring rubrics that outline the scoring criteria. From the standpoint of evaluating translations, holistic scoring has three main positive features: [1] it is faster and more user friendly because the evaluator reads the translation is once and assigns a single score, instead of reading it several times, each time focusing on a different aspect of the translation; [2] the evaluator's attention is focused on the strengths of the translation, not on its deficiencies, so that translation trainees are rewarded for what they do well; [3] it "is more valid than analytic scoring methods because it reflects most closely the authentic, personal reaction of a reader to a text"

(Cushing 114). In analytic scoring too much attention is given to the parts of the whole which could obscure the meaning of the whole (Waddington 244-251).

To summarize, the choice about the kind of rating scale to use is not always clear-cut. A useful approach to use as a basis for a decision is to appeal to the six qualities of test usefulness: reliability, construct validity, practicality, impact, authenticity, and interactiveness (Bachman and Palmer 19-29). As Bachman and Palmer note, the choice of testing procedures involves finding the best combination of these qualities and deciding which qualities are most relevant in a given situation. For example, if large numbers of students need to be placed in a translation program in a limited time with limited resources, a holistic scale may be the most appropriate based on consideration of practicality. On the other hand, a translation that will be evaluated for final grade results may have reliability and construct validity as central concerns. However, what is of ultimate importance in developing a scale for translation evaluation, whether the holistic or analytic method is used, is establishing well defined criteria (Waddington 247).

The scale presented in this project is not meant for an individual to a score. Its main purpose is to enable the experienced rater to identify with a particular stage of development of a learner. Because of the nature of translation competence, as well as the limitations on defining and observing the performance that is believed to be indicative of that competence, it is not possible to design a scale that includes all the abilities and skills individuals will possess at a given stage of their learning process. Learner's performance in this scale is evaluated from the point of view of development of five different competences:

1. Communicative language competence in both languages that comprises linguistic competences, sociolinguistic competences and textual competences.
2. Transfer competence which is the ability to comprehend a source text and convert it into a target text taking into account text-type conventions of the target language resulting in a communicative text in the target culture containing the intentions of the source text. It also includes knowledge of the theory of translation, encyclopedic and thematic knowledge, knowledge of documentation sources, research techniques and new technologies
3. Strategic competence which includes all the individual processes, conscious and unconscious, verbal and non-verbal used to solve translation problems, and the strategies used to manipulate language to achieve communicative goals.
4. Cultural competence comprises the awareness of similarities and differences in the way source text and target text communities view and structure the world in order to correctly render the meaning of the ST in the TT keeping the communicative effect and respecting the cultural norms and elements of the target reader.

No one has ever produced a complete exhaustive description of any language as a formal system for the expression of meaning. Language systems are very complex and the language of an advanced society is never completely mastered by any of its users. Language is in constant evolution in response to the exigencies of its use in

in communication (CEF 2001). Consequently, the descriptors presented in the following scales only *attempt* to identify and classify into stages the main components of *communicative* translation competence as defined in Chapter Two. These descriptors, as mentioned above, have been developed through a combination of intuitive methods, the analysis of the translations from the participants in the study, existing scales, studies on student translation processes performed by Kiraly (1995), Kussmual (1995) and Lörscher (1992) and translation quality assessment (House (2001), Nord (1988), Schäffner (1997) and Hatim and Mason (1990).

The scales and the descriptors need to be used critically. The usefulness of this scale will depend primarily on the content and objectives of the translation training course where it could be used plus on the needs, motivation, characteristics and resources of learners. The scales are intended not only to measure global proficiency in translation, but for evaluating separately the four different competences in the model of communicative translation competence presented in this project: communicative language, transfer, strategic and cultural competence.

## Translational Communicative Language Competence Scale

### Introduction

Language competence as required in translation share features of language competence in any communicative language act, but it also has its own characteristics. Translation is a special type of communicative language use in that it requires competence in two languages. Translators are people who are competent in two languages, and their work clearly involves putting those two competencies together (Pym 3). Communicative language competence for the purposes of this scale refers to having knowledge of the linguistic elements of two languages which empower a person to possess the ability to use both languages. This definition of competence involves so many aspects of language that it would be almost impossible to give a description of each. As mentioned before, language systems are very complex and are in constant evolution in response to technology, world affairs, and the general evolution of mankind. Consequently, to try to give an exhaustive description of *all* the language knowledge and abilities an individual should draw upon to be a user of a language is unrealistic.

The scale for communicative language competence below is divided into subcompetences—the knowledge resulting from experience and formal learning, skills and abilities to perform a translating task. These subcompetences include:

- lexical (knowledge of and ability to use the vocabulary of two languages)

- grammatical (knowledge of and ability to use the set of principles that govern the language system of two languages to produce meaningful utterances.
- mechanical accuracy (knowledge of and skill to use punctuation, paragraphing and layout conventions of two languages.
- cohesion and organization (the ability to arrange sentences in sequence so as to produce organized, structured and coherent messages.
- sociolinguistics (knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation between the “world” of the source community and the “world” of the target community).

The descriptors for communicative language competence in translation described in the following chart have been developed through a combination of intuitive methods, the analysis of the translations from the participants in the study, existing scales, studies on student translation processes performed by Kiraly (1995), Kusmual (1995) and Lörcher (1992) and translation quality assessment (House 2001, Nord (1988), Schäffner (1997) and Hatim and Mason (1990). These descriptors are not exhaustive of what an individual can do at the different stages. Their purpose is to enable the experienced rater to identify with a particular stage of development.



GENERAL COMPETENCE: Communicative Language Competence						
LEVEL	NOVICE TRANSLATOR	APPRENTICE TRANSLATOR	COMPETENT TRANSLATOR	PROFICIENT TRANSLATOR	EXPERT TRANSLATOR	
SUBCOMPETENCES	LEXICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficient vocabulary to transfer isolated words/and or phrases from familiar subject matter and real-world knowledge.</li> <li>Command of common field-specific terminology known to the lay person.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficient vocabulary to translate generalities from very simple factual texts, but there is frequent repetition, word confusions, false cognates and inconsistencies are common.</li> <li>Command of a very narrow repertoire of field-specific terminology.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good range of vocabulary to translate texts that contain not only facts, but also abstract language; word choice and inconsistencies are evident.</li> <li>Command of a limited range of field-specific terminology.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good command of a broad lexical repertoire to translate moderate to difficult texts.</li> <li>High command of field-specific terminology, idioms, colloquialisms, collocations, synonyms and antonyms to vary writing, though occasionally a more appropriate rendering may be used.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent command of a very broad lexical repertoire to translate very difficult and highly specialized texts; impressive, rich in imagery; adheres to target language norms.</li> <li>Mastery of field-specific terminology that allows successful translation within the field.</li> </ul>
	GRAMMATICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little language control; language errors and restricted choice of language forms are so noticeable readers are seriously distracted by them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple grammatical patterns from the target language used with reasonable accuracy to translate straightforward factual texts.</li> <li>Noticeable influence of structure and word order of the source language which can interfere with meaning, over-elaboration and excessive paraphrasing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large, but not complete, range of both morphologic and syntactic structures in the target language.</li> <li>Good grammatical control, though there could be some awkwardness and systematic errors.</li> <li>Some source language structure and word order influence, but does not interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large range of morphological and syntactic structures.</li> <li>Grammatical accuracy throughout; errors are rare, difficult to spot and never interfere with communication.</li> <li>Sentence structure of the original has been modified to target language consistently throughout the translation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mastery of morphological and syntactic structures.</li> <li>Flawless grammatical control of complex language which is consistent with target language conventions.</li> </ul>
	MECHANICAL ACCURACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inaccurate notions of mechanical conventions punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing) and of appropriate and accurate presentation according to text-type.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General notions of mechanical conventions (punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing) in the target language and of appropriate and accurate presentation according to text-type.</li> <li>Meaning confused/or obscured often.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fair control of mechanical conventions (punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing) and of appropriate and accurate presentation according to text-type.</li> <li>Meaning obscured at times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good control of mechanical conventions: punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing.</li> <li>Appropriate presentation according to text-type</li> <li>Meaning not obscured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meticulous control of mechanical conventions in target language.</li> <li>Expressions of finer shades of meaning, such as feelings, emotions, attitudes conveyed through punctuation.</li> <li>Accurate presentation according to text-type.</li> </ul>
	COHESION AND ORGANIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translation is so fragmentary that comprehension of the target text is virtually impossible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most frequent connectors and transition words to link ideas.</li> <li>Unsatisfactory cohesion could cause difficulty in understanding some of the text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate range of cohesive devices and transition words to clearly mark the relationships between ideas.</li> <li>Some ideas may be confused or disconnected, displays some awkwardness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wide range of cohesive devices and transition words.</li> <li>Occasional deficiencies may mean that certain parts of the text are loosely organized and not always effective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete range of cohesive devices resulting in fluent expression, ideas clearly stated and well organized, and logical sequencing.</li> <li>Sophisticated ability to link ideas in a logical and subtle manner, adapting to TL uses.</li> </ul>
	SOCIOLINGUISTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no evidence of linguistic markers to signal social class and attitude, geographic region, time, participation, formality, province, modality, occupational and professional group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some linguistic markers for social class and attitude, geographic region, time, participation, formality, province, modality, occupational and professional group.</li> <li>Linguistic markers may not correspond to the intention or sense of the original.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate range of linguistic markers for social class and attitude, geographic region, time, participation, formality, province, modality, occupational and professional group.</li> <li>Linguistic markers broadly correspond to the intention or sense of the original.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replacement of almost all culture-specific concepts (social class and attitude, geographic region, time, participation, formality, province, modality, occupational and professional) of the source text with target-culture linguistic elements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full appreciation of the sociolinguistic implications in the source language.</li> <li>Intended sociolinguistic implications and nuances in the source text are conveyed in the target language according to its sociolinguistic conventions.</li> </ul>

## Transfer Competence Scale

### Introduction

Translation competence not only requires a comprehensive syntactic, lexical, and morphological knowledge of the source and target languages but a complete knowledge of source and target language *text* worlds and the ability to match source and target knowledge areas to end with a communicatively effective interlingual and intertextual transfer which Nord calls transfer competence (Nord 11). According to the PACTE group transfer competence is the central competence that integrates all others. It is the ability to understand the ST and re-express it in the TL, taking into account the translation's function and the characteristics of all those involved in the translation: writer, commissioner, ST and TT recipients (PACTE 2000). Transfer competence also comprises "the skills of research, as well as the ability to *synchronize* ST reception and TT production" (Nord 11). In other words it is the ability to produce target texts that satisfy the demands of all those involved in the translation task: writer, commissioner, ST and TT recipients. According to Nord having transfer knowledge implies possessing the following: [1] comprehension skills (the ability to analyze, synthesize and activate extra linguistics knowledge to capture the sense of a text); [2] research skills (knowledge and use of all kinds of documentation sources) and [3] encoding skills (the ability to carry out the transfer process from the ST to the production of the TT in function of the receiver's needs and the purpose of the translation).

The descriptors for transfer competence in translation described in the following chart have been arrived from the theoretical premises discussed above. These descriptors are not exhaustive or representative of what an individual can do at the different stages. Their purpose is to enable the experienced rater to identify with a particular stage of development.

