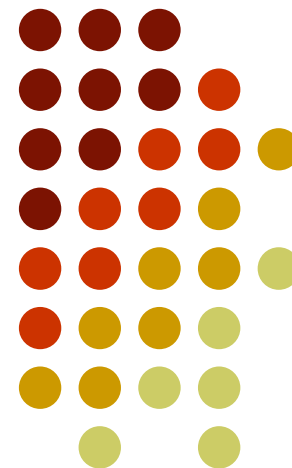


The Professionalization of Translation in Portugal

From occupation to profession: A sociological approach to the translator's status in a business-oriented setting

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Topic of research



1. The professionalization of translation in Portugal

2. The professional translator's profile:

freelancers, translation agencies, clients

New field of research in Portugal:



- **1. Studying professionalization from the point of view of:**
 - the translator
 - the commissioner
 - the client
- **2. The relationship between sociology and translation (industrial sociology, sociology of work / professions)**
 - The translator's sociological profile (status, recognition, ethics, "habitus"..)

Objectives



1. To establish the main criteria through which the concept of professionalization is applied to translation practice in Portugal (What is professional translation?)
2. To analyse the translator's sociological profile as far as professional recognition, status, practice, background, job satisfaction, ethics...
3. To study the way translation is seen in Portugal as a professional activity (autonomy? recognition?)



4. Interaction between professional practice and the translation market (constraints, features, dynamics, network of relationships, conflicts...)

5. Define the “preprofessional prototype situation” (Hermans and Lambert 1998)

Hypothesis



- What is professionalization?
 - 1. some form of recognized expertise
 - 2. some code of ethics attached to the profession
 - 3. other
- Do translators in Portugal consider themselves professionals? Why?
- Which standards govern the whole principle of a translation professional?
- What does it take to be considered a professional?

Hypothesis



- Is there a real professional status?
- Establish the professional ethics/code of conduct
- Skills associated with the world of professional translation
- How do clients/commissioners see translators in this context?

Plan



- 1. Introduction
- 2. Definition of terms
 - Translation
 - Profession vs Occupation
 - Agency vs Company
 - Translator vs Service Provider
- 3. Background and context
- 4. Review of literature (State of the art)
- 5. Chronological approach / History (what's been done so far)
- 6. The sociological turn in TS
- 7. The practice of translation in Portugal (background, history)
- 8. The European context (terms of reference and comparison)
- 9. Methodological approach – Function-oriented / Process-oriented DTS
- 10. The investigation – Questionnaire, surveys, interviews, empirical research
- 11. Description
- 12. Analysis
- 13. Conclusion, prescriptions, recommendations

Professionalization – 2 schools of thought



- 1. **Trait theory** – an occupation becomes a profession by attaining certain characteristics, i.e. adherence to a code of ethics, a systematic body of theoretical knowledge, licensure or registration, and loyalty to colleagues (checklists)
- 2. **Theory of control** – looks at how the occupation relates to other components of the labour market and institutions in society. The more control practitioners of an occupation are able to exert over the substance of their work and the market in which they operate, the more professionalized the occupation.

Tseng model on professionalization (1992)



- 1. Market disorder
- 2. Mystification (occupation stage)
- 3. Impact of training
- 4. Consolidation of the profession and the development of a consensus about practitioner's aspirations
- 5. Professional associations – ethical standards
- 6. Control of admission to the profession
- 7. Exert influence on the public through publicity campaigns
- 8. Market control
- 9. Influence political and legal authorities (lobbying)
- 10. Public perception in the recognition of the profession

Corpus and methodology

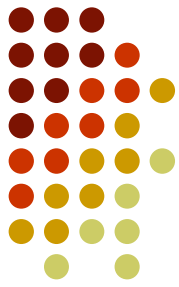


- Controlled group coming from a specific area / region of Portugal (North – Porto region, Center, South)
- Source - Yellow Pages, phone directory, translation agencies' databases, Chamber of Commerce, consulates, embassies, government departments, institutions, companies (private, state), professional translator's databases
- N^o of interviewees/agencies: ?



- Target different sub-groups and cross info:
 - 1) companies that are actually buying translation services and that are used to resort to translation – clients, consumers
 - 2) companies, departments, institutions that are used to doing translations (publishing houses, marketing, tourism...)
 - 3) translation agencies
 - 4) professional translators working in the market, freelancers

Methodology



- Establish relationships between the various partners involved in different business situations
- Interviews as a research tool
- Based on questionnaires (previously sent by mail)
- Questions – open and close
- Face-to-face encounter, discussion, recorded
- On a group or individual basis
- Starting with the companies/agencies where there is supposed to be translation practice

Description of a possible questionnaire (Janis 1996)



- 1. The career of the translator, source languages, fields of specialization, qualifications, background, technological requirements
- 2. The process of translation itself
- 3. The translator's attitudes towards the profession / market
- 4. The way translators perceive their work as a profession, how they keep up with the major market tendencies /demands and their attitude towards the training and qualifications of fellow translators.
- 5. Experience in working with clients / translation agencies, outsourcing, networking
- 6. Quality assessment, follow up

Alternative



- See Hermans and Lambert 119 – 121
- Job satisfaction, instructions given to translators and the implicit norms underlying them, and feedback produced/received

Specimen 1 – Work in progress



- The sociological profile of the Portuguese translation agencies (APET)
- Study initiated in 2005, available at <http://ceh.ilch.uminho.pt/lea/questionario.html> targeting Portuguese translation agencies (members of the Portuguese Translation Agencies Association, APET)
- Research project – Training context
- Results will be published during 2006

Items that have been studied so far in this survey



- Company's profile (ID card)
- Human resources / Staff
- Professional status
- Languages
- Domains of specialization
- Type of services offered
- Quality management procedures
- Skills
- Technological requirements
- Training
- Outsourcing
- Prices
- Customer/Client relationship
- Future trends
- Opinion about training and teaching
- European standard

Commons key structures/dynamics



- The dynamics of globalization:
- Telework, networking, teletranslation,
- Mobility, distance work
- Sociological profile
- New technology arrangements

- The dynamics of translation:
- Procedures, routines
- Strategies
- Theory and practice
- Product-oriented vs Process-oriented

- The dynamics of teaching:
- Skills / Competencies
- Teaching paradigm
- Market-oriented view

- The dynamics of business:
- Quality control, quality metrics
- Standards (LISA, JAE, Elf)
- Project management
- Client satisfaction