

An Evaluation of Translation Teaching at Undergraduate Level in Tanzania

Japhari Salum

Assistant Lecturer, Muslim University of Morogoro, Department of Languages and Linguistics, Tanzania

Corresponding Author: Japhari Salum, E-mail: japhar@mum.ac.tz

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ABSTRACT

Universities in Tanzania are now greatly interested in teaching translation courses at undergraduate level. One outstanding observation is that most graduates work as teachers and not as translators. This paper aimed at evaluating teaching of translation courses at undergraduate level. The objective is to determine to what extent translation courses in Tanzania meet the market needs. The study used qualitative and quantitative methods in order to collect information. This includes questionnaires and the evaluation of course outlines, prospectuses, timetables, leaflets and examination papers. Findings indicate that translation courses in Tanzania are not in line with the current market needs. On the one hand, the findings of this study will enable the government of Tanzania, represented by Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) and higher learning institutions offering translation courses to be up-to-date on the requirements of professional translator training in the era of globalization. On the other hand, the findings of this study will lead them in the rethinking of the translation courses. Furthermore, the present study will awaken the consciousness of student-translators, translator trainers and professional translators on the current translation market needs in the twenty-first century and a part of contribution to the on-going global debate on teaching translation at undergraduate level.

1. INTRODUCTION

¹Globalization has promoted international trade, tourism and international relationship in general. As a result, it has increased demand for translation. In recent years, the globalization markets and digital revolution have transformed translation from a profession confined primarily to individuals into a full-fledged industrial sector. This globalization trend has triggered a chain of changes and influenced the integration movement throughout the African continent. The process of integration in Africa goes hand in hand with the growth of regional and international organizations and the resulting increase in the number of meetings, conferences and documents to be translated. This has clearly heightened the need for translators and translations. The translator is a communicator, a bridge builder between languages and cultures.

Due to the increased demand of professional translators and interpreters in Africa, in 2010 the African Union, in collaboration with the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) of the

University of Buea in Cameroon, launched a special project for training professionals from all its member countries in these fields. This initiative, which aims to contribute to meeting the demand for professionals in these fields in Africa, comes in the wake of similar initiatives to train new generations of interpreters and translators in East Africa.

Despite the fact that translation has shaped the world throughout time, contributing to the development of people, the formal training of professional translators is relatively new in East Africa, compared to the time when this activity began. Besides the Pan-African project initiative, universities in East Africa are now greatly interested in translation courses to train and graduate competent translators. Tanzania is not left out in this globalization process. Its official language is Kiswahili, which is widely spoken by its citizens. It is surrounded by English and French speaking countries like Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. Therefore, the best means of achieving understanding between people who do not speak the same language is through translation. In order to maintain its relationship with neighboring countries, Tanzania needs well trained translators.

Furthermore, the on-going integration process among East African countries requires the services of professional translators who can conveniently navigate between two or more languages and cultures in order to facilitate communication. According to the official website of the East African Community (www.eala.org), on 25 August 2016, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) proposed the adoption of Kiswahili as official language in all East African states and on 30 August 2016, EALA passed a resolution to make Kiswahili an official language of the East African Community alongside English. As a result, the need for competent translators, particularly translating into Kiswahili, is on the rise in East Africa.

Presently in Tanzania, some universities and other institutions include translation studies in their programmes at undergraduate level. The Muslim University of Morogoro (MUM) was the first to launch a complete undergraduate programme in 2010 followed by the University of Dodoma in 2016 that includes both interpretation and translation studies. Other institutions are offering translation courses only in the 5th semester within programmes like Bachelor of Arts in Education, Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies, Bachelor of Arts in Kiswahili, just to mention but a few.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

One outstanding observation is that most graduates trained in translation and interpretation courses work as teachers and not as translators. This is an indication that training courses may not be in line with the market needs.