**GENERAL COMPETENCE: Transfer**

LEVEL		NOVICE TRANSLATOR	APPRENTICE TRANSLATOR	COMPETENT TRANSLATOR	PROFICIENT TRANSLATOR	EXPERT TRANSLATOR
<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>DECODING SKILLS OF READING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient comprehension to understand connected simple prose, but consistently interpreted inaccurately.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient comprehension to draw inferences from prose in straightforward/high-frequency linguistic structures.</li> <li>• Limited vocabulary, use of contextual and real-word cues helps understand the text.</li> <li>• Failure to recognize intertextuality, to locate situationality, and identify genre specification of ST.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Almost complete comprehension for a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects.</li> <li>• Some comprehension of subject matter highly dependent on cultural and technical knowledge.</li> <li>• Some recognition of intertextuality, location of situationality and identification of genre specification of ST.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fluent and accurate comprehension of language pertinent to almost all text types and genres.</li> <li>• Ability to draw on situational, verbal, cognitive and socio-historical knowledge to interact with ST and make sense of it.</li> <li>• Awareness of writer's use of nuance and subtlety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehension of extremely difficult or abstract prose.</li> <li>• Sensitivity to and understanding of sociolinguistic and cultural references.</li> <li>• Broad ability to understand the nuances and subtleties of texts by activating all extra linguistic knowledge of context.</li> </ul>
	<b>ENCODING SKILLS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little familiarity with text- type conventions in the SL and TL which affect the transmission of main and secondary functions of ST, and ignore target receptors and the communicative situation.</li> <li>• Little knowledge of typographical, lexical, syntactic, discourse, pragmatic, cultural and semiotic differences between the SL and the TL, resulting in failure to render the message of the ST.</li> <li>• Equivalence based on isolated words and phrases, automatic one to one associations restricted to the lexical level.</li> <li>• Requirements of the translation brief are ignored.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited familiarity with text –type conventions in the SL and TL which affect the transmission of main and secondary functions of ST, and ignore target receptors and the communicative situation.</li> <li>• Limited knowledge of typographical, lexical, syntactic, discourse, pragmatic, cultural and semiotic differences between the SL and TL, resulting in contradiction of or significant departure from the meaning of ST.</li> <li>• Equivalence is based on words and phrases, but gradually longer units are included.</li> <li>• Translation is an inappropriate rendering of the subject matter dealt with in the ST.</li> <li>• Partial solution to extra linguistic references.</li> <li>• Awareness of a translation brief, but translation strategies are insufficient to meet these requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity with text- type conventions in SL and TL, secondary functions of ST often affected, awareness of target receptors and communicative situation</li> <li>• Some knowledge of typographical, lexical, syntactic, discourse, pragmatic, cultural and semiotic differences between the SL and TL.</li> <li>• Overall message of ST preserved with errors in typographical, lexical, syntactic, discourse, and pragmatic aspects.</li> <li>• Emphasis on ST participants (producer, sender, recipient).</li> <li>• Some inaccuracy to the solution of extra linguistic references.</li> <li>• Moderate range of translation strategies to meet translation brief requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of text- type conventions often results in accurate rendering of main and secondary functions of ST, target receptors and communicative situation acknowledged.</li> <li>• Translation is partially based on a reformulation of the ST conceptual meaning and the text as a whole, not on words and syntactic structures.</li> <li>• Shift in emphasis from the ST participants (producer, sender, recipient) to the TT participants</li> <li>• Little inaccuracy to the solution of extra linguistic references.</li> <li>• Good range of translation strategies to meet translation brief requirements</li> <li>• Awareness of possible omissions and/or modifications related to differences in time and location between</li> <li>• ST and TT.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mastery of text-type conventions resulting in a communicative text in the TC containing the intentions of the ST.</li> <li>• Translation is totally based on the text as a whole and meets the requirements of the translation scope in the TC.</li> <li>• Total accuracy to the solution of extra linguistic references.</li> <li>• Complete range of translation strategies to meet translation brief requirements.</li> <li>• Complete modifications or expansions in the informativity of the TT due to differences in time and location between ST and TT.</li> </ul>
	<b>RESEARCH SKILLS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient notions on location and use of documentation sources, information and communication technologies applied to translation: dictionaries of all kinds, encyclopedias, grammars, style books, parallel texts, electronic corpora, data bases, search engines and informants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General notions on the location and use of monolingual/bilingual dictionaries, encyclopedias, parallel texts and search engines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient knowledge of location and use of dictionaries of all kinds, encyclopedias, parallel texts, search engines, data bases, and informants.</li> <li>• Sufficient dictionary skills to establish interlinguistic correspondences and to construct parallel representations of part of a semantic field.</li> <li>• Some documentary sources are used to deal with stylistic factors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad knowledge of location and use of documentation sources, information and communication technologies applied to translation: dictionaries of all kinds, encyclopedias, grammars, style books, parallel texts, electronic corpora, data bases, informants and search engines.</li> <li>• Good dictionary skills to establish interlinguistic correspondences and to construct parallel representations of part of a semantic field.</li> <li>• Wide variety of documentary sources is used to deal with stylistic factors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete knowledge of location and use of documentation sources, information and communication technologies applied to translation: dictionaries of all kinds, encyclopedias, grammars, style books, parallel texts, electronic corpora, data bases, informants and search engines.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Competence Scale

### Introduction

Strategic competence comprises “all the individual procedures, conscious and unconscious, verbal and non-verbal, used to solve problems found during the translation process” (Orozco 201 in Developing C C). This competence is used in detecting problems, making decisions, and correcting occasional errors or deficiencies in any of the other competences. There are at least three stages in this process: [1] realization of a problem whether at the comprehension or production level on the part of the individual, [2] arriving at a solution to the problem and [3] realization that the problem cannot be solved at the given point and time (Lörscher 99).

Studies done by Kiraly (104) have demonstrated that translation is a mixture of controlled and relatively uncontrolled processes. According to him (106) uncontrolled processes were the norms in his case studies, and conscious strategies are applied only when problems occur. The case studies also indicated that there are no patterned sequences of conscious strategies. He found that this is true of both novice and professional subjects.

Strategies are useful in many ways. First, they help solve equivalence problems. Strategies can become the most important tools for the transmission of the meaning and form of the original text into the target language. Nida (1964) distinguished between formal and dynamic equivalence. Formal equivalence is the closest possible to match form and content between source text and target text, while dynamic equivalence is the equivalence of effect on the target reader. It is difficult to find an

equivalent and it involves considering all the options the target language offers and the use of strategies where no exact translation is evident. Strategies can become the most important tools for the transmission of the meaning and form of the original text into the target language. Second, they favor translation-as-a-process awareness, and third, they present students with opportunities to discuss and reflect on contextualized theoretical issues (Aguado-Giménez 2).

**GENERAL COMPETENCE: Strategic Competence**

LEVEL		NOVICE TRANSLATOR	APPRENTICE TRANSLATOR	COMPETENT TRANSLATOR	PROFICIENT TRANSLATOR	EXPERT TRANSLATOR
<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to detect ambiguities and reference problems, faulty logic and inconsistencies, errors of fact, faulty text structure, and incoherence in ST.</li> <li>• Superficial ST analysis before attempting translation, realization of some salient translation problems at the syntactic and lexical level.</li> <li>• Relying heavily on bottom-up (language-based) processes for ST analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficient ability to detect ambiguities and reference problems, faulty logic and inconsistencies, errors of fact, faulty text structure, and incoherence in ST.</li> <li>• General ST Analysis before attempting translation, realization of the most salient translation problems at the syntactic and lexical level.</li> <li>• Imbalance between top-down (world knowledge-based) and bottom-up (language-based) processes for ST analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certain ability to detect some ambiguities and reference problems, faulty logic and inconsistencies, errors of fact, faulty text structure, and incoherence in ST.</li> <li>• More in depth ST analysis before attempting translation, realization of some translation problems at the syntactic, lexical, textual and cultural level, verbalizing of problem</li> <li>• Inadequate balance between top-down (world knowledge-based) and bottom-up (language-based) processes for ST analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate ability to detect most ambiguities and reference problems, faulty logic and inconsistencies, errors of fact, faulty text structure, and incoherence in ST.</li> <li>• Thorough ST analysis to identify and highlight almost all specific syntactic, lexical, textual and cultural features which might be expected to present translation problems.</li> <li>• Adequate between top-down (world knowledge-based) and bottom-up (language-based) processes for ST analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptional ability to detect all ambiguities and reference problems, faulty logic and inconsistencies, errors of fact, faulty text structure, and incoherence in ST.</li> <li>• Exhaustive ST analysis, realization of all possible problems at the syntactic, lexical, textual and cultural level which might be expected to present translation problems.</li> <li>• Complete balance between top-down (world knowledge-based) and bottom-up (language-based) processes for ST analysis.</li> </ul>
	<b>PLANNING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No apparent plan on how to translate main points that present problems by exploiting available resources.</li> <li>• Planning of solution of problems based on small units of translation, decision-making not prioritized and strategic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some plan on how to translate main points and some details that present linguistic problems by exploiting some available resources (dictionaries, parallel texts).</li> <li>• Planning of solution of problems in a linear way, concern with problems of a local kind, form oriented approach rather than communicative, proceed problem by problem, word by word, sentence by sentence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conventional plan apparent on how to translate a text that presents linguistic, cultural and textual problems that could have an effect on the recipient by exploiting almost all available resources.</li> <li>• Planning of solution of problems mostly form oriented rather than communicative, some consideration given to sense, style and text-type, but proceed problem by problem, word by word, sentence by sentence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear plan on how to translate a text that presents linguistic, cultural and textual problems that could have an effect on the recipient by exploiting all available resources.</li> <li>• A more global plan to solve problems: sense, style and text-type start being of importance, communicative-oriented approach followed.</li> <li>• Constant reevaluation of attempts made.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well thought out plan on how to translate a communicative text for the target reader.</li> <li>• Plan to solve problems is totally seen from the point of view of sense, style and text-type, use of translator's world knowledge and own inferences are basis for decision-making, communicative-oriented approach followed.</li> <li>• Constant reevaluation of attempts made and checking the text's communicative effectiveness.</li> </ul>
	<b>PROBLEM SOLUTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaning conveyed by maximum fidelity to the source text at the word level through recall and rehearsal of an appropriate equivalent from bilingual memory (usually common and frequent use of a word) and dictionary use (often superficial), very literal translation; decision-making left to the target reader.</li> <li>• Interference of the dominant language: incorporation of ST syntax and terms; phenomenon of false cognates.</li> <li>• Misconceptions of translation processes, translator's task and translation theory do not determine strategies</li> <li>• Editing at word level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paraphrasing using related words applied when the concept expressed by the source item is lexicalized in the target language but in a different form and when the frequency of use in the SL is higher than in the TL.</li> <li>• Very little experimentation with new combinations and expressions, preference for a more literal translation</li> <li>• Few translation versions at the word, clause or phrase level to solve problems</li> <li>• Very general concepts of translation processes, translator's task and translation theory to support determination of strategies</li> <li>• Editing at word and sentence level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paraphrasing using unrelated words when the concept is not lexicalized in the target language; other strategies: borrowing, calques, compensation and appeal for help from field specialists.</li> <li>• Omission strategy using when lexis or linguistic structures are not vital to the development of the text</li> <li>• Several translation versions at the sentence level to solve problems</li> <li>• General concepts of translation processes, translator's task and translation theory occasionally determine strategies.</li> <li>• Editing structure of paragraphs to make message logical.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of footnotes, endnotes, translator's notes and other explicit explanations, word coinage and transposition</li> <li>• Several translation versions at the paragraph level to try to solve problems.</li> <li>• Sound understanding of translation processes, translator's task and translation theory often determine strategies.</li> <li>• Preference for a freer approach to translation.</li> <li>• Editing to prioritize understanding over completeness to make message logical and accurate to TR.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choice of strategy is dependent on readership: modulation, reformulation and adaptation are common.</li> <li>• Several translation versions at different level (work, phrase, sentence, paragraph) using different strategies in each to try to solve problems.</li> <li>• Thorough theoretical knowledge channel and determine translation strategies.</li> <li>• Content editing (additions/omissions to make text more appropriate for its target audience or more appropriate for its medium of publication).</li> </ul>

## Cultural Competence Scale

### Introduction

According to the functional approach to translation, translation is not just the transformation of a text from one language to another, but rather the production of a target text that can function within a different context for readers from a different culture. Linguistic skills are part of a more basic cultural competence in handling source and target communicative contexts. In a modern world where distances between countries are getting shorter every day, and cultures have more and more contact with each other developing cultural competence for translating is of great importance (Baker 61).

