

Importance of Linguistics in the Development of Translation Competence

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Abstract

The current debate in translation pedagogy seems to relegate the importance of linguistics to a secondary position. The objective of this article is to argue that descriptive and contrastive linguistics should constitute a core component in translator-training programs. For one thing, translators are language professionals and should be equipped with the required tools as well as metalanguage (language used to make statements about language) to analyze, understand and evaluate source and target texts in the translation process. The development of cultural, technical and professional dimensions of translation competence, which constitute the focus of translation research in recent years, remains inadequate unless it is supported by sound training in linguistics relevant to the tasks professional translators grapple with while translating texts. Besides translation, translators are required to edit and revise translated texts, hence the significance of equipping them with the linguistic tools and metalanguage that would enable them to evaluate translation assignments and draft the relevant reports relating to quality assurance.

Key words: metalanguage, translation competence, syntax, morphology, pragmatics