1.2 Research Objective

The study aims at:

1. Determining to what extent translation courses in Tanzania meet the market needs.

1.3 Research question

The research problem of this study is operationalized by the following question

1. To what extent do translation courses in Tanzania meet the market needs?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Translation Market Needs

The main objective of university translator-training programmes is to train translators for the translation market, although not all graduates work as translators. The role of the market in curricular design and education practices in higher education has been at the core of discussions in education, especially for disciplines that have a vocational

aspect. The role of the market in translator training, defined by Kearns (2008:185) as a typically vocational activity which is often based in, and in other ways contingent on, academic settings is crucial. Bridging the gaps between the academic and the professional worlds in translator training has been and is still gaining momentum. Many translation scholars suggest that it would also be useful to develop translation pedagogy, guided by market demand. Calls for designing the curriculum in response to the market needs are reflected in the works of Goudec (2000), Li (2000), Way (2000), Pym (2003, 2011), Beeby (2004), Gabr (2007), Salinas (2007), among others.

Alongside the concern for each translation course to be designed in its own context, taking into account its own constraints and environment, there are existing common market needs, especially in the 21st century, and these are professionalization, specialization, technologization, multilingualism and academization.

2.1.1 Professionalization and Specialization in Translator Training

Professionalization of translator training consists of moving from the acquisition of only scholarly knowledge (academic knowledge) to the acquisition of professional competence that is a combination of know-how, interpersonal skills and acting skills. In other words, it consists of enabling students translators to be functional at the end of the training. The Specialization of translator training refers to acquiring a particular specific competence in a field of translation like Terminology, Localization, Revision, Editing, etc. Some institutions incorporate it into the common core of the translation curriculum while others refer it to continuing education.

According to Kiraly (2000), these two approaches are respectively known under the names 'objectivist epistemology' and 'constructive epistemology'. He advocates the latter, that is, the social constructivist approach (mostly referred to as 'social constructivism'), for its benefits for the training of professional translators today and in the future.

Furthermore, Kiraly (2000:17) proposed three types of strategies that can be applied to translation studies: individual work strategies (problem-based approach, case studies, autonomous practice); interactive strategies (focus groups, role play, modeling, guided practice); and social constructivist strategies (peer teaching, tutoring, teamwork, project-based learning). Pym (2009:8) updated the list of pedagogical activities proposed by Nord (1996), restated by Kiraly (2000:55-57) and Nord (2005). The list consists of the following items: small group work,

partial or complete translation exercises, guided translation exercises, use of parallel texts, sight translation, condensed translation, documentation and revision.

In "Training Language Services Providers: Local Knowledge in Institutional Context", Pym (2002c:1) discussed about the need to contextualize translator training given the diverse tasks that translators are responsible for today practices from one place to another and from one context to another. In fact, today's translators do more than translate, they navigate between professions handling multiple tasks which are considered as part of their duties as translators: they carry out revision, terminology management, multilingual document management, project management, cultural expertise, all kinds of interpretations, customer relationship management and cultural communication.

Pym (2002a & 2013), Goudec (2007:70), Hennessy (2011:3), Costales (2012) and Gambier (2012) believe that, social professionally, the current context requires the training of versatile translators who are able to handle several different tasks and to adapt to any changes that may occur in the area of translation. Thus, the role of training is not only to find solutions to current market challenges but also to future challenges. To achieve this, they advocate the combination of efforts and collaboration between researchers, professional translators and amateur translators to ensure a bright future for the translation industry.

If all the approaches, strategies and activities mentioned above are incorporated into the translation courses, then this section will move quickly towards the professionalization and training discussed by Kelly (2005), Kiraly (2005) and Goudec (2007). However, translation scholars recognize that there will always be a gap between the market and training. According to Defeng Li, (2000); Pym (2003: 359) and Al-Maaini (2009) agree that we cannot, therefore, pretend to train complete translators; it is just a question of providing them with the skills they need to meet the demands of the market and to meet future challenges, that is, to adapt to future changes that will occur later in the translation sector; hence the need to integrate the concepts of training with adaptability and lifelong learning into training.

Kelly (2005:93-94) stress on the importance of work placements, which should be combined with other activities within the translation programme in order to raise student awareness about the profession. Kelly add that other activities are visits by professional translators to institutions, day trips to local translation

companies, analysis of the job market through published advertisements, visits by representatives of professional associations, analysis of information available on the website of professional associations and simulation of professional practice in the classroom.