Cultural competence comprises the whole range of everyday interactions in a given community as well as general knowledge about historical, political, economic and cultural aspects in the source and target cultures. Developing this competence means awareness of specific cultural references or of cultural nuances in the text and, in addition, being able to identify and transfer them; as well as making the strategic choices which will affect the quality of a translation (González 6). For Pym, “the ultimate aim of translation is to improve intercultural relations” (Pym 169).

“Communicative acts are part of a culture” (Kusmaul 65), and this relationship of texts with culture has always been a source of problems translators. Translators have had to decide whether terms, names, attitudes and behaviors not known in the target culture had to be explained, adapted or even dropped in the translation. There are no



rules for this decision. All that a translator can do is consider that texts are embedded in cultures and that their function is culturally determined (Kusmaul 70).

The scale descriptors provided below for aspects of cultural competence are representative rather than exhaustive of what an individual can do at each level.

GENERAL COMPETENCE: Cultural Competence						
LEVEL	NOVICE TRANSLATOR	APPRENTICE TRANSLATOR	COMPETENT TRANSLATOR	PROFICIENT TRANSLATOR	EXPERT TRANSLATOR	
SKILLS	SOURCE TEXT COMPREHENSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very little awareness that there is text which has a function only within the source culture and no communicative purpose for the TR.</li> <li>• Very little identification of geographical and social register and other linguistic features that carry socio-cultural significance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little awareness that there is text which has a function only within the source culture and no communicative purpose for the TR.</li> <li>• Little identification of geographical and social register and other linguistic features that carry socio-cultural significance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some ability to identify text which has a function only within the source culture and no communicative purpose for the TR.</li> <li>• Some identification of geographical and social register and other linguistic features that carry socio-cultural significance.</li> <li>• Some appreciation of the socio-cultural implications in the SL, their intended implications and nuances.</li> <li>• Some awareness that texts are embedded in cultures and that their function is culturally determined and the relationship between the SL and TL and the SC and the TC.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate ability to identify text which has a function only within the source culture and no communicative purpose for the TR.</li> <li>• Competent ability to identify geographical, social and historical register; other linguistic features that carry socio-cultural significance; and some cultural features that makes up the individuality of ST writer.</li> <li>• General appreciation of the socio-cultural implications in the SL, their intended implications and nuances.</li> <li>• General awareness that texts are embedded in cultures and that their function is culturally determined.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptional ability to identify text which has a function only within the source culture and no communicative purpose for the TR.</li> <li>• Exceptional ability to identify geographical, social and historical register, linguistic features that carry socio-cultural significance along with the cultural features that make up the individuality of the ST writer.</li> <li>• Full appreciation of the socio-cultural implications in the SL, their intended implications and nuances.</li> <li>• Complete awareness that texts are embedded in cultures and that their function is culturally determined.</li> </ul>
	TARGET TEXT EXPRESSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very little ability to preserve the socio-cultural significance contained in the register and other linguistic features of the ST.</li> <li>• Word for word translation of a culture-specific item which has the same propositional meaning of ST, but means nothing to target reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little ability to preserve the socio-cultural significance contained in registers and other linguistic features of the ST.</li> <li>• Some paraphrasing of culture-specific items which have the same propositional meaning of ST, however, confuses and leads to misunderstandings in the target reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some ability to preserve the socio-cultural significance contained in registers, other linguistic features of the ST and some cultural features that makes up the individuality of ST writer.</li> <li>• Certain awareness that a choice must be made between domestication (bringing the foreign culture closer to the reader in the target culture) or foreignization (taking the reader over to the foreign culture and making the cultural differences felt) of the text; implications of either are not clear.</li> <li>• Paraphrasing of culture-specific items which do not have the same propositional meaning in ST, but allows target reader to relate item to target culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competent ability to preserve the socio-cultural significance contained in registers, other linguistic features of the ST and most cultural features that makes up the individuality of ST writer.</li> <li>• Ability to decide between domestication or foreignization of the text according to translation brief and text function and awareness of the implications of the decision</li> <li>• Cultural adaptation which accounts for cultural differences between SL and TL communities.</li> <li>• Replacement of a culture-specific item with a target language item which does not have the same propositional meaning, but is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader.</li> <li>• Globalization: replacement of a culture-specific item with one which is more neutral or general and accessible to TR from a wider range of cultural backgrounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptional ability to preserve the socio-cultural significance contained in registers, other linguistic features of the ST and all of the cultural features that makes up the individuality of ST writer.</li> <li>• Choice of domestication or foreignization is linked to questions of ethics, target-cultural norms, expectations and needs of target culture readers; loss of exotic feeling and flavor.</li> <li>• Unobtrusive addition of information in the form of gloss, footnotes or glossaries to preserve original culture-specific item which might lead to obscurity.</li> <li>• Effective replacement of culture-specific items with target language items which do not have the same propositional meaning, but have a similar impact on the target reader.</li> </ul>

## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusions**

The scale presented in this graduation project was designed on the premise that a reasoned assessment, using scales established on the basis of objective criteria which assign skills and abilities to levels depending on performance, is appropriate for both students, teachers and the translation profession and can prove to be an excellent time-saver. Teachers are expected to grade their students' progress—whether in relation to the norm of the group or a given criterion. In doing so, trainers in the field of translation assume the roles of commissioner and user of a translation. They are the ones who evaluate and react to students' work. It is the teacher's responsibility not only to commission the job, but also to judge the possible effect of the translation on the intended user of the translation. In a professional context, there is no direct parallel to these roles.

The commissioner of a translation may provide some feedback to the translator, but this usually only occurs in the case of a complaint in which the motivation is financial. Feedback from any user, if it occurs at all, is usually mediated through a third party, possibly the commissioner of the translation. Teachers, on the other hand, have a primary and direct duty to help students to improve their present and future performance. For this to happen, they need objective well calibrated measurements against which to evaluate trainers' work, thus, providing constructive feedback with regard to translation errors or difficulties.

Any attempt to judge a translation presupposes the existence of some criteria, whether objective or subjective, and these criteria further presuppose a theory of translation and translation competence (House 247). The scale proposed in this project is based on functionalist translation. It has been designed to evaluate a student, whereby the purpose of the test is to judge the ability to perform a particular task simulating “real-world” conditions, or to establish the suitability of an individual to perform a specified task in the context of professional translation. Skills such as grammatical accuracy, use of a range of vocabulary, mechanics, and awareness of text-types, cultural considerations, strategies and other skills and abilities employed in the performance of the task are not considered for their own sake, but in relation to their contribution to the completion of the task.

As mentioned in Chapter One of this project, earlier approaches to translation assessment were heavily influenced by contrastive linguistic considerations with a strong emphasis on form and equivalence of structures and lexis. With the introduction of the functionalism to Translation Studies, the view shifted to language as use rather than language as system; consequently, assessment with the functionalist theoretical framework as backbone is not form-driven, but task driven. However, a functionalist approach to translation does not necessarily imply that all translation practice be assessed in purely functional terms (i.e. authentically) or that the ultimate goal be confused with teaching strategies designed to reach that goal. In other words, we need to distinguish between ends and means, “one must distinguish between the activities of assessing the quality of translations [...], translation criticism

and translation quality control on the one hand and those of assessing performance on the other” (Hatim and Mason 199).

A difference needs to be made between a ‘functioning translation’ and a ‘functional translation’. A functioning translation need not be a functional one. That is a translation can be accepted in specific circumstances although it is not absolutely acceptable, because it does not conform to the conventions and the norms of the text type. Therefore, the notion of purpose as the decisive criterion for the quality of a translation is linked to the linguistic correctness of the text, i.e. conformity to linguistic, text-typological, and communicative rules and conventions of the target language and culture. A quality translation has to be linguistically correct, culturally appropriate, functionally effective, and referentially complete (Schäffner 3). This is one of the main reasons why the model for this scale comprises four different competences: communicative language competence, transfer competence, strategic competence and cultural competence.

In the preface to a recent book on academic writing, the editors say: “We still do not know very much about the linguistic and textual features which characterize successful products and distinguish them from unsuccessful ones” (Ventola & Mauranen in Schäffner, 5). This statement can be applied in a similar way to translation. In Translation Studies there it is still no consensus of when a translated text can be characterized as “good” or “successful”. Different approaches define a ‘good’ translation differently and apply different assessment criteria. The translation studies have shown that some approaches are more successful than others, and the

functionalist approach has definitely contributed to valuable arguments. Ultimately, all approaches have to prove their value in everyday translation (Scäffner, 5).

### **Drawbacks of the Scale**

There are a number of possible ways in which descriptors can be assigned to different levels. The methods most commonly used are; intuitive methods, qualitative methods and quantitative methods (CEF 22). The best approach to writing descriptors is a combination of the three methods. The small amount of data analyzed in this study is inadequate for generalizing about the typical behavior of the subjects in the study. Consequently, the method most relied on to design this scale was the intuitive; furthermore, the nature of this graduation project and time constraints did not allow for the qualitative and quantitative methods to be applied . The main weakness of reliance on intuition is that it can be subjective. Secondly, there is also the possibility that users from different sectors may have valid differences due to the needs of learners.

The starting point to develop descriptors was to consider what was going to be described. Then existing scales, translation theories on assessment, analysis of translations done by students and professionals who participated in the study and who were representative samples of performance at different levels and other relevant sources were used to write the descriptors. For the scale to prove accurate, valid and balanced, the scale needs to go through a process.

A scale, like a test, has validity in relation to contexts in which it as been shown to work. “Validation—which involves some quantitative analysis—is an ongoing,

theoretically never-ending, process” (CEF 22). The following steps must be taken in a future research study to give the scale validation and balance (CEF 208-211):

1. Raters pilot the scale with a large sample of individuals from the different levels. It is good practice to obtain two ratings per sample. A typical procedure is to have all samples rated by two raters and to have a third rater rate those samples on which the first two raters differ by more than one scale level (Bachman & Palmer 222). Regardless of the backgrounds of the raters selected, it is important that they receive training. A general procedure to train raters is given below.
2. The scale is edited; new descriptors are formulated and then discussed by the raters.
3. Once there is a second draft, a simple technique is used with a new set of raters. The scale is chopped and informants typical of the people who will use the scale are asked to (a) put the descriptors where they think they belong in a level, (b) explain why they think that, and then once the difference between their placement and the intended placement is discussed, to (c) identify what key points were helping or confusing them. The scale is refined again. Sometimes a level needs to be removed or a level needs to be added.
4. Translation trainers pilot the new scale one more time to check that they can relate to the descriptors selected, and that the descriptors actually describe the performances they were intended to describe.
5. Finally, new descriptors are written based on the feedback from the trainers in step four.

Bachman and Palmer (1996) suggest the following general procedure for training raters (222):

1. Read and discuss scales together.
2. Review samples which have been previously rated by other experienced raters and discuss the ratings.
3. Practice rating a different set of samples. Then compare the ratings with those of experienced raters. Discuss the ratings and how the criteria were applied.
4. Rate additional samples and discuss them.
5. Each participant rates the same set of samples. The amount of time taken to rate and the consistency in rating is evaluated.
6. Raters are selected on their ability to provide reliable and efficient ratings. Besides raters should have extensive experience in one or more of the following: (a) translating expository prose in Academia and in the professional context, (b) translating special purpose prose (including literature) in Academia and in the professional context and (c) theory of translation with a balance in translating.

### **Problems Adapting Existing Language Proficiency Scales**

The following problems were found trying to adapt the ACTFL, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and other language proficiency scales to assess proficiency in translating ability:

1. The scales mentioned above and others were designed to measure general linguistic competence and not “special purpose subject area” (Lowe 54).



