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TRANSLATION DIDACTICS AND NEW DIRECTIONS IN TRANSLATOR TRAINING WITH CAT TOOLS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Abstract:

In recent years, the field of translation has been profoundly influenced by rapid technological development, particularly through the widespread use of Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools and Artificial Intelligence (AI). These changes have significantly transformed both professional translation practice and translator education. Translation didactics, as a discipline concerned with the theory and practice of translator training, must respond to new market demands and technological realities. This article explores the theoretical foundations of translation studies and examines new directions in translator training through the integration of CAT tools and AI technologies. It analyzes the pedagogical role and importance of CAT tools, the impact of AI on translation education, emerging training models, and the ethical challenges associated with technology-assisted translation. Drawing on academic research and authoritative web-based sources, the study highlights how modern translation pedagogy can balance linguistic competence with technological and ethical awareness. The article argues that effective translator training requires a comprehensive didactic framework that integrates theory, practice, technology, and critical thinking to prepare translators for the evolving digital translation industry.

Keywords:

translation didactics, translator training, CAT tools, artificial intelligence, machine translation, translation studies, digital translation, translation pedagogy, professional competence, neural machine translation.

Introduction:

The profession of translation has experienced substantial transformation due to globalization, digitalization, and the increasing reliance on technology. Traditional models of translator training, which focused primarily on linguistic and cultural competence, are no longer sufficient to meet the expectations of the modern translation industry. Today's translators are expected to work efficiently with digital tools, manage large translation projects, and interact with machine-generated texts.

Translation didactics plays a crucial role in addressing these changes by developing effective teaching methods and training strategies that reflect contemporary professional realities. As a branch of translation studies, translation didactics focuses on how translation is taught, learned, and assessed. The integration of CAT tools and artificial intelligence into translator education has become a defining feature of modern translation pedagogy.

The aim of this article is to analyze translation didactics in the context of technological innovation and to explore new directions in translator training. By examining theoretical

foundations, practical tools, and ethical considerations, the article seeks to demonstrate how translation education can evolve to prepare competent, reflective, and technologically literate translators for the global market.

Theoretical Foundations of Translation Studies:

Translation studies emerged as an independent academic discipline in the second half of the twentieth century, drawing on linguistics, literary studies, cultural studies, and applied linguistics. Early theoretical models focused on equivalence, fidelity, and linguistic accuracy, emphasizing the relationship between source and target texts. Scholars such as Nida (1964) introduced functional and dynamic equivalence, highlighting the importance of meaning and communicative effect in translation.

Later developments in translation theory expanded the scope of the discipline by incorporating cultural, functional, and sociological perspectives. The Skopos theory proposed by Vermeer emphasized the purpose of translation as a determining factor in translation decisions, while Toury's descriptive translation studies focused on norms and regularities in translated texts. These theoretical frameworks have significantly influenced translation didactics by shifting attention from prescriptive rules to functional and context-oriented approaches.

In contemporary translation studies, competence-based models are widely used in translator training. According to the European Master's in Translation (EMT) framework, professional translation competence includes linguistic, cultural, technological, strategic, and ethical components. Translation didactics therefore aims to develop these interconnected competences through systematic and learner-centered pedagogical approaches.

The Role of CAT Tools and Their Importance in Translator Training:

Computer-Assisted Translation tools have become essential instruments in professional translation practice. CAT tools such as SDL Trados, MemoQ, and Wordfast enable translators to work more efficiently by using translation memories, terminology databases, and project management features. These tools do not translate texts automatically; instead, they support human translators by storing and retrieving previously translated segments.

In translator training, CAT tools play a vital pedagogical role by familiarizing students with industry-standard technologies. Integrating CAT tools into translation curricula allows learners to develop technological competence alongside linguistic skills. According to Bowker and Fisher (2010), early exposure to CAT tools helps students understand professional workflows and increases their employability.

CAT tools also support consistency and quality control in translation tasks. By using translation memories and terminology management systems, students learn how to maintain terminological coherence and adhere to client requirements. Moreover, CAT-based training encourages collaborative learning, as students can work on shared projects and simulate real-world translation environments.