On the other hand, Pym (2009:5) and Defeng Li (2002:7) suggest that professional translators and other translation professionals, in classrooms or seminars, should be in charge of educating learners about the functioning and requirements of translation and encouraging learners to join professional associations. They also suggest a learner performance evaluation system based on translation portfolios, and execution of 'authentic' professional tasks, with explicit instructions from clients.

As for Goudec (2007:22), learners should be placed in a real work situation and accustomed to professional tasks, consisting of voluminous translation projects to be managed by the learners themselves in small groups and with various roles (translator, reviser, terminologist, work provider, etc.). In addition, Pym (2010:15) similarly suggest that risk management is an important element to incorporate into training, given the negative consequences of globalization and ICT for the translator profession. In the same vein, Lasnier (2000:107), Chamberlan et al. (2006:3-151) and Calvo (2011:12) also looked into the issue of curriculum content and pedagogical activities required for effective training of translators.

Furthermore, Vandepitte (2009:123), suggest that the student-translator should, at the end of training, demonstrate the following entrepreneurial values: creativity, independence, self-confidence, spirit of initiative, perseverance, pro activity and sense of responsibility. To the list, Vandepitte (2009:124) added the following concepts considered essential for training at the higher education level: training for continuing education, flexibility and adaptability, training for responsibility, ethics, participation and collaboration, preparation of candidates but mostly job providers, etc.

In short, the professionalization of translator training aims at training translators while taking into account his/her employability and specialization focus on the acquisition of specific skills in certain aspects of translation. Thus, it would be difficult or even impossible to talk about these concepts in the era of globalization without discussing technologization in translator training.

2.1.2 Technologization in Translator Training

In today's globalized world, technological competences are no longer neglected, and so it is important to incorporate ICT into translation courses. Technological competences are no longer limited only to the mastery of CAT tools but also to attaining advanced computer skills and the full involvement of technology and specifically the computer in the teaching-learning process.

Vieira et al. (2013:1) point out that with the advent of information technology, new models have emerged in the learning process. The learning process generates levels and forms of organization, of very different interactions in knowledge sharing at a speed never seen before. Indeed, the emergence of these technologies in diverse environments such as work places, school or mainstream culture, as well as the amount of information available, or simply new relationships are all factors that profoundly change teaching-learning process.

Serrano (2002:32), suggest that didactics, which has succeeded in establishing itself as a discipline on its own right in several fields of activity, should be taken seriously in the training of translators in the era of major technological changes. Indeed, given the employability difficulties of recently trained translators, it is necessary for training programmes to redefine their objectives and teaching methods in order to train student-translators who are capable of meeting present and future challenges.

Pym (2002b:113-120), affirm that the adoption of technology has turned teaching into a purely asymmetrical activity, with both didactic and pedagogical implications. Indeed, the interaction schema of the teaching-learning process now has three components: teacher-learner-technology (computer or screen). This type of interaction necessarily calls for a new space-time configuration of classrooms and teaching units on the one hand and promotes the autonomy in training on the other hand. However, the place of classes' in-person training and the presence of the human teacher in the space where the training takes place would remain indisputable.

Furthermore, Kelly (2005:75-76), Kiraly (2004:22) and Gouadec (2007:13) affirm that, currently, we are heading for new areas such as tele-translation, videoconferencing, voice recognition systems, localization, dubbing and subtitling, which largely involve translators. To this end, they advocate the modernization and supply of technological tools to upgrade different training options, and above all, putting learners in a real situation during the teaching-learning process. In addition, with the new cutting edge technology for real-time electronic

exchange, chat rooms, and video-conferencing on the internet, it is possible to simulate what is happening in a real classroom, or encourage learners to contextualize their learning other than through learner-to-learner contacts within the same classroom.

Pym (2008:1), demonstrate that the notion of translational skills dates back to the 1970s. Initially, this notion mainly concerned with the linguistic and cultural skills, but over time and especially with the birth and evolution of the internet, the notion has been redefined. For him, linguistic competence is no longer enough. New skills are needed in the ICT field. The translator must master, among other things, the revision tools, know how to create and localize sophisticated web sites, master the translation memories (SDLX Trados Studio, Wordfast, DejaVu, etc.) and master the tools of terminological research (Multicorpora, Alchiny, Lingotek, etc.). It would be preferable that the acquisition of such skills be done first during the training.