2. These scales are focused to measure lower levels of linguistic competence. An individual in a translation training program should demonstrate performance at the upper levels of the scales.
3. The authors of these scales managed to effectively define the different skills that comprise linguistic competence; however “translation proves to be an exceedingly complex skill” (Lowe 57) so some categories can be described by these scales and other categories are insufficiently addressed by the scales.

Even though the scale in this project was inspired in the global evaluation models used in teaching a foreign language, it was not simply adapted to existing scales. A model of translation competence was first developed and then the scale was built using the model as backbone. Deciding to describe translation competence in one scale or dividing the scale into four different competences was not easy. The problem was to establish clear cut lines between the competences, in other words where does a skill start and end and when does the other one start. The acquisition of knowledge passes through different stages. Individuals do not appear to leap suddenly from rule-guided “knowing that” to experience-based “knowing how”. Beginning with the initial stage (novice knowledge), the knowledge gradually becomes more automatic until the final stage (expert knowledge) is reached. Studies of the skill-acquisition process show that the acquisition of any knowledge is a dynamic process (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 19). Translation competence evolves in the same way from novice knowledge (pre-translation competence) to expert knowledge (translation competence).

The evaluation system of adding and subtracting points due to errors in translation trainers led to the design of this global system of assessing presented in this project. However it is not suggested that error analysis in the evaluation of translation be abandoned and replaced with scales like the one proposed here. Further empirical research in both views, the analytical and global systems, should be done to establish the weaknesses and strengths of both systems, and thus, develop a model that can bridge the gap between both systems. Whatever type of yardstick is used to measure a student's progress, knowledge and skills, the important thing is to heighten students' awareness of the processes involved in translating and in the production of translations and to help them to reflect on what they are doing so that they can have well backed arguments to support their decision-making. Assessing students' translations should be a tool to develop translation competence not an end in itself.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aguado-Giménez, Pilar and Pascual-Francisco Pérez-Paredes. "Translation-Strategies Use: A Classroom-Based Examination of Baker's Taxonomy." *Meta* 50.1 (2005). 3 October 2006 <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2005/v50/n1/010675ar.htm>>.
- Al-Qinai, Jamal. "Translation Quality Assessment. Strategies, Parametres and Procedures." *Meta* 45.3 (200) 20 March 2007 <[www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2000/v45/n3/001878ar.pdf](http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2000/v45/n3/001878ar.pdf)>.
- Alves, Fabio, José Luis Vila Real Goncalves and Rui Rothe-Neves. "In Search of a Definition of Translation Competence: The Structure and Development of an Ongoing Research Project." *Quaderns. Revista de Traducción*. 11 Nov. 2005. <[www.bib.uab.es/pub/quaderns/11385790n6p46.pdf](http://www.bib.uab.es/pub/quaderns/11385790n6p46.pdf)>.
- American Translators Association. ATA Certification Program. 21 February 2007 <[www.translation-services-usa.com/articles/productive\\_bilingualism.shtml](http://www.translation-services-usa.com/articles/productive_bilingualism.shtml)>.
- Anderman, Gunilla and Margaret Rogers. "What is That Translation For? A Functional View of Translation Assessment from a Pedagogical Perspective: A Response to Hans G. Höning." *Current Issues in Language & Society* 4.1 (1997). 24 February 2007 <[www.multilingual-matters.net/cils/004/1/default.htm](http://www.multilingual-matters.net/cils/004/1/default.htm)>.
- Bachman, Lyle. *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. Oxford: OUP, 1990.
- Bachman, Lyle and Palmer, A. *Language Testing in Practice*. Oxford: OUP, 1996.
- Baker, Mona. *The Translator Studies in Intercultural Communication*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, Barnwell, David. *Proficiency and the Native Speaker*. ADFL Bulletin. 9 Nov. 2005 <<http://www.ade.org/adfl/bulletin/v20n2/202042.htm>>.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. London: Routledge, 2001.
- Beeby Lonsdale, Allison. *Teaching Translation from Spanish to English*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Choosing an Emperical-Experimental Model for Investigating Translation Competence." *Intercultural Faultlines Research Models in Translation Studies Textual and Cognitive Aspects*. Ed. Maeve Olohan. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2000.
- Bell, Roger T. *Translation and Translating*. London: Longman, 1991.
- Boase-Beier, Jean. *Stylistic Approaches to Translation*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2006.
- Bowker, Lynne. "Towards a Methodology for a Corpus-Based Approach to Translation Evaluation." *Meta* 46.2 (2001) 14 September 2006 <[www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2001/v46/n2/002135ar.pdf](http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2001/v46/n2/002135ar.pdf)>.

- Byrnes, Heidi and Michael Canale, eds. *Defining and Developing Proficiency: Guidelines, Implementations, and Concepts*. Illinois: National Textbook Co., 1987.
- Campbell, Stuart. *Translation into the Second Language*. London: Longman, 1998.
- Canale, Michael. "From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy." *Language and Communication*. Eds. J. Richards and Richard Schmidt. London: Longman, 1983.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and Merrill Swain. "Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing." *Applied Linguistics* 1 (1980a): 1-47.
- Cao, Deborah. "Towards a Model of Translation Proficiency." *Target* 8.2 (1996): 325-40.
- Catford, J.C. *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. London: Longman, 1965.
- Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. *Canadian Language Framework: 2000 Theoretical Framework*. 24 March 2007 <[http://www.language.ca/pdfs/final\\_theoreticalframework3.pdf](http://www.language.ca/pdfs/final_theoreticalframework3.pdf)>.
- Chastain, Kenneth. "The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines: A Selected Sample of Opinions." *ADFL Bulletin* 20.2. (1989). 9 Nov. 2005 <<http://www.ade.org/adfl/bulletin/v20n2/202047.htm>>.
- Chesterman, Andrew. "Teaching Translation Theory: The Significance of Memes." *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 3 New Horizons*. Ed. Cay Dollerup. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.
- Chomsky, Noam. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965.
- Cohen, Andrew D. *Language Learning Insights for Learners, Teachers, and Researchers*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 1990.
- Colina, Sonia. *Translation Teaching from Research to the Classroom A Handbook for Teachers*. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2003.
- Cook, Vivian. *Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition*. Hampshire: Macmillan, 1993.
- Council for Cultural Cooperation Education Committee. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: CUP, 2001.
- Darwish, Ali. "Transmetrics: A Formative Approach to Translator Competence Assessment and Translation Quality Evaluation for the New Millenium." 5 March 2007 <[www.translocutions.com/translation/research\\_papers.html](http://www.translocutions.com/translation/research_papers.html)>.
- Dollerup, Cay and Annette Lindegaard, eds. *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 2: Insights, Aims, Visions*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1993

- \_\_\_\_\_ and Vibeke Appel, eds. *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 3 New Horizons*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1996.
- Dreyfus, Hubert L. and Stuart E. Dreyfus. *Mind Over Machine*. New York: Free Press, 1986.
- Elena, Pilar. *El traductor y el texto*. Barcelona: Editorial Ariel, 2001.
- Faber, Pamela. *Translation Competence and Language Awareness*. University of Granada. 14 Nov 2005 <[www.ugr.es/~dpto\\_ti/prof/fp.html](http://www.ugr.es/~dpto_ti/prof/fp.html)>.
- Fenyő, Sarolta. "The Translator's Cultural Competence." *European Integration Studies, Miskolc* 4.2 (2005). 17 March 2007 <[www.uni-miskolc.hu/uni/res/kozlemenyek/2005-2/pdf/fenyo.html](http://www.uni-miskolc.hu/uni/res/kozlemenyek/2005-2/pdf/fenyo.html)>.
- Fraser, Janet. "Professional versus Student Behaviour." *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 3: New Horizons*. Cay Dollerup, ed. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.
- García Álvarez, Ana María. "Evaluating Students' Translation Process in Specialised Translation: Translation Commentary." *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 7 (2007). 21 March 2007 <[www.jostrans.org/issue07/art\\_alvarez.pdf](http://www.jostrans.org/issue07/art_alvarez.pdf)>.
- Gentzler, Edwin. *Contemporary Translation Theories*. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Gerding-Salas, Constanza. "Teaching Translation Problems and Solutions." *Translation Journal* 28 Feb. 2001. *Accurapid*. 12 Nov. 2005. <<http://accurapid.com/journal/13educ.htm>>.
- Gile, Daniel. *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.
- Goff-Kfourri, Carol Ann. *Testing and Evaluation in the Translation Classroom*. Notre Dame University. 11 Nov. 2005. <<http://www.seasite.niu.edu/trans/articles/Testing%20and%20Evaluation%20in%20the%20Translation%20C1>>.
- González Davies, María. "A Problem-Solving and Student-Centred Approach to the Translation of Cultural References." *Meta* 50.1 (2005). 3 October 2007 <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2005/v50/n1/010666ar.html>>.
- Haiyan, Li. "Cultivating Translator Competence: Teaching and Testing." *Accurapid* 10. (2006). 2 October 2006 <<http://accurapid.com/journal/37testing.htm>>.
- Hatim, Basil. *Teaching and Researching Translation*. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001.
- Hatim, Basil and Ian Mason. *The Translator as Communicator*. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Hervey, Sándor, Ian Higgins and Louise M. Haywood. *Thinking Spanish Translation a Course in Translation Methods: Spanish to English*. London: Routledge, 1995.

- Higgs, Theodore V., ed. *Teaching for Proficiency, the Organizing Principle*. Illinois: National Textbook Co., 1984.
- Hongwei, Chen. "Cultural Differences and Translation." *Meta* 44.1 (1999). 14 March 2007 <[www.erudit.org/revue/meta/1999/v44/n1/002224ar.html](http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/1999/v44/n1/002224ar.html)>.
- House, Juliane. "Translation Quality Assessment: Linguistic Description versus Social Evaluation." *Meta* 46.2 (2001). 20 Nov. 2005 <[www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2001/v46/n2/003141ar.pdf](http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2001/v46/n2/003141ar.pdf)>.
- Hudson, Thom. "Trends in Assessment Scales and Criterion-referenced Language Assessment." *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 25 (2005). 26 February 2007 <<http://journals.cambridge.org/production/action/cjoGetfulltext?fulltextid=322810>>.
- Hurtado Albir, Amparo. *Traducción y Traductología Introducción a la Traductología*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2004.
- Hyland, Ken. *Second Language Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003.
- Hymes, Dell. "Competence and Performance in Linguistic Theory." . *Language Acquisition: Models and Methods*. R. Huxley and E. Ingram, eds. London: Academic Press, 1971.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "On Communicative Competence." *Sociolinguistics*. J.B. Pride and J. Holmes, eds. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Sapir, Competence, Voices." *Individual Differences in Language Ability and Language Behavior*. Eds. Charles J. Fillmore, Daniel Kempler and William S-Y.Wang, New York: Academic Press, 1979.
- ILR Skill Level Descriptions for Translation Performance*. 19 September 2006 <[www.govtilr.org/AdoptedILRTranslationGuidelines.htm](http://www.govtilr.org/AdoptedILRTranslationGuidelines.htm)>.
- Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Descriptions*. University of Tennessee at Martin. 12 Nov. 2005. <<http://www.tum.edu/staff/globeg/ilrlist.htm>>.
- ITR Ltd. *ITR Blackjack*. 12 April 2007. <[www.itrblackjack.com](http://www.itrblackjack.com)>.
- Jääskeläinen, R. "Think-aloud Protocol Studies into Translation." *Target* 14.1 (2002): 107-136.
- James, Charles J., ed. *Foreign Language Proficiency in the Classroom and Beyond*. Illinois: National Textbook Co., 1985.
- Jekat, Susanne J. and Garry Massey. "The Puzzle of Translation Skills. Towards an Integration of E-Learning and Special Concepts of Computational Linguistics into the Training of Future Translators." *Linguistik Online* 17.3. 6 Nov. 2005 <[http://www.linguistik-online.de/17\\_03/jekatMassey.html](http://www.linguistik-online.de/17_03/jekatMassey.html)>.
- Kelly, Dorothy. *A Handbook for Translation Trainers*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2005.