Artificial Intelligence in Translation Education:

Artificial intelligence, particularly neural machine translation (NMT), has introduced new dynamics into translation practice and education. AI-powered systems such as Google Translate and DeepL are capable of producing fluent translations in many language pairs, raising questions about the future role of human translators. However, rather than replacing translators, AI has redefined their responsibilities.

In translation education, AI technologies are increasingly used as learning tools. Students analyze machine-generated translations, identify errors, and perform post-editing tasks. This approach enhances critical thinking and develops students' ability to evaluate translation quality. According to O'Brien (2012), post-editing competence has become a key professional skill in the translation industry.

AI integration in translator training also encourages discussion about the limitations of machine translation, particularly in terms of cultural nuance, pragmatic meaning, and ethical responsibility. By engaging critically with AI tools, students learn to position themselves as informed and reflective language professionals rather than passive users of technology.

New Directions in Translator Training:

Integration of CAT tools and AI has led to new pedagogical models in translator training. Modern translation education increasingly emphasizes project-based learning, where students work on authentic translation projects using professional tools. This approach bridges the gap between theory and practice and enhances learner autonomy.

Another emerging direction is the interdisciplinary nature of translator training. Translation programs now incorporate elements of information technology, corpus linguistics, and localization studies. Online platforms and cloud-based CAT tools have further expanded learning opportunities, enabling remote collaboration and flexible learning environments.

Blended learning and digital assessment methods are also becoming more common. These innovations allow educators to evaluate not only translation products but also translation processes, including decision-making strategies and tool usage. As a result, translator training is evolving toward a more holistic and competence-oriented model.

Challenges and Drawbacks of CAT-Based Translation:

Despite their advantages, CAT tools present several challenges in translator training. One major concern is overreliance on technology, which may reduce students' attention to linguistic creativity and critical analysis. Excessive dependence on translation memories can lead to mechanical translations and the repetition of errors.

Technical complexity is another drawback, particularly for beginners. Learning to use CAT tools requires time and technical support, which may overwhelm students and instructors alike. Additionally, access to licensed software can be limited due to financial constraints, especially in developing educational contexts.

There is also a risk that students may perceive CAT tools as substitutes for translation competence rather than as supportive instruments. This misunderstanding highlights the importance of integrating CAT tools within a strong theoretical and pedagogical framework.

Dealing with Problems in Ethical Aspects:

Ethical considerations have become increasingly important in technology-assisted translation. Issues such as data confidentiality, intellectual property, and authorship are central concerns when using CAT tools and AI systems. Translators must ensure that sensitive information is protected and that machine-generated content is used responsibly.

In translator training, ethical awareness should be an integral part of the curriculum. Students need to understand the ethical implications of using AI tools, including the risk of plagiarism and the potential bias embedded in machine translation systems. According to Pym (2011), ethical competence is essential for professional credibility and trust.

By discussing real-world ethical dilemmas and case studies, educators can help students develop responsible attitudes toward technology. Ethical training encourages transparency, accountability, and critical judgment in professional practice.

Implications for Translation Pedagogy:

The integration of CAT tools and AI has significant implications for translation pedagogy. Educators must adopt learner-centered approaches that balance theoretical knowledge with practical skills. The role of the teacher is shifting from knowledge transmitter to facilitator and mentor, guiding students through complex technological and linguistic tasks. Curriculum design should reflect industry needs while maintaining academic rigor. Continuous professional development for translation teachers is also essential to ensure effective technology integration. By aligning pedagogy with technological change, translation education can remain relevant and forward-looking.

Conclusion:

Translation didactics is undergoing rapid transformation in response to technological innovation and changing professional demands. The integration of CAT tools and artificial intelligence has opened new directions in translator training, offering opportunities for enhanced efficiency, collaboration, and competence development. At the same time, these technologies pose pedagogical and ethical challenges that require careful consideration. This article has demonstrated that effective translator training must combine theoretical foundations, practical tool-based instruction, and ethical reflection. By adopting a comprehensive and balanced didactic approach, translation education can prepare future translators to navigate the complexities of the digital translation landscape and to contribute meaningfully to global communication.

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