2.1.3 Multilingualism in Translator Training

Today, there is no country in the world that is unaware of the importance of languages. As the world has become a world of giving and receiving, the tendency remains that each people would like to 'receive' in their own language (s) and 'give' others in their own.

Garcia (2005:267-268), find that the era of globalization is an open time of globalization of knowledge, which brings us new challenges that are hard to pin down. Among these challenges is the integration of multilingualism into translation courses in a world where more than 4000 languages are spoken in order to protect political, cultural and socio-economic interests, leaning towards bilingualism or multilingualism. Thus, we are no longer in the perspective of the Mother Tongue Principle but in that of plurilingualism. Some training institutions have understood this and in order to meet the linguistic diversification of the demand for training, they have, for the most part, passed from one to several language or multilingual combinations.

On the other hand, Grin (2011), in his article entitled 'Translation and the Dynamics of Multilingualism', proposed to place translation in the broader context of the macro-dynamics of multilingualism. He begun by pointing out that translation does not emerge ex nihilo, but emerges from a multilingual context and therefore depends on it. To him, translation contributes to the maintenance and development of linguistic diversity and the promotion of multilingualism always depend on the will of

linguistic policies. He therefore proposes an identification of the mechanisms of the macro-dynamics of multilingualism by suggesting, for this reason, an unprecedented metric and explicitly locating translation in this dynamic. In addition, his work places special emphasis on the role of language policies, showing that translation is dependent, but that it is also one of the conditions for their effectiveness. Based on this position of Grin (2011), one could easily draw the conclusion that the multilingualism in training (including national languages) becomes a necessity, as does the academization of translator training.

2.1.4 Academization in Translator Training

Academization in training involves theory and research. Thus, the current trend in the majority of vocational schools is to attach great importance to research in order to develop the profession. The research and theory components would thus be illustrated as a panacea provided they are well conducted. According to the philosophy of UNESCO (1995), it is a question of training the mastermind, taking into account the implications of globalization in the sectors of activity.

Gile (2008:153-154), emphasize the importance of research in general and empirical research, particularly, for society and translation studies, specifically for the training of translators. Indeed, it is in search of proposing possible solutions to the different problems encountered in the field of translation studies. In addition, it must ensure the survival and defense of the latter, help the learner to deepen his/her knowledge or to supplement the knowledge acquired in the classroom. This would be the reason why the research component is gaining momentum and is increasingly being awarded a higher number of credits in professional translation training institutions around the world. According to Gile (2008:36-38) it is vital in the training of executives, design agents and mastermind. Thus, the involvement of academics in the training of the translator needs to be encouraged since they contribute greatly to the training of translators through the research component.

Gambier (2012:14), see rather in the academization of training the ability to train responsible translators, able to defend their field of activity. It is about training the masterminds that are able to combine theory and practice, and whose positions in society would help to enhance the image of the profession of translator. He rightly declares: 'today, the competent translator is also a person of his word - he must be reliable (he keeps his word) and know how to defend

and justify his work, not to mention the pre-translation and post-writing tasks (he must know how to speak)'.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative and quantitative methods and a two-scale analysis (analysis of manifest content and latent content) on the other hand was employed to analyze the data.

3.1 Data Collection Method

As already indicated above, the study used qualitative and quantitative methods in order to collect information on translation teaching at undergraduate level in Tanzania. Qualitative data were collected from timetables, course outlines, prospectuses, leaflets and examination papers. While quantitative data were collected through self-administered questionnaires. These questionnaires were designed for teachers and students involved in the translation courses. The researcher administered student's questionnaires to 31 students whereby 24 students filled the questionnaire and 7 students did not fill the questionnaire. On the other hand, the researcher administered teacher's questionnaires to 15 teachers and 11 teachers filled and returned the questionnaires form.

3.2 Data Source

All documents used in this study, in data collection process were provided by the persons directly involved in the teaching of translation, namely those responsible for training institutions, heads of departments and translation trainers (from MUM and UDOM).