- Kiraly, Donald C. *Pathways to Translation Pedagogy and Process*. Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1995.
- Klaudy, Kinga. "Quality Assessment in School vs. Professional Translation." Ed. Cay Dollerup. *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 3 New Horizons*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.
- Kunschak, Claudia. "Quality in Translator/Interpreter Training: Can Quality Be Taught?" Universidad Europea de Madrid 30 September 2006 <[www.uem.es/web/fil/invest/publicaciones/web/EN/autores/kunschak\\_art.htm](http://www.uem.es/web/fil/invest/publicaciones/web/EN/autores/kunschak_art.htm)>.
- Kussmaul, Paul. *Training the Translator*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Sonja Tikkonen-Condit. "Think-Aloud Protocol Analysis in Translation Studies." *Meta* 8.1 (1995). 23 June 2007 <[www.erudit.org/revue/ttr/1995/v8/n1/037201ar.pdf](http://www.erudit.org/revue/ttr/1995/v8/n1/037201ar.pdf)>.
- Lauscher, Susanne. "Translation Quality Assessment: Where Can Theory and Practice Meet?" *The Translator* 6 (2000): 149-169.
- Leaver, Betty Lou and Boris Shekhtman, eds. *Developing Professional-Level Language Proficiency*. Cambridge: CUP, 2002.
- Lightbrown, Patsy M. and Nina Spada. *How Languages Are Learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Lindfors, Anne-Marie. "Respect or Ridicule: Translation Strategies and the Images of a Foreign Culture." *Helsinki English Studies* 1 (2001). 29 August 2007 [http://www.eng.helsinki.fi/hes/Translation/respect\\_or\\_ridicule1.htm](http://www.eng.helsinki.fi/hes/Translation/respect_or_ridicule1.htm).
- López Guix, Juan Gabriel and Jacqueline Minett Wilkinson. *Manual de traducción Inglés / Castellano teoría y práctica*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 2001.
- Lörscher, Wolfgang. "Process-oriented Research into Translation and Implications for Translation Teaching." *Meta* 5.1 (1992). <[www.erudit.org/revue/ttr/1992/v5/n1/037110ar.pdf](http://www.erudit.org/revue/ttr/1992/v5/n1/037110ar.pdf)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Model for the Analysis of Translation within a Framework of Systemic Linguistics." *Cadernos* 10 [www.cadernos.ufsc.br/online/cadernos10/wolfgang.pdf](http://www.cadernos.ufsc.br/online/cadernos10/wolfgang.pdf).
- Lowe, Pardee Jr. "Revising the CTFL/ETS Scales for a New Purpose: Rating Skill in Translating." *Translation Excellence: Assessment, Achievement, Maintenance*. Ed. Rose, Marilyn Gaddis. American Translators Association Series, Vol.1. New York: SUNY Binghamton Press, 1989. 100-108.
- Lüdi, Georges. *SprachenKonzept Schweiz*. Language Proficiency Descriptors. 25 Sept. 2007. <[http://ronsem.unibas.ch/sprachenknozept/Annexe\\_3.html](http://ronsem.unibas.ch/sprachenknozept/Annexe_3.html)>.

- Luoma, Sari. *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge: CUP, 2004.
- Maier, Carol, ed. "Evaluation and Translation." *The Translator Studies in Intercultural Communication*
- Malmkjær, Kirsten, ed. *Translation and Language Teaching Language Teaching and Translation*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 1998.
- Martínez Melis, Nicole and Amparo Hurtado Albir. "Assessment in Translation Studies: Research Needs". *Meta* 44.1 (2001). 24 Nov. 2005 <[www.cpra.com.cn/Article\\_Show2.asp?ArticleID=466-89k](http://www.cpra.com.cn/Article_Show2.asp?ArticleID=466-89k)>.
- Massey, Gary. "Process-Oriented Translator Training and the Challenge for E-Learning." *Meta* 50.2 (2005). 29 August 2007 <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2005/v50/n2/011006ar.html>>.
- McElhanon, Kenneth A. "From Word to Scenario: The Influence of Linguistic Theories Upon Models of Translation." *Journal of Translation* 1.3 (2005). 25 July 2007 <[www.sil.org:8090/siljot/2005/3/siljot2005-3-02.html](http://www.sil.org:8090/siljot/2005/3/siljot2005-3-02.html)>.
- Neubert, Albrecht. "Competence in Language, in Languages, and in Translation". Eds. Christina Schäffner and Beverly Adab. *Developing Translation Competence*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000.
- Newmark, Peter. *Manual de traducción*. Trans. Virgilio Moya. Madrid: Cátedra, 1999.
- Nida, Eugene A. and Charles Taber. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: Brill, 1969.
- Nord, Christiane. *Text Analysis in Translation Theory, Methodology, and Didactic Application of a Model for Translation-Oriented Text Analysis*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991.
- Olohan, Maeve, ed. *Intercultural Faultlines*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2000.
- Olvera Lobo, et al. "A Professional Approach to Translator Training (PATT)." *Meta* 52.3 (2007). 2 September 2007 <[www.scimago.es/benjamin/Meta.PDF](http://www.scimago.es/benjamin/Meta.PDF)>.
- Omaggio, Alice C. *Teaching Language in Context*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 1986.
- Ordudary, Mahmoud. "Translation Procedures, Strategies and Methods." *Accurapid* 11.3 (2007). 4 September 2007 <<http://www accurapid.com/journal/41culture.htm>>.
- Orozco, Mariana. "Building A Measuring Instrument for the Acquisition of Translation Competence in Trainee Translators." *Developing Translation Competence*. Eds. Christina Schäffner and Beverly Adab. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Amparo Hurtado Albir. "Measuring Translation Competence Acquisition". *Meta* 47.3 (2002). 01 Sept. 2006 <[www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2002/v47/n3/008022ar.pdf](http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2002/v47/n3/008022ar.pdf)>.



- PACTE Group. "Acquiring Translation Competence: Hypotheses and Methodological Problems of a Research". Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. 11 Nov. 2005 <[www.fti.uab.es/pacte/publicacions/Benjamins2000.pdf](http://www.fti.uab.es/pacte/publicacions/Benjamins2000.pdf)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Exploratory Texts in a Study of Translation Competence". *Conference Interpretation and Translation* 4 (2), pp 41-69 (2002). 29 Aug. 2006 <<http://www.ti.uab.es/publicaciones/Exploratory%20tests.pdr#search=%22%measur>>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Building a Translation Competence Model." *Triangulating Translation: Perspectives in Process Oriented Research*. Alves, F. eds. 28 September 2006 <[www.fti.uab.es/pacte/publicacions/web\\_benjamins\\_2003.pdf](http://www.fti.uab.es/pacte/publicacions/web_benjamins_2003.pdf)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "La competencia traductora y su adquisición." *Quaderns. Revista de Traducción* 6.41 (2001). 28 February 2007 <[www.fti.uab.es/pacte/publicacions/Quaderns2001.pdf](http://www.fti.uab.es/pacte/publicacions/Quaderns2001.pdf)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Investigating Translation Competence: Conceptual and Methodological Issues." *Meta* 50.2 (2005). 25 April 2007 <[www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2005/v50/n2/011004ar.html](http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2005/v50/n2/011004ar.html)>.
- Pennington, Martha C. "Grammar and Communication: New Directions in Theory and Practice." *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. Eli Hinkel and Sandra Fotos, eds. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002.
- Pinto, María. "Quality Factors in Documentary Translation." *Meta* 46.2 (2001). 22 July 2007 <[www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2001/v46/n2/003840ar.pdf](http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2001/v46/n2/003840ar.pdf)>.
- Pym, Anthony. *Translation and Text Transfer*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang Publications, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Redefining translation competence in an electronic age" *Meta* 48.4 (2003). 6 Nov. 2005 <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2003/v48/n4/008533ar.html>>.
- Raupach, Manfred. "Analysis and Evaluation of Communication Strategies." In Claus Færch & Gabriele Kasper, *Strategies in Interlanguage Communication*. London: Longman, 1983.
- Rivers, Wilga M. *Communicating Naturally in a Second Language*. London: CUP, 1984.
- Rojas, Oscar. "El *Portafolio* y la evaluación del proceso en traducción." *Letras* 36 (2004): 27-59.
- Rothe-Neves, Rui. "Notes on the Concept of Translator's Competence" *Quaderns, Revista de Traducción* 14 (2007). 7 July 2007 <[ddd.uab.cat/pub/quaderns/11385790n14p125.pdf](http://ddd.uab.cat/pub/quaderns/11385790n14p125.pdf)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Translation Quality Assessment for Research Purposes: An Empirical Approach." *Cadernos de Tradução* 10.2 8 May 2007 <[www.cadernos.ufsc.br/download/10/pdf/Rui-Cadernos10.pdf](http://www.cadernos.ufsc.br/download/10/pdf/Rui-Cadernos10.pdf)>.

- Ruuskanne, Deborah. "Creating the 'Other': A Pragmatic Translation Tool." In: Cay Dollerup, ed. *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 3 New Horizons*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.
- Sager, Juan C. *A Practical Course in Terminology Processing*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000.
- Savignon, Sandra. *Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice*. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1983.
- Schäffner, Christina. "From 'Good' to 'Functionally Appropriate': Assessing Translation Quality." *Current Issues in Language and Society* 4.1 (1997) 12 November 2006 < [www.multilingual-matters.net/cils/004/0001/cils0040001.pdf](http://www.multilingual-matters.net/cils/004/0001/cils0040001.pdf)>
- Schäffner, Christina and Beverly Adab, eds. *Developing Translation Competence*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2000.
- Secară, Alina. "Translation Evaluation – A State of the Art Survey." University of Leeds Centre for Translation Studies. 8 May 2007 < [www.leeds.ac.uk/cts/research/publications/leeds-cts-2005-03-secara.pdf](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/cts/research/publications/leeds-cts-2005-03-secara.pdf)>.
- Snell-Hornby. *Translation Studies An Integrated Approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Zuzana Jettmorová, Klaus Kaindl, eds. *Translation as Intercultural Communication*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.
- Stansfield, Charles W., W. Scott, Mary Lee and Kenyon, Dorry Mann. "The Measurement of Translation Ability." *The Modern Language Journal*, 76.4 (1992): 455-67.
- Steiner, George. *Después de Babel Aspectos del lenguaje y la traducción*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001.
- Tirkkonen, Condit, Sonja. "The monitor model revisited. Literal Translation as an Element of the Translation Process." *Meta* 50.2 (2005). 23 April 2007 < [www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2005/v50/n2/index.html](http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2005/v50/n2/index.html)>.
- Toury, Gideon. *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Handful of Paragraphs on 'Translation' and 'Norms'." *Current Issues in Language & Society* 5.1&2 (1998). 16 August 2007. <[www.multilingual-matters.net/cils/005/cils0050010.htm](http://www.multilingual-matters.net/cils/005/cils0050010.htm)>.
- Venuti, Lawrence, ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Strategies of Translation. In M. Baker (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. London: Routledge, 1998.

- Waddington, Christopher. *Estudio comparativo de diferentes métodos de evaluación de traducción general (inglés-español)*. Madrid: Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2000.
- Wu, Wanwei. *Productive Bilingualism and Translator Education*. Wuhan University of Science and Technology. 22 April 2007 <[www.translation-services-usa.com/articles/productive\\_bilingualism.shtml](http://www.translation-services-usa.com/articles/productive_bilingualism.shtml)>.
- Weigle, Sara Cushing. *Assessing Writing*. Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2002.
- Weir, Carol J. *Communicative Language Testing*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1990.
- Williams, Malcolm. "The Application of Argumentation Theory to Translation Quality Assessment." *Meta* 46.2 (2004). 14 Apr. 2007 <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2001/v46/n2/004605ar.pdf>>.
- Wilss, Wolfram. "Translation Studies – The State of the Art." *Meta* 49.4 (2004), 26 October 2006 <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/2004/v49/n4/009781ar.htm>>.
- Witte, Heidrum. "Contrastive Culture Learning in Translator Training." *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 3: New Horizaon*. Cay Dollerup, ed. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.
- Zabalbeascoa, Patrick. *La didáctica de la traducción: desarrollo de la competencia traductora*. Centro Virtual Cervantes. 8 Nov. 2005. <<http://cvc.cervantes.es/obref/aproximaciones/zabalbeascoa.htm>>.

