

Developing Communicative and Textual Competence through Genres

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Abstract

In recent years the concept of *translation competence* has steadily gained acceptance up to the point where it has now become the most widely discussed issue in relation to translator training. Proof of this can be seen, for example, in the work carried out by Hurtado in the PACTE group (2001) or that of Kelly (2002, 2005, 2006). Translation competence is a complex, multifaceted concept that takes in a number of different aspects.

Many researchers have adapted the literary studies tradition focused on text genres to both the field of linguistics and language teaching (Swales, 1990, and Bhatia, 1993, among others) and to translation (Hatim and Mason, 1990; or, for example, the work of the GENTT team, and more especially García Izquierdo, ed. 2005).

In this article we reconsider the value of the concept of text genre in translator training (and, therefore, in the make-up of translation competence), as well as in research on translation. Here, text genre is understood to be a conventionalised, and at the same time dynamic and hybrid, text form (Kress, 1985) that represents an interface between text and context, and between the source text and the target text (Montalt, 2003; GENTT, 2005).

The aim of this study is to go a step further in this line of thinking and explore the relation between genre and translation competence, on the one hand, and the communicative and textual sub-competence, on the other (Kelly, 2005). Indeed, the value of the concept of text genre in the acquisition of translation competence has already been addressed in previous works (Montalt, 2003; Montalt, Ezpeleta and García de Toro, 2005; Ezpeleta, 2005; or García Izquierdo, 2005a). Now, as we have said above, translation competence is a multifaceted concept that is made up of a number of sub-competencies and we believe it is possible to define in greater detail exactly which particular translation sub-competencies could be acquired by using text genre as a teaching aid. More specifically, the main hypothesis we will attempt to illustrate here is that this concept would be especially useful for acquiring what is known as *communicative and textual subcompetence*.

The acquisition of translation competence is a gradual process that is strongly influenced by the degree of complexity of the texts/genres the translator is working with. The greater the complexity of the text is, the higher the level of competence required of the translator will be. This explains why the relation between text genres and the communicative and textual sub-competence is also affected by the level of complexity and/or specialisation of the texts that the translator has to deal with. Thus, following on with the line taken by the Gentt research team (www.gentt.uji.es), we will be focusing on the analysis of some genres from specialised fields (mainly medical/health care and technical genres) in an attempt to show that the relation between text genre and communicative and textual sub-competence, among others, can be very fruitful.

Keywords

Translation competence; Communicative and textual sub-competence; Specialised translation; Text genre; Electronic corpora.

0. Introduction

The latest tendencies in Translation Studies highlight the need to diversify the way translation is analysed by considering not only the variables that are traditionally addressed by the theoretical models (i.e. meaning, equivalence, skopos, and so forth), but also the multifaceted concepts that can help us to understand the mechanisms at play in the production of human and social interaction, of which translation is an example. One of these concepts, which is proving to be a valuable aid in the analysis, teaching and practice of translation, is the concept of *text genre*.

Hence, in this work our aim is to emphasise the usefulness of this concept and to take thinking on the matter a step further. Our intention is therefore to explore the relation between text genre and what is known as *translation competence* (TC).

More specifically, we will attempt to propose a pedagogical framework for developing *translation competence* based on the concept of text genre, with special attention paid to translation of areas of specialisation. By so doing we hope to show how some of the sub-competencies into which translation competence can be broken down – particularly the one Kelly (2005) calls the *communicative and textual sub-competence* – can be acquired in an effective way by implementing this concept.

Our initial hypothesis is that, in these areas of specialisation, texts usually have a very standardised format. Furthermore, from the socio-communicative point of view, they are always texts that satisfy very specific communicative needs and purposes which are to a large extent set by convention. This means that genre (as a category that combines the formal, socio-communicative and cognitive aspects of communication) can be very useful and a promising candidate for use as a way to acquire competence.

1. Translation competence

Translation competence is a complex concept that has been addressed by a number of researchers in the field of Translation Studies. Yet, as stated by Ezpeleta (2005: 136):

Reflection on the matter is a relatively recent development and results from empirical studies are still scarce. Some authors talk of *translation abilities or skills* (Lowe, 1987; Pym, 1992; Hatim and Mason, 1997) while others refer to *translation performance* (Wilss, 1989). The term *competence* – *translational competence* – was first used by Toury (1980, 1995), because of its similarity to Chomsky's (1965) famous distinction between linguistic competence and performance, to explore certain aspects of translation practice. Nord (1991) employs *transfer competence* and Chesterman (1997) called it *translational competence*.

Generally speaking, translation competence is defined following the pedagogical model of competence (the abilities, skills and attitudes needed to carry out an activity successfully) and it therefore affects different aspects of the translator's training (and work). This is the view taken by authors such as Kiraly (1995: 108), for whom certain aspects, like the need to possess specialised as well as cultural knowledge, are shared with other professions (see also Pym, 1992). There are, however, aspects that *are* restricted to the realm of translation and which constitute the cornerstone of the definition of the concept of *translation competence*. As we shall now go on to see, here we are referring to specific know-how.

Neubert (2000: 3-18) claims that the practice of translation and, hence, teaching translation require a single competence that is made up of or could be considered to integrate a set of competencies that include, for instance, competence in both the source and the target languages. According to this author, to be able to answer the question as to what translation competence consists of, first, it is necessary to take into account a series of contextual factors underlying the knowledge and skills required of translators, namely: the *complexity*, the *heterogeneity*, and the *approximate* nature of the expert knowledge possessed by translators, since it is impossible for them to cover the whole range of aspects or fields within the areas in which they work. What actually happens is that they acquire the capacity to get an idea of the subject matter and facilitate understanding between experts belonging to different cultures and in different languages. As a result of the approximate nature of their knowledge, translation competence is always in a *non-finite* state of acquisition that requires translators to continually introduce new knowledge and, hence, to possess the capacity to be *creative*¹. In order to attain the desired results translators also have to be aware of the *situationality* of translation and to be capable of adapting themselves to both recurring and novel situations, as well as being capable of dealing with the changing situations arising from the very *historicity* of their work.

These seven factors are closely intertwined and linked to each other, and they are present in all the processes involved in translation. They can be reformulated as parameters that each translator will develop to varying degrees depending on their own competencies and requirements. The five parameters

¹ This is what Neubert himself (1997: 17-21) called *derived or guided creativity*, as it has its root in a stimulus that arises from the source text and has to adapt itself to the context of the target text where the conditions of the type of discourse may be different. It is therefore the translator's job to establish new relations between content and form or between signified and signifier.

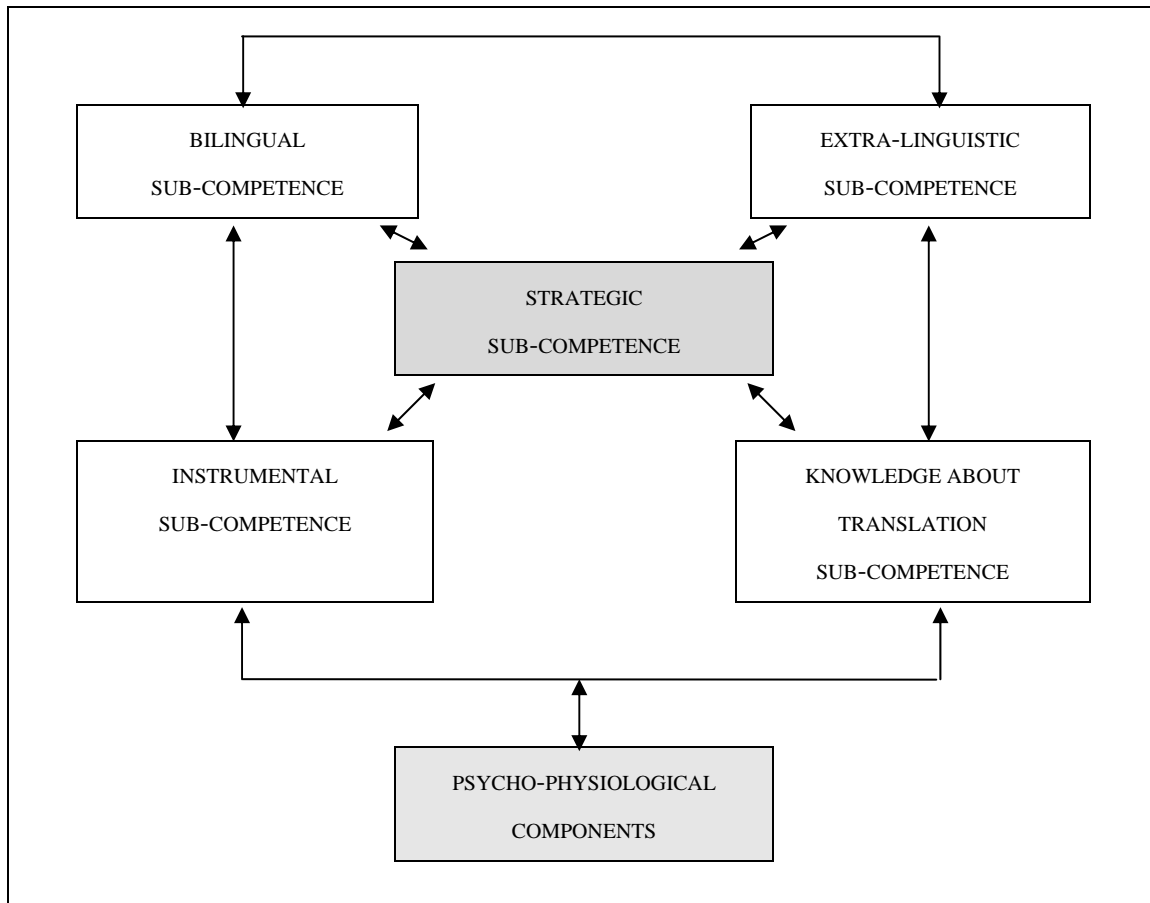
that make up translation competence are: (1) *language competence*; (2) *textual competence*; (3) *subject competence*; (4) *cultural competence*; and (5) *transfer competence*. The interaction among these five competencies is precisely what distinguishes translation from other areas of communication.

In Spain, the work that has most clearly focused on defining this concept is that carried out by the PACTE group (1998, 2000, 2003, 2005). This team conducts empirical-experimental research with the aim of eventually being able to define the concept of translation competence and the process of acquiring it in written translation. More specifically, they propose a model of translation competence that they consider to be the underlying system of knowledge that is required to be able to translate (2000: 100; 2001: 39; 2003: 126) and which has, they claim (2005: 610), four distinguishing features:

- (1) it is expert knowledge and is not possessed by all bilinguals; (2) it is basically procedural (and not declarative) knowledge; (3) it is made up of various interrelated sub-competencies; (4) the strategic component is very important, as it is in all procedural knowledge.

In fact, the *Translation Competence Model* proposed by this research team (2003) is made up of 5 sub-competencies and psycho-physiological components (2005: 610-611) that overlap each other as they operate.

FIGURE 1. PACTE Translation Competence Model (2003)



The *bilingual sub-competence* consists of the underlying systems of knowledge and skills that are needed for linguistic communication to take place in two languages. It is made up of comprehension and production competencies, and includes the following knowledge and skills: grammatical competence; textual competence (which consists in being proficient in combining linguistic forms to produce a written or oral text in different genres or text types); illocutionary competence (related to the functions of language); and sociolinguistic competence (concerned with appropriate production and comprehension in

a range of sociolinguistic contexts that depend on factors such as the status of the participants, the purpose of the interaction, the norms or conventions at play in the interaction, and so forth).

The *extra-linguistic sub-competence* is made up of encyclopaedic, thematic and bicultural knowledge.

The *translation knowledge sub-competence* is knowledge of the principles guiding translation, such as processes, methods, procedures, and so forth.

The *instrumental sub-competence* comprises the knowledge required to work as a professional translator, such as the use of sources of documentation and information technologies applied to translation.

The *strategic sub-competence* integrates all the others and is the most important, since it allows problems to be solved and ensures the efficiency of the process. It consists in the capacity to follow the transfer process from the source text to the production of the final target text, according to the purpose of the translation and the characteristics of the target audience (Hurtado, 2001: 395-397; PACTE, 2005: 611).

Kelly (2002, 2005) reviewed the different definitions of translation competence that have been put forward to date (2002: 10 et seq.) and then proposed her own definition, which is specifically focused on syllabus design and teaching (which makes it especially interesting within the context of this study). In her opinion:

Translation competence is the macrocompetence that comprises the different capacities, skills, knowledge and even attitudes that professional translators possess and which are involved in translation as an expert activity. It can be broken down into the following sub-competencies, which are all necessary for the success of the macrocompetence (2002: 14-15).

She then cites 7 sub-competencies: communicative and textual, cultural, thematic, professional instrumental, psycho-physiological, interpersonal and strategic, which are intimately related to each other and which, when developed in a particular way, allow translation competence to be acquired.

We are especially interested in the first of these competencies, that is to say, the *communicative and textual sub-competence*. Kelly (2002: 17) claims that this sub-competence includes the capacity: to understand and analyse a range of different types of (both oral and written) texts from different fields produced in languages A, B and, later, C; to develop the capacity to produce different types of texts from different fields in languages A and B; and to ensure that the characteristics and conventions of the major text genres and sub-genres used in professional translation and interpretation are made known in the distinct cultures in which languages A, B and C are spoken.

In general terms, these studies (PACTE, 2003, 2005; Kelly, 2005) highlight the importance of *translation competence* as the goal that we pursue in the teaching-learning process.

Furthermore and as we will attempt to show below, in our opinion it is possible to define the translation sub-competencies that could be specifically acquired using text genres as a teaching aid. More specifically, the main hypothesis we will attempt to establish in this work is that this concept would be especially significant in the acquisition of what Kelly (2005) called the *communicative and textual competence*, which is in turn related to the *bilingual and extra-linguistic sub-competencies* proposed by PACTE.

2. The concept of *text genre* in the research conducted by GENTT

The GENTT² research team (Text Genres for Translation, www.gentt.uji.es) is working to define and systematise text genres within areas of specialisation by creating a comparable multilingual corpus (Spanish, Catalan, English, German and French). The value of the concept of text genre both in teaching and in research has already been addressed in previous works (Montalt, 2003; Montalt, Ezpeleta and García de Toro, 2005; Ezpeleta, 2005; or García Izquierdo, 2005a).

As more and more research has been conducted, a definition of the concept of *text genre* has gradually been shaped, albeit in an eclectic way, mainly by taking propositions from systemic functional

² GENTT is a research group that has been working in the Translation Department at the Universitat Jaume I since 2000. Led by Prof. García Izquierdo, it has received public funding from a number of sources. At the present time (2006-2009), the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science and *Fondos Feder* are funding a project being carried out by the team (HUM2006-05581/FILO).

linguistics, genre theory applied to translation and sociology as its starting point. The research carried out by the GENTT team focuses on the communicative and formal aspects of the definition of genre, without taking cognitive considerations into account for the time being. Thus, the research concentrates, on the one hand, on analysing the formal aspects of genre, on systematising and analysing it as a linguistic transaction and, on the other hand, on a more sociological or socio-professional analysis that attempts to develop the communicative aspect of the concept and to incorporate the vision of professionals who work with the genres under study³.

The concept of genre began to gain strength within the field of Translation Studies as a semiotic notion related to the intercultural nature of translation in the 70s and 80s (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990). Although this idea was introduced by the German Functionalist School (Reiss and Vermeer), based on the concept used in applied linguistics, it has been addressed by a number of studies since then. Nevertheless, the only Translation Studies approach that focuses on the text as the material that the translator works with is the one proposed by exponents of the *Textual Approach* (Hatim and Mason, Baker, Neubert, etc.). Translation is thus seen as a textual operation and the importance of linguistic and extra-linguistic elements is highlighted, which means that emphasis is also being placed on elements that are used by other approaches (for example, the sociocultural environment). In this case, however, it is the process of understanding the raw material used in translation, that is to say the text itself, that is being emphasised. In this context, genre is considered to be a semiotic category that is relevant for the comprehension/production of texts. We must also add the studies on genre conducted by Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) within the field of Foreign Language Teaching (FLT), the conclusions to which have also played an important role in furthering research in translation.

The work by Hatim and Mason (1990) has been one of the most influential in Spain (although authors like Schäffner and Adab (2002) or A. Hurtado (2001) have also helped to further our understanding of the subject).

Closely in line with the proposal put forward by Hatim and Mason, in García Izquierdo (2000a) genre is defined as:

a conventionalised text form that has a specific function in the culture that it belongs to and which reflects a purpose that is intended by the sender and can be foreseen by the receiver.

Genre therefore becomes a culturally specific category which allows us to observe the different ways languages conceptualise reality (García Izquierdo, 1999). Going further into this approach, Monzó (2001: 82 et seq.) claims that the fact we have to observe genre from a cultural perspective makes it clear that it is, in its own right, a means of *socialisation* (i.e. the translator's *raison d'être* as a social figure is to produce a discursive text from another discursive text).

In short, as members of a cultural community, we are capable of recognising that a given text belongs to a genre (from a particular socio-professional domain) on the basis of the features of prototypicality and recurrence, which are made apparent in different micro and macrostructural categories. Although many propositions have been put forward to characterise each genre, such as Göpferich (1995), Trosborg (1997, 2000), Gamero (2001), Borja (2000), García Izquierdo (2000a), etc., and many have claimed that the key lies in the form, in the communicative situation or in the communicative purpose, Trosborg (2002: 15) states that it is difficult to determine the purposes of a genre and that the analysis must be capable of capturing its multiple purposes, including both those that are to be expected and also the less widely acknowledged. We can state that, generally speaking, all research conducted in this direction insists on the need for a multidimensional characterisation. And that is how we approach the analysis from our perspective (see Montalt and García Izquierdo, 2002; García Izquierdo (ed.) (2005)).

However, as has been shown in previous studies (García Izquierdo, 2002), establishing the limits of the different genres is a very difficult task and even more so when dealing with areas of specialisation, which are themselves far more difficult to characterise. There is also the added difficulty of whether or not to take into account the existence of transcultural genres (that is to say, genres that fully coincide with each other in different cultures). As Fowler said (1986: 41):

A solution may lie in Wittgenstein's (1953) notion of 'family resemblances', arguing that genres may be regarded as "making up a family whose steps and individual members are related in

³ Although to date the team has not begun to explore cognitive considerations, in this paper we do touch on these issues by addressing the relation between text genre and translation competence.

various ways, without necessarily having any single feature shared in common by all” (Cited by B. Paltridge, 1997: 33)

In our opinion, the solution proposed by Fowler ties in with the concepts of *transgenre* (Monzó, 2001), which is understood to be:

a genre that is exclusive to translation and includes the three cultural, cognitive and discursive aspects of genre; it shares characteristics that are homogeneous among texts belonging to the same genre and displays differences with respect to the original texts in the source and target cultures which it could be considered as being analogous to (Monzó, 2001: 251)

and Bazerman’s concept of *Systems of genre* (1994: 95):

[Systems of genre] are interrelated genres that interact with each other in specific settings. Only a limited range of genres may appropriately follow upon another in particular settings, because the success conditions of the actions of each require various states of affairs to exist.

The translator, as an expert writer, will have to be thoroughly familiar with these restraints.

The approach proposed by GENTT therefore constitutes a change of perspective: the main focus is shifted away from language and culture as abstract entities and is placed on actual communication in professional fields, that is to say, the genre, where language and culture play a supporting role in allowing communicative aims to be accomplished. Thus, one of the main ideas underlying the research is that translators are actively involved in genres.

In this same line, in García Izquierdo (2005b) a new model of text analysis is suggested (which draws on previously proposed categories, although with a different focus) that highlights the central role of genres as the start and finish point of analysis.

Hence, basing ourselves on this definition of genre, in the following paragraphs we will attempt to demonstrate its value as a teaching aid and establish the connections that exist between genre and translation competence.

3. Relation between the text genre and the different sub-competencies of TC

We have just observed that genre can be defined as a multifaceted concept that is made up of three complementary perspectives: *a*) the socio-communicative perspective, which considers the space around the participants, the relationships that are established between them and the actions they carry out; *b*) the formal perspective, that is to say, the conventional elements that correspond to the readers’ expectations generated by the socio-communicative context guiding the processes of creating and understanding the text; and *c*) the cognitive perspective, or the ways each community understands, organises and transforms the reality that surrounds them. As a result, it can be considered to be a category that plays a vital role when it comes to planning the teaching of translation and acquiring translation competence, which is the ultimate aim of education in this field.

We will therefore attempt to determine the relationship that exists between the characterisation of the category *text genre* in each of these perspectives and the definitions that have been put forward for each of the sub-competencies that make up translation competence. By so doing our intention is to search for the existence of links (especially those referring to textual and communicative issues) that can help us to confirm our initial hypothesis.

In the previous section we stated that, for a genre to be considered as such, it must be a communicative phenomenon that is recognised and shared by the members of the professional or academic community in which it occurs. Furthermore, whether they belong to a socio-professional community or not is determined not only by having common objectives and knowledge within their areas of knowledge, but also, and necessarily, by the fact that they are familiar with the genres they commonly use to interact with each other and to do their work (Orlinowski and Yates, 1998; Ezpeleta, 2007). Working on text genres, therefore, makes it possible to identify a series of elements, such as the agents playing the roles of sender and receiver, the relationship that is established between them in terms of power or authority, the degree of specialisation they offer and the situational context in which the genre in

question occurs. So, in its communicative dimension, genre identifies the situation and the context of the communication situation; it also designates the participants, the relationship that arises between them and the purpose of the action. Likewise, it enables the socio-professional community to which the genre belongs to acquire knowledge, that is to say, knowledge about the possible norms or laws that govern them (European standards, Vancouver guidelines – in the case of genres used in biomedical research journals – and so forth) and also about relevant social and cultural aspects.

As far as the practice of translation is concerned, genre competence can help to:

- Establish the status of the participants and the degree of authority they each have.
- Infer and create the purpose of the interaction.
- Recognise and establish the situationality of the source and target texts.
- Infer and create the intentionality of the source text.
- Have a thorough understanding of the sociolinguistic context.
- Acquire bicultural knowledge.
- Acquire thematic knowledge.

It thus plays a part in improving or consolidating abilities and skills that are related to the *bilingual and extra-linguistic sub-competencies* put forward by PACTE (2003, 2005). These sub-competencies have to do with appropriate comprehension and production in diverse sociolinguistic contexts, which depend on factors such as the participants' status, the purpose of the interaction, the norms or conventions governing the interaction, and so forth. Genre competence may also help to:

- increase awareness of textuality and discourse; this makes it possible to infer and create acceptability, which refers to the attitude of the receivers, who must perceive the text as being relevant and as being important to them because it enables them to cooperate with the person they are speaking to in the construction of a discursive goal.
- recognise cultural and intercultural values, perceptions, behaviours, etc. and thus further the processes of comprehending and reformulating the communicative conventions that are typical of certain cultures or social groups.

It can facilitate improvement or consolidation of abilities and skills related to the *communicative and textual and cultural and intercultural sub-competencies* proposed by Kelly (2005) because it promotes the development of the capacity to understand, analyse and produce texts that are compatible with the genres and subgenres present both in the source culture and in the culture where the target language is used.

FIGURE 2

COMMUNICATIVE ASPECT OF GENRE	TRANSLATION COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants • Purposes • Communicative situation • Context of the communicative situation • Knowledge of the socio-professional community that the genre belongs to • Laws or norms that govern the genre (Vancouver, European standards, etc.) • Relevant general cultural and social aspects 	<p>BILINGUAL & EXTRA-LINGUISTIC SUB-COMPETENCIES (PACTE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of the participants • Purpose of the interaction • A thorough understanding of the sociolinguistic context • Bicultural knowledge • (Thematic knowledge) <p>COMMUNICATIVE & TEXTUAL, CULTURAL & INTERCULTURAL SUB-COMPETENCIES (KELLY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of textuality and discourse • Cultural and intercultural values, perceptions, behaviour, etc.

From the formal perspective we see genres as being structured, conventionalised phenomena, and if we understand convention to be:

a device, principle, procedure or form which is generally accepted and through which there is an agreement between the writer and his readers which allows him various freedoms and restrictions (Cuddon 1992: 192)

then it can be concluded that there must be a group that recognises the mechanism and the existence of an agreement among members of that group to ensure that their behaviour always follows the same pattern. At the same time, although variations can be introduced into this pattern and there are areas that allow a certain amount of leeway, it also complies with a series of restraints or stable areas, which are what allow participants to recognise the communicative intention and, hence, the genre.

The conventions that characterise genres are the formal traits that have been sanctioned by the community that uses them, rather than others that would be linguistically acceptable but do not fit the previously agreed patterns. These include the directly observable elements of the communicative event, such as its macrostructural characteristics, for example, the structure, the sections, the moves, and also the intratextual or microstructural aspects it offers (including the degree of formality of the discourse used and the way the reader is addressed, the modality, the connectors, the lexical items that are employed, the degree of terminological density, the phraseology, the utilisation of non-verbal graphic elements, and so forth).

Depending on the nature of each genre, some parameters will be more important than others. For example, in the case of the genre *certificate of quality* aspects concerning the thematic progression and cohesion or the tenor are reduced to the minimum expression while the macrostructure is an extremely valuable feature. In genres such as the *patent* or the *patient information leaflet* the intratextual elements are highly conventionalised, while in others, like the *instruction manual*, the tenor plays a prominent role. When it comes to translation not all the parameters are equally important either; the focus tends towards the macrostructural and intratextual areas, where there are differences in the way conventions are used in the source culture and the target culture.

In teaching translation, genre competence, in its formal dimension, can help to enhance the following skills and abilities in the translator:

- Recognising and establishing the structure of the source and target texts;
- Recognising the texture of the source text and organising that of the target text (selection of lexical items, syntactic organisation, cohesion);
- A thorough understanding of the text forms of particular genres;
- Developing reformulation strategies such as: paraphrasing, summarising, avoiding calques, and so forth;
- Producing appropriate texts in the target language.

It therefore helps to improve or consolidate abilities and skills related to the bilingual sub-competence proposed by PACTE (2003, 2005), as well as allowing translators to:

- Become aware of the textual and discursive conventions in the cultures involved.

Hence, it facilitates the improvement or consolidation of abilities and skills related to the *communicative and textual sub-competence* proposed by Kelly (2005) because it helps in the development of the capacity to understand, analyse and produce texts that are compatible with the characteristics and conventions of the genres and subgenres present in the cultures involved.

FIGURE 3

FORMAL ASPECT OF GENRE	TRANSLATION COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macrostructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sections 	<p>BILINGUAL SUB-COMPETENCE (PACTE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of texts in the target language

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moves, etc. • Microstructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How the reader is addressed - Modality - Connectors - How terminology is dealt with - Phraseology, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of coherence and cohesion • Thorough understanding of the text forms in particular genres • Identification of the illocutionary force <p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNICATIVE & TEXTUAL SUB-COMPETENCE (KELLY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the textual and discursive conventions in the cultures involved
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Lastly, and although to date it has not been part of the research conducted by the GENTT team, we can also compare the relations between genre and translation competence from the cognitive perspective. From this perspective, genre competence may allow the comprehension of texts to become a routine and/or automated process, depending on the genre they belong to. It may also act as a conceptual template in that it allows logical relationships to be established between information and its internalisation.

Thus, genre, in its cognitive dimension, can help to enhance the following skills and abilities in the translator:

- Identifying the type of information depending on the section or subsection in which it appears;
- Understanding the implicit information of the genre in question, depending on the type of reader;
- Understanding the degree to which information is made explicit according to the reader's needs;
- Automating the process of understanding the key concepts that are routinely repeated in the genre;
- Grasping genre as a conceptual, argumentative pattern (or template) that only really makes sense when viewed as a whole;
- Distinguishing between the main and secondary ideas;
- Establishing conceptual relations;
- Evaluating the nature of the information given in the source text and balancing it with that in the target text;
- Identifying the illocutionary force of the source text and transferring it to the target text;
- Developing the cognitive faculties of memory and attention.

It can therefore help to enhance or consolidate abilities and skills related to the bilingual and extra-linguistic sub-competencies, as well as the psycho-physiological components proposed by PACTE (2003, 2005). It also allows translators to:

- Understand different types of texts from different fields and subject areas;
- Acquire a basic knowledge of the disciplines that the genres belong to;
- Automate translation tasks.

It thus helps to enhance or consolidate abilities and skills related to the *communicative and textual, thematic* and *psycho-physiological sub-competencies* proposed by Kelly (2005).

FIGURE 4

COGNITIVE ASPECT OF GENRE	TRANSLATION COMPETENCE
<p style="text-align: center;">Make the understanding of texts