3.3 Data Analysis

The present study used a two-scale analysis: Analysis of manifest content and latent content. According to Angers (1996:158),

Analyser un contenu manifeste revient à analyser ce qui est explicite, réellement formulé dans un document, alors qu'analyser le contenu latent c'est procéder à l'examen de ce qui est implicite ou sous-entendu dans un document.

[Analysis of manifest content amounts to analyzing what is explicit, actually formulated in a document while analyzing the latent content is to examine what is implicit or implied in a document]. (my translation)

The contents of the collected documents were analyzed. The analysis was done in such a way as to highlight the elements which have made it possible to

describe synchronically the training courses in the Tanzanian context. The synchronic aspect of the data analysis focused on the current state of the translation courses of the two institutions involved in this research work. Then proceeded to the evaluation of the levels of adaptation of these courses in relation to the translation market needs in the 21st century, namely professionalization, specialization, technologization, multilingualism and academization.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Professionalization and Specialization in the Training of Translators in Tanzania

The professionalization of translator training in Tanzania shows that there are similarities in the teaching. The common points between the two translation courses are the existence of the internship/practicum in the workplace, the assessment methods and inexistence of collaboration with other translation professionals in the training.

At MUM, translation students go for internship/practicum during the third semester while at UDOM students go for internship in the fifth semester. However, both institutions do not put emphasize on the supervision of students during their internship.

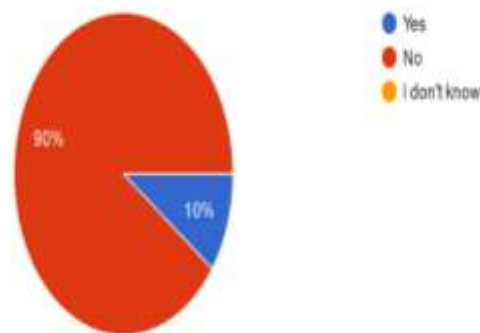
Concerning assessment methods, according to their programme document both institutions use the same assessment methods that are continuous assessment which count for 40% and final written examination account for 60%. Nonetheless, as shown below in Figure 1, the variation of answers provided by translation trainers from both institutions on the assessment methods they are using revealed that teachers were not aware with the assessment methods established by their departments; as a result every teacher chooses his/her own method of assessing student’s performance.

Figure 1: What are the methods of assessment?



When teachers were asked regarding to the collaboration with other translation professionals, the majority answered that they do not collaborate with other institutions or association in training translators as shown in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Does the department collaborate with the other department(s) in some other universities in Africa and around the world?

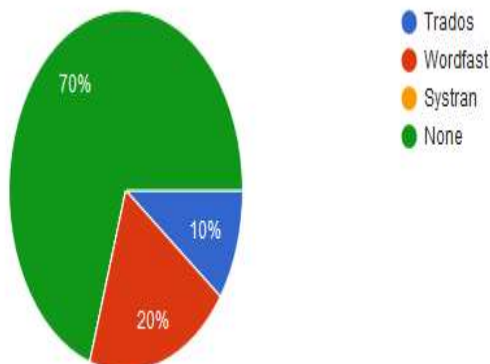


Thus, professionalization in the translator training in Tanzania is still neglected. Both institutions should make sure that during internship period students are supervised by professional translators and at the end of the internship they should get feedback from them. Equally they should establish a clear assessment methods and all trainers and trainees should be aware of them.

4.2 Technologization in Training of Translators in Tanzania

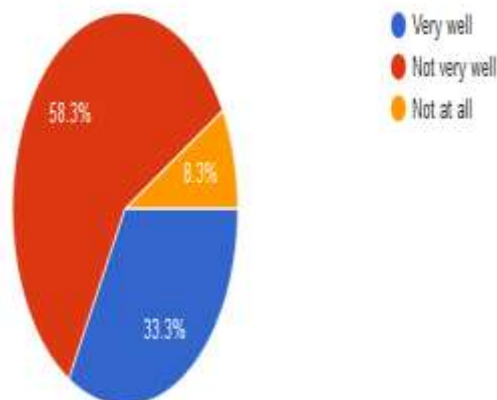
Technologization in translator training at MUM is still limited to introduction to Computing & Information Systems. BLI department do not include Computer-Assisted Tool (CAT) in its translation course structure. At UDOM, translation students are taught how to use CAT tools in the fourth and fifth semesters. To achieve a precise picture of how technology is integrated in the teaching of translation in Tanzania, teachers were asked what types of CAT tools were employed in the classroom as it is shown in figure 3 below.

Figure 3: CAT tools taught



The overwhelming majority of the respondents (70%) stated that they were not teaching any CAT tool in their department, while 20% said they were teaching Wordfast and 10% said they were teaching Trados. As a result of trainers neglecting to adopt language technologies, majority of the translation students (66.6%) are incapable of using translation softwares. This was discovered when they were asked how well they can use Computer Assisted Translation tools as it is shown in the figure 4 below.

Figure 4: CAT tool competence



Although it is clear that most of the translator trainers in Tanzania are reluctant to adopt language technologies as they can completely transform the way teaching is carried out, and shift the dynamics in a classroom, the rapid developments in this field mean that students need to have some knowledge of how online tools for example can help them and benefit their work. Also as discussed in the literature review, translation scholars propose the adaptation of

the curricular training within the technology environment.

In short, as far as the technologization in translator training is concerned, no training programme in Tanzanian context is offering e-learning courses in translation. However, with regard to the acquisition of the technological competence which constitutes the basis of the technological process of the training of the translator, at least UDOM is best prepared to welcome the e-learning courses.

4.3 Multilingualism in the Training of Translators in Tanzania

Multilingualism in translator training in Tanzania is very limited. It is at least two and at most three languages. There are four languages that are taught at MUM but most of the translation students they have two languages (French-English/English-French) and only few of them they have three languages (French-English/English-French) and Arabic/Chinese. At UDOM, the situation is the same as that of MUM. Majority of the students have two languages (Swahili-English/English-Swahili) and those who have three languages, during the examination the third language is considered as an optional course and not compulsory course.

Nevertheless, multilingualism must be considered as an essential component to be integrated into the training courses of the professional translator in the era of globalization and translation market disorder. In addition, the lack of professional translators in some languages opens the door for non-professionals. Thus, the system of languages in the training of professional translators in Tanzania must be revised.

4.4 Academization in the training of translators in Tanzania

The process of academization remains paralyzed because of the inadequacy of the profile and status of trainers. The majority of the translation trainers in the BLI department are part-timers as a result they do not have enough time to work on the weakness of the students. Also, it was discovered that it is only one part-timer lecturer in the BLI department who had carried out a research in the translation area while the rest of the trainers in both institutions are carrying out research and publishing articles and books in other areas.

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to evaluate and determine the level of adaptation of the translation courses and the market needs. As it was discussed in the literature review, the common market needs

especially in the 21st century are professionalization, specialization, technologization, multilingualism and academization. At the end of the study it was revealed that professionalization in the translator training in Tanzania is still neglected, technologization is limited to introduction to Computing and Information Systems, most of the translation students are trained to translate only in two languages, therefore multilingualism is disregarded and academization remains paralyzed because of the inadequacy of the profile and status of trainers. Thus, the translation courses in Tanzania do not meet the requirements of the current market needs.

From the foregoing, we believe that Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) as a regulatory, supportive and advisory body for all universities in Tanzania shall take the measures to ensure that translation market needs are incorporated in the translation courses offered in Tanzanian universities and sensitize the university administrations to focus on training professional translators who are able to compete in the translation market. Furthermore, higher learning institutions teaching translation courses shall hire instructors with translation background, emphasize translation trainers to conduct researches within the domain of translation and providing translation students with as much 'real-world' practice to become competent and professional translators.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Japhari Salum holds an M.A in Translation and works as an Assistant Lecturer at the Muslim University of Morogoro (MUM), department of Languages and Linguistics. He has been teaching translation courses to undergraduate students. He is also a translation coordinator at the Muslim University of Morogoro. His major areas of teaching and research interests include the translator training and education, history of translation, language programme evaluation and curriculum design, audio visual translation and interpreting theory and practice.

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