## APPENDIX 1

### ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking<sup>1</sup>

Revised 1999




---

#### SUPERIOR

Speakers at the Superior level are able to communicate in the language with accuracy and fluency in order to participate fully and effectively in conversations on a variety of topics in formal and informal settings from both concrete and abstract perspectives. They discuss their interests and special fields of competence, explain complex matters in detail, and provide lengthy and coherent narrations, all with ease, fluency, and accuracy. They explain their opinions on a number of topics of importance to them, such as social and political issues, and provide structured argument to support their opinions. They are able to construct and develop hypotheses to explore alternative possibilities. When appropriate, they use extended discourse without unnaturally lengthy hesitation to make their point, even when engaged in abstract elaborations. Such discourse, while coherent, may still be influenced by the Superior speakers' own language patterns, rather than those of the target language. Superior speakers command a variety of interactive and

<sup>1</sup> Taken from: LTI Language Testing International. "ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines" 15 September 2006 [www.languagetesting.com/scale.htm](http://www.languagetesting.com/scale.htm)

discourse strategies, such as turn-taking and separating main ideas from supporting information through the use of syntactic and lexical devices, as well as intonational features such as pitch, stress and tone. They demonstrate virtually no pattern of error in the use of basic structures. However, they may make sporadic errors, particularly in low-frequency structures and in some complex high-frequency structures more common to formal speech and writing. Such errors, if they do occur, do not distract the native interlocutor or interfere with communication.

## **ADVANCED**

### **ADVANCED HIGH**

### **ADVANCED MID**

### **ADVANCED LOW**

#### **ADVANCED HIGH**

ADVANCED HIGH Speakers at the Advanced-High level perform all Advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence and competence. They are able to consistently explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. In addition, Advanced- High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Superior level but cannot sustain performance at that level across a variety of topics. They can provide a structured argument to support their opinions, and they may construct hypotheses, but patterns of error appear. They can discuss some topics abstractly, especially those relating to their particular interests and special fields of expertise, but in general, they are more comfortable discussing a variety of topics concretely. Advanced-High speakers may demonstrate a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms or for limitations in, vocabulary by the confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing, circumlocution, and illustration. They use precise vocabulary and intonation to express meaning and often show great fluency and ease of speech. However when they are called on to perform the complex tasks associated with the Superior level over a variety of topics, their language, at times, breaks down or proves inadequate, or they may avoid the task altogether, for example, by resorting to simplification through the use of description or narration in place of argument or hypothesis.

#### **ADVANCED MID**

ADVANCED MID Speakers at the Advanced-Mid level are able to handle with ease and confidence a large number of communicative tasks. They participate actively in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete topics relating to work, school, home, and leisure activities, as well as to events of current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance. Advanced-Mid speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate

and describe in all major time frames (past, present, and future) by providing a full account, with good control of aspect, as they adapt flexibly to the demands of the conversation. Narration and description tend to be combined and interwoven to relate relevant and supporting facts in connected, paragraph-length discourse. Advanced-Mid speakers can handle successfully and with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar. Communicative strategies such as circumlocution or rephrasing are often employed for this purpose. The speech of Advanced-Mid speakers performing Advanced-level tasks is marked by substantial flow. Their vocabulary is fairly extensive although primarily generic in nature, except in the case of a particular area of specialization or interest. Dominant language discourse structures tend to recede, although discourse may still reflect the oral paragraph structure of their own language rather than that of the target language. Advanced-Mid speakers contribute to conversations on a variety of familiar topics, dealt with concretely, with much accuracy, clarity and precision, and they convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. They are readily understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the quality and/or quantity of their speech will generally decline. Advanced-Mid speakers are, often able to state an opinion or cite conditions; however, they lack the ability to consistently provide a structured argument in extended discourse. Advanced-Mid speakers may use a number of delaying strategies, resort to narration, description, explanation or anecdote, or simply attempt to avoid the linguistic demands of Superior- level tasks.

## ADVANCED LOW

Speakers at the Advanced-Low level are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks, although somewhat haltingly at times. They participate actively in most informal and a limited number of formal conversations on activities related to school, home, and leisure activities and, to a lesser degree, those related to events of work, current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance. Advanced-Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in all major time frames (past, present and future) in paragraph length discourse, but control of aspect may be lacking at times. They can handle appropriately the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar, though at times their discourse may be minimal for the level and strained. Communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution may be employed in such instances. In their narrations and descriptions, they combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length. When pressed for a fuller account, they tend to grope and rely on minimal discourse. Their utterances are typically not longer than a single paragraph. Structure of the dominant language is still evident in the use of false cognates, literal translations, or the oral paragraph structure of the speaker's own language rather than that of the target language. While the language of Advanced-Low speakers may be marked by substantial, albeit irregular flow, it is typically somewhat strained and tentative, with noticeable self-correction and a certain grammatical

roughness. The vocabulary of Advanced-Low speakers is primarily generic in nature. Advanced-Low speakers contribute to the conversation with sufficient accuracy, clarity, and precision to convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion, and it can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may be achieved through repetition and restatement. When attempting to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the linguistic quality and quantity of their speech will deteriorate significantly.

## **INTERMEDIATE**

### **INTERMEDIATE HIGH**

### **INTERMEDIATE MID**

### **INTERMEDIATE LOW**

#### **INTERMEDIATE HIGH**

**INTERMEDIATE HIGH** Intermediate-High speakers are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with most routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level. They are able to handle successfully many uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to work, school, recreation, particular interests and areas of competence, though hesitation and errors may be evident. Intermediate-High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Advanced level, but they are unable to sustain performance at that level over a variety of topics. With some consistency, speakers at the Intermediate High level narrate and describe in major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length. However, their performance of these Advanced-level tasks will exhibit one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to maintain the narration or description semantically or syntactically in the appropriate major time frame, the disintegration of connected discourse, the misuse of cohesive devices, a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary, the failure to successfully circumlocute, or a significant amount of hesitation. Intermediate-High speakers can generally be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, although the dominant language is still evident (e.g. use of code-switching, false cognates, literal translations, etc.), and gaps in communication may occur.

#### **INTERMEDIATE MID**

Speakers at the Intermediate-Mid level are able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to those predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture; these include personal information covering self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, as well as physical and social needs, such

as food, shopping, travel and lodging. Intermediate-Mid speakers tend to function reactively, for example, by responding to direct questions or requests for information. However, they are capable of asking a variety of questions when necessary to obtain simple information to satisfy basic needs, such as directions, prices and services. When called on to perform functions or handle topics at the Advanced level, they provide some information but have difficulty linking ideas, manipulating time and aspect, and using communicative strategies, such as circumlocution. Intermediate-Mid speakers are able to express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to make utterances of sentence length and some strings of sentences. Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. Because of inaccuracies in their vocabulary and/or pronunciation and/or grammar and/or syntax, misunderstandings can occur, but Intermediate-Mid speakers are generally understood by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives.

### INTERMEDIATE LOW

INTERMEDIATE LOW Speakers at the Intermediate-Low level are able to handle successfully a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by creating with the language in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to some of the concrete exchanges and predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language culture. These topics relate to basic personal information covering, for example, self and family, some daily activities and personal preferences, as well as to some immediate needs, such as ordering food and making simple purchases. At the Intermediate-Low level, speakers are primarily reactive and struggle to answer direct questions or requests for information, but they are also able to ask a few appropriate questions. Intermediate-Low speakers express personal meaning by combining and recombining into short statements what they know and what they hear from their interlocutors. Their utterances are often filled with hesitancy and inaccuracies as they search for appropriate linguistic forms and vocabulary while attempting to give form to the message. Their speech is characterized by frequent pauses, ineffective reformulations and self-corrections. Their pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax are strongly influenced by their first language but, in spite of frequent misunderstandings that require repetition or rephrasing, Intermediate-Low speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors, particularly by those accustomed to dealing with non-natives.



## **NOVICE**

### **NOVICE HIGH**

### **NOVICE MID**

### **NOVICE LOW**

#### **NOVICE HIGH**

NOVICE HIGH Speakers at the Novice-High level are able to handle a variety of tasks pertaining to the Intermediate level, but are unable to sustain performance at that level. They are able to manage successfully a number of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to a few of the predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language culture, such as basic personal information, basic objects and a limited number of activities, preferences and immediate needs. Novice-High speakers respond to simple, direct questions or requests for information; they are able to ask only a very few formulaic questions when asked to do so. Novice-High speakers are able to express personal meaning by relying heavily on learned phrases or recombinations of these and what they hear from their interlocutor. Their utterances, which consist mostly of short and sometimes incomplete sentences in the present, may be hesitant or inaccurate. On the other hand, since these utterances are frequently only expansions of learned material and stock phrases, they may sometimes appear surprisingly fluent and accurate. These speakers's first language may strongly influence their pronunciation, as well as their vocabulary and syntax when they attempt to personalize their utterances. Frequent misunderstandings may arise but, with repetition or rephrasing, Novice-High speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors used to non-natives. When called on to handle simply a variety of topics and perform functions pertaining to the Intermediate level, a Novice- High speaker can sometimes respond in intelligible sentences, but will not be able to sustain sentence level discourse.

#### **NOVICE MID**

NOVICE MID Speakers at the Novice-Mid level communicate minimally and with difficulty by using a number of isolated words and memorized phrases limited by the particular context in which the language has been learned. When responding to direct questions, they may utter only two or three words at a time or an occasional stock answer. They pause frequently as they search for simple vocabulary or attempt to recycle their own and their interlocutor's words. Because of hesitations, lack of vocabulary, inaccuracy, or failure to respond appropriately, Novice-Mid speakers may be understood with great difficulty even by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to handle topics by performing functions associated with the Intermediate level, they frequently resort to repetition, words from their native language, or silence.

## NOVICE LOW

NOVICE LOW Speakers at the Novice-Low level have no real functional ability and, because of their pronunciation, they may be unintelligible. Given adequate time and familiar cues, they may be able to exchange greetings, give their identity, and name a number of familiar objects from their immediate environment. They are unable to perform functions or handle topics pertaining to the Intermediate level, and cannot therefore participate in a true conversational exchange.

## ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Writing<sup>2</sup>

Revised 2001




---

### SUPERIOR

Writers at the Superior level are able to write most kinds of correspondence, such as memos and letters, as well as summaries, reports, and research papers on a variety of practical, social, academic or professional topics treated both abstractly and concretely. They demonstrate the ability to explain complex matters in detail, provide lengthy narrations in all time frames and aspects, present opinion, develop persuasive arguments based on logic, and construct extended hypotheses and conjectures. They can organize ideas clearly, the relationship of ideas is consistently clear, showing chronological ordering, logical ordering, cause and effect, comparison, and thematic development, but their writing may not totally reflect target language cultural, syntactic, and structural patterns. They demonstrate full control of structures, both general and specialized/professional vocabulary, spelling or symbol production, cohesive devices, and punctuation except for occasional errors that may occur, particularly in low-frequency structures, but that do not interfere with comprehension and rarely disturb the native reader. Their vocabulary

<sup>2</sup> Taken from: LTI Language Testing International. "ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines." 15 September 2006 [www.languagetesting.com/scale.htm](http://www.languagetesting.com/scale.htm)

is precise and varied with frequent use of synonyms. The length of writing at this level extends from a number of paragraphs to a number of pages. To supplement specialized vocabulary or to improve content and style, Superior-level writers use dictionaries and other resources with a high degree of accuracy. They are aware of formal and informal styles of writing in which format, salutations, and style conform to cultural standards and writing etiquette. They use a variety of sentence structures, syntax, and vocabulary to tailor their writing to various purposes or readers.

## **ADVANCED**

### **ADVANCED HIGH**

### **ADVANCED MID**

### **ADVANCED LOW**

#### **ADVANCED HIGH**

ADVANCED HIGH - Writers at the Advanced-High level are able to write about a variety of topics with significant precision and detail. They can handle most social and informal business correspondence using conventional greetings, openings, and closings. They can write extensively about topics relating to particular interests and special areas of competence, but tend to emphasize the concrete aspects of such topics. Advanced-High level writers can describe and narrate in all major time frames, with good control of aspect, and show the ability to develop arguments and construct hypotheses, but have some difficulty dealing with topics in abstract, global, and/or impersonal terms. Advanced-High level writers incorporate many of the features of the Superior level, but cannot sustain them. They often show remarkable ease of expression, but under the demands of Superior-level writing tasks, time constraints, and pressure, patterns of error appear. They have good control of a full range of grammatical structures and a fairly wide general vocabulary but cannot yet use them comfortably and accurately all the time. Weaknesses in grammar, vocabulary, or in spelling or character writing formation may occasionally distract the native reader from the message. Writers do not consistently demonstrate flexibility to vary their style according to different tasks and readers. Their writing production will often read rather successfully on the surface but will fail to convey adequately the subtlety, nuance, and/or required details of writing.

#### **ADVANCED MID**

ADVANCED MID - Writers at the Advanced-Mid level are able to meet a range of work and/or academic writing needs with fullness and cohesiveness; to write cohesive summaries; to write about familiar topics relating to interests and events of current, public,

and personal relevance by means of narratives and descriptions of a factual nature. Advanced-Mid level writers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe with some detail in all major time frames. Written expression is characterized by a range of general vocabulary that expresses thoughts clearly, at times supported by some paraphrasing or elaboration. Writing at the Advanced-Mid level may exhibit a number of cohesive devices, in producing texts of several paragraphs in length. There is good control of the most frequently used syntactic structures, e.g., common word order patterns, coordination, subordination. There may be frequent errors in complex sentences, as well as in punctuation, spelling, or the formation of nonalphabetic symbols and character production due to graphic or sound confusion. While features of the written style of the target language may be present, Advanced-Mid level writing may at times resemble transcriptions of oral discourse. Where appropriate, Advance-Mid writing incorporates organizational elements such as introduction, topic sentences, supporting facts, comparing and contrasting, chronological sequencing, summary, and conclusion. When called on to perform functions or to handle topics associated with the Superior level, the Advanced-Mid writers will generally manifest a decline in the quality and/or quantity of their writing, often lacking the rhetorical structure, the accuracy, and the fullness of elaboration and detail that would be characteristic of the Superior level. Writing at the Advanced-Mid level is understood readily by natives not used to the writing of non-natives.

## ADVANCED LOW

Writers at the Advanced-Low level are able to meet basic work and/or academic writing needs, produce routine social correspondence, write about familiar topics by means of narratives and descriptions of a factual nature, and write cohesive summaries. Advanced-Low writing reflects the ability to combine and link sentences into texts of paragraph length and structure. Their accounts, while adequate, may not be substantive. Writers at the Advanced-Low level demonstrate an ability to write with a limited number of cohesive devices, and may resort to much redundancy, and awkward repetition. Use of dependent clauses is present and structurally coherent, while it often reflects the writer's native language or patterns. Writing at the Advanced-Low level may resemble native language patterns of oral discourse. More often than not, the vocabulary, grammar, and style are essentially reflective of informal writing. Writers demonstrate sustained control of simple target-language sentence structures and partial control of more complex structures. While attempting to perform functions at the Superior level, their writing will deteriorate significantly. Writing at the Advanced-Low level is understood by natives not used to the writing of non-natives.

## **INTERMEDIATE**

### **INTERMEDIATE HIGH**

### **INTERMEDIATE MID**

### **INTERMEDIATE LOW**

#### **INTERMEDIATE HIGH**

INTERMEDIATE HIGH - Writers at the Intermediate-High level are able to meet all practical writing needs such as taking rather detailed notes on familiar topics, writing uncomplicated letters, summaries, and essays related to work, school experiences, and topics of current, general interest. They can also write simple descriptions and narrations of paragraph length on everyday events and situations in different time frames, although with some inaccuracies and inconsistencies. Intermediate-High writers connect sentences into paragraphs using basic cohesive elements, but with some breakdown in one or more features of the Advanced level. They are often successful in their use of paraphrase and elaboration. In those languages that use verbal markers to indicate tense and aspect, forms are not consistently accurate. The vocabulary, grammar, and style of Intermediate-High writers are essentially reflective of the spoken language. Their writing, even with numerous but not significant errors, is generally comprehensible to natives not used to the writing of non-natives.

#### **INTERMEDIATE MID**

Writers at the Intermediate-Mid level are able to meet a number of practical writing needs. They can write short, simple letters, essays, and descriptions in loosely connected text that are based on personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other topics related to personal experiences and immediate surroundings. Most writing is framed in present time, with inconsistent references to other time frames. There is some evidence (although minimal) of the use of grammatical and stylistic cohesive elements — object pronouns, relative pronouns, adverbs of time, coordinating conjunctions, and subordinate clauses. The writing style is reflective of the grammar and lexicon of spoken language. Writers at the Intermediate-Mid level show evidence of the control of the syntax in non-complex sentences and in basic verb forms, such as declensions or conjugations. Writing is best defined as a collection of discrete sentences, since there is little evidence of deliberate organization. Intermediate-Mid writers can be readily understood by natives used to the writing of non-natives.

## INTERMEDIATE LOW

INTERMEDIATE LOW - Writers at the Intermediate-Low level are able to meet some limited practical writing needs. They can create statements and formulate questions based on familiar material. Most sentences are recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures. These are short and simple conversational-style sentences with basic subject-verb-object word order. They are written mostly in present time with occasional and often incorrect uses of past or future time. Writing tends to be a collection of simple sentences loosely strung together, often with repetitive structure. Vocabulary is limited to common objects and routine activities, adequate to express elementary needs. Writing is somewhat mechanistic and topics are limited to highly predictable content areas and personal information tied to limited language experience. There may be basic errors in grammar, word choice, punctuation, spelling, and in the formation and use of nonalphabetic symbols. Their writing is understood by natives used to the writing of non-natives.

## NOVICE

### NOVICE HIGH

### NOVICE MID

### NOVICE LOW

## NOVICE HIGH

NOVICE HIGH - Writers at the Novice-high level are able to meet limited uncomplicated practical writing needs, such as lists, short messages, postcards, and simple notes, and to express familiar meanings by relying mainly on memorized material, limited by the context in which the language was learned. They are able to recombine learned vocabulary and structures to create simple sentences on very familiar topics, but the language they produce may only partially communicate what is intended. Due to a lack of adequate vocabulary and/or control of the language features of the Intermediate level, the writing is generally writer-centered and focuses on common, discrete elements of daily life. Their writing is generally comprehensible to natives used to the writing of non-natives.

## NOVICE MID

NOVICE MID - Writers at the Novice-Mid level are able to copy or transcribe familiar words or phrases, and reproduce from memory a modest number of isolated words and phrases. Novice-Mid writers exhibit a high degree of accuracy when writing using prompts based on a well-practiced, familiar topic and a linguistic repertoire focused at this level.

With less familiar topics, there is a marked decrease in accuracy. There is little evidence of functional writing skills. They can supply limited information on simple forms and documents, and other simple biographical information, such as names, numbers, and nationality. Errors in spelling or in the representation of symbols may be frequent. Their writing may be difficult to understand even by those accustomed to reading the writing of non-natives.

### NOVICE LOW

NOVICE LOW - Writers at the Novice-Low level are able to form letters in an alphabetic system and can copy and produce isolated, basic strokes in languages that use symbols or characters. Given adequate time and familiar cues, they can reproduce from memory a very limited number of isolated words or familiar phrases, but errors are to be expected.



## ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Listening<sup>3</sup>

Revised 1997



**NOVICE LOW** Understanding is limited to occasional words, such as cognates, borrowed words, and high-frequency social conventions. Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.

**NOVICE MID** speakers are able to understand some short, learned utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible. Comprehends some words and phrases for simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands and courtesy formulae about topics that refer to basic personal information or the immediate physical setting. The listener requires long pauses for assimilation and periodically requests repetition and/or a slower rate of speech.

**NOVICE HIGH** speakers are able to understand short, learned utterances and some sentence-length utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible. Comprehends words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands and courtesy formulae. May require repetition, rephrasing and/or slowed rate of speech for comprehension.

<sup>3</sup> Taken from: LTI Language Testing International. "ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines." 15 September 2006 [www.languagetesting.com/scale.htm](http://www.languagetesting.com/scale.htm)

**INTERMEDIATE LOW** speakers are able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombinations of learned elements in a limited number of content areas, particularly if strongly supported by the situational context. Content refers to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and routine tasks, such as getting meals and receiving simple instructions and directions. Listening tasks pertain primarily to spontaneous face-to-face conversations. Understanding is often uneven; repetition and rewording may be necessary. Misunderstandings in both main ideas and details arise frequently.

**INTERMEDIATE MID** speakers are able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombinations of learned utterances on a variety of topics. Content continues to refer primarily to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and somewhat more complex tasks, such as lodging, transportation, and shopping. Additional content areas include some personal interests and activities, and a greater diversity of instructions and directions. Listening tasks not only pertain to spontaneous face-to-face conversations but also to short routine telephone conversations and some deliberate speech, such as simple announcements and reports over the media. Understanding continues to be uneven.

**INTERMEDIATE HIGH** speakers are able to sustain understanding over longer stretches of connected discourse on a number of topics pertaining to different times and places; however, understanding is inconsistent due to failure to grasp main ideas and/or details. Thus, while topics do not differ significantly from those of an Advanced-level listener, comprehension is less in quantity and poorer in quality.

**ADVANCED** speakers are able to understand main ideas and most details of connected discourse on a variety of topics beyond the immediacy of the situation. Comprehension may be uneven due to a variety of linguistic and extralinguistic factors, among which topic familiarity is very prominent. These texts frequently involve description and narration in different time frames or aspects, such as present, nonpast, habitual, or imperfective. Texts may include interviews, short lectures on familiar topics, and news items and sports primarily dealing with factual information. Listener is aware of cohesive devices but may not be able to use them to follow the sequence of thought in an oral text.

**Advanced Plus** speakers are able to understand the main ideas of most speech in a standard dialect; however, the listener may not be able to sustain comprehension in extended discourse which is propositionally and linguistically complex. Listener shows an emerging awareness of culturally implied meanings beyond the surface meanings of the text but may fail to grasp socio-cultural nuances of the message.

**Superior** speakers are able to understand the main ideas of all speech in a standard dialect, including technical discussion in a field of specialization. Can follow the essentials of extended discourse which is propositionally and linguistically complex, as in academic/professional settings, in lectures, speeches, and reports. Listener shows

some appreciation of aesthetic norms of target language, of idioms, colloquialisms, and register shifting. Able to make references within the cultural framework of the target language. Understanding is aided by an awareness of the underlying organizational structure of the oral text and includes sensitivity for its social and cultural references and its affective overtones. Rarely misunderstands but may not understand excessively rapid, highly colloquial speech or speech that has strong cultural references.

## ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Reading<sup>4</sup>

Revised 1997



Superior

Advanced

ADVANCED HIGH  
ADVANCED MID  
ADVANCED LOW

Intermediate

INTERMEDIATE HIGH  
INTERMEDIATE MID  
INTERMEDIATE LOW

Novice

NOVICE HIGH  
NOVICE MID  
NOVICE LOW

**NOVICE LOW** speakers are able occasionally to identify isolated words and/or major phrases when strongly supported by context.

**NOVICE MID** speakers are able to recognize the symbols of an alphabetic and/or syllabic writing system and/or a limited number of characters in a system that uses characters. The reader can identify an increasing number of highly contextualized words and/or phrases including cognates and borrowed words, where appropriate. Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase at a time, and rereading may be required.

<sup>4</sup> Taken from: LTI Language Testing International. "ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines." 15 September 2006 [www.languagetesting.com/scale.htm](http://www.languagetesting.com/scale.htm)

**NOVICE HIGH** speakers have sufficient control of the writing system to interpret written language in areas of practical need. Where vocabulary has been learned, can read for instructional and directional purposes, standardized messages, phrases, or expressions, such as some items on menus, schedules, timetables, maps, and signs. At times, but not on a consistent basis, the Novice-High level reader may be able to derive meaning from material at a slightly higher level where context and/or extralinguistic background knowledge are supportive.

**INTERMEDIATE LOW** speakers are able to understand main ideas and/or some facts from the simplest connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs. Such texts are linguistically noncomplex and have a clear underlying internal structure, for example, chronological sequencing. They impart basic information about which the reader has to make only minimal suppositions or to which the reader brings personal interest and/or knowledge. Examples include messages with social purposes and information for the widest possible audience, such as public announcements and short, straightforward instructions dealing with public life. Some misunderstandings will occur.

**INTERMEDIATE MID** speakers are able to read consistently with increased understanding simple, connected texts dealing with a variety of basic and social needs. Such texts are still linguistically noncomplex and have a clear underlying internal structure. They impart basic information about which the reader has to make minimal suppositions and to which the reader brings personal interest and/or knowledge. Examples may include short, straightforward descriptions of persons, places, and things written for a wide audience.

**INTERMEDIATE HIGH** speakers are able to read consistently with full understanding simple connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs about which the reader has personal interest and/or knowledge. Can get some main ideas and information from texts at the next higher level featuring description and narration. Structural complexity may interfere with comprehension; for example, basic grammatical relations may be misinterpreted and temporal references may rely primarily on lexical items. Has some difficulty with the cohesive factors in discourse, such as matching pronouns with referents. While texts do not differ significantly from those at the Advanced level, comprehension is less consistent. May have to read material several times for understanding.

**ADVANCED** speakers are able to read somewhat longer prose of several paragraphs in length, particularly if presented with a clear underlying structure. The prose is predominantly in familiar sentence patterns. Reader gets the main ideas and facts and misses some details. Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject matter knowledge but from increasing control of the language. Texts at this level include descriptions and narrations such as simple short stories, news items, bibliographical information, social notices, personal correspondence, routinized business letters, and simple technical material written for the general reader.

**ADVANCED PLUS** speakers are able to follow essential points of written discourse at the Superior level in areas of special interest or knowledge. Able to understand parts of texts which are conceptually abstract and linguistically complex, and/or texts which treat unfamiliar topics and situations, as well as some texts which involve aspects of target-language culture. Able to comprehend the facts to make appropriate inferences. An emerging awareness of the aesthetic properties of language and of its literary styles permits comprehension of a wider variety of texts, including literary. Misunderstandings may occur.

**SUPERIOR** speakers are able to read with almost complete comprehension and at normal speed expository prose on unfamiliar subjects and a variety of literary texts. Reading ability is not dependent on subject matter knowledge, although the reader is not expected to comprehend thoroughly texts which are highly dependent on knowledge of the target culture. Reads easily for pleasure. Superior-level texts feature hypotheses, argumentation, and supported opinions, and include grammatical patterns and vocabulary ordinarily encountered in academic/professional reading.

At this level, due to the control of general vocabulary and structure, the reader is almost always able to match the meanings derived from extralinguistic knowledge with meanings derived from knowledge of the language, allowing for smooth and efficient reading of diverse texts. Occasional misunderstandings may still occur; for example, the reader may experience some difficulty with unusually complex structures and low-frequency idioms. At the Superior level the reader can match strategies, top-down or bottom-up, which are most appropriate to the text. (Top-down strategies rely on real-world knowledge and prediction based on genre and organizational scheme of the text. Bottom-up strategies rely on actual linguistic knowledge.) Material at this level will include a variety of literary texts, editorials, correspondence, general reports, and technical material in professional fields. Rereading is rarely necessary, and misreading is rare.

**DISTINGUISHED** speakers are able to read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language pertinent to academic and professional needs. Able to relate inferences in the text to real-world knowledge and understand almost all sociolinguistic and cultural references by processing language from within the cultural

framework. Able to understand a writer's use of nuance and subtlety. Can readily follow unpredictable turns of thought and author intent in such materials as sophisticated editorials, specialized journal articles, and literary texts such as novels, plays, poems, as well as in any subject matter area directed to the general reader.

## APPENDIX 2

### Measuring Instruments



Universidad Nacional  
Facultad de Filosofía y Letras  
Escuela de Literatura y Ciencias del Lenguaje  
Maestría en Traducción

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Part I**

#### **Questionnaire 1<sup>5</sup>**

Please fill out the following questionnaire before you proceed to the translation. Please give *spontaneous, honest* answers to all the questions. It is important that you answer *all* the questions and *in the order* they have been given.

Answer the following questions by writing *your* opinion. Please do not look up any information in any type of reference source.

1. What is translation to you?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. What should a good translator know?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

<sup>5</sup> This questionnaire was adapted from Orozco, Mariana. "Building a Measuring Instrument for the Acquisition of Translation Competence in Trainee Translators." *Developing Translation Competence*. Eds. Schgäffner, Christina and Beverly Adab. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000. 209-213.





6. When you are translating an English expression that you understand, but that you do not know how to express the meaning clearly or exactly enough in Spanish, what do you do? Please list in *chronological order* the steps you would take.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

7. What is most important when you translate?

- a. the word
- b. the sentence
- c. something else

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

8. Check the elements that you think intervene in a translation.

- a.  client
- b.  reader of the original text
- c.  reader of the translated text
- d.  socio-cultural environment of the original text
- e.  socio-cultural environment of the translated text
- f.  date of when the original text was written
- g.  date of when the text is being translated
- h.  function of the original text
- i.  function of the translated text



## Part II Translation

Please read instructions carefully before proceeding.

Translate the following text taking into account the *translation brief*. When you are translating think you are doing so for a real client. You can use all the reference sources available to you to help you with your translation, but you *must write the names of the sources* you have consulted on page seven of this handout.

**Translation brief:** *Bridge-Linguattec has decided to advertise in Costa Rica. You have been asked to translate the following advertisement taken from their webpage. Your translation will be published in La Nación in its Sunday edition.*

### ORIGINAL TEXT<sup>6</sup>

Bridge-Linguattec is a language services company with headquarters in the United States and subsidiary offices in Argentina, Chile and Brazil. It was founded in 1983 by Raphael Alberola, former President and CEO of Berlitz International, Inc.

Bridge-Linguattec's translation division has a network of over 2,000 translators worldwide and specializes in legal, medical, corporate and technical document translation. We provide premier translation services with an uncompromising commitment to quality and on-time delivery.

Bridge-Linguattec  
is a member of the **American  
Translators Association**



### Website Translations

Bridge-Linguattec has an expert team of translators and graphic designers ready to assist you with your website translation needs. Whether you are making the transition from local to international or establishing a market in a new country, having a strategic communications partner can be vital to expanding your business.

The main concern of many of our clients is making a smooth transition into new markets. Our team translates and designs directly from your existing online content, so whether you want to translate your entire site or just a few

<sup>6</sup> Taken from: Bridge-Linguattec Language Services. 15 January 2007 < [www.bridgelinguattec.com/ForeignLanguageTraining\\_denver/about\\_us.htm](http://www.bridgelinguattec.com/ForeignLanguageTraining_denver/about_us.htm)

select pages, the translated version will retain your site's original style, tone, and feel. You will be able to penetrate new markets with a seamless continuation of your current content.

Another common concern is the issue of localization. The Internet is full of examples of websites from other languages obviously transliterated (word-for-word) into English. And we all know how much more willing we are to deal with someone whose website makes sense to us. Bridge-Linguattec is sensitive to the issue of localization, using linguists who are native speakers of the target language and subject-qualified in the content that is being translated. Additionally, we proofread our translations specifically for grammatical and cultural content, ensuring that your message gets across, not just in language that can be understood, but in the dialect and cultural idioms that are actually used by your target audience.

**Bridge-Linguattec 915 S. Colorado Blvd. Denver, CO 80246 USA**

**Phone: 303-777-7783 Toll-Free: 1-866-473-8140 Fax: 303-777-7246**



**Part III**  
**Questionnaire #2<sup>7</sup>**

Answer the following questions about the text you have just translated. Please answer the questions in the given order *without going back* to previous questions. Please do not look up any information in any type of reference source.

1. What is the function or purpose of the text you have translated?

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

2. Did you try to identify the target audience of the text before you began to translate? \_\_\_\_\_ Who is the target audience of the text? \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

Did you have to make any adaptations to the text? \_\_\_\_\_

If your answer is yes, what adaptations did you make?

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

<sup>7</sup> This questionnaire was adapted from Orozco, Mariana. "Building a Measuring Instrument for the Acquisition of Translation Competence in Trainee Translators." *Developing Translation Competence*. Eds. Schgäffner, Christina and Beverly Adab. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000. 209-213.





7. List the *five* most difficult problems you found while translating. Describe what sort of problems they were and how you solved them.

**Problem 1** (write down the fragment that caused the problem)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Did you solve the problem? \_\_\_\_\_ If your answer is yes, how did you solve it? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

If your answer is no, why couldn't you solve it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Problem 2** (write down the fragment that caused the problem)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Did you solve the problem? \_\_\_\_\_ If your answer is yes, how did you solve it? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

If your answer is no, why couldn't you solve it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Problem 3** (write down the fragment that caused the problem)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Did you solve the problem? \_\_\_\_\_ If your answer is yes, how did you solve it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

If your answer is no, why couldn't you solve it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Problem 4** (write down the fragment that caused the problem)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Did you solve the problem? \_\_\_\_\_ If your answer is yes, how did you solve it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

If your answer is no, why couldn't you solve it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Problem 5** (write down the fragment that caused the problem)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Did you solve the problem? \_\_\_\_\_ If your answer is yes, how did you solve it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

If your answer is no, why couldn't you solve it?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

8. How many times did you read your translation before turning it in? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many changes did you make? \_\_\_\_\_ What were those changes? Please be specific.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

9. On a scale of 1 to 10 how difficult was the text? Circle the number you think is most appropriate (*"0" is very easy and "10" is very difficult*)

**VERY EASY                      0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10                      VERY DIFFICULT**  
**Instructions for Part II for individuals translating from Spanish to English**

## Instructions for Translation from Spanish to English

### Part II

Please read instructions carefully before proceeding.

Translate the text on page seven of this handout taking into account the *translation brief*. When you are translating think you are doing so for a real client. You can use all the reference source available to you to help you with your translation, but you *must write the names of the sources* you have consulted on page six of this handout.

Translation brief: IBIDEM Group has decided to advertise in Washington D.C., United States of America. You have been asked to translate the following advertisement taken from their web-page. Your translation will be published in *The Washington Post* in its Sunday edition.

**Text for translation from Spanish to English**

**Part IV**  
**Questionnaire # 3**

Please answer the following questions on your previous experience translating.

1. Before participating in this study, had you done any translating? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_  
(If your answer is NO, stop here.)
2. If your answer is, how long have you been translating?
3. What types of texts have you translated?
4. Approximately how long were the texts you translated?
5. Did your always charge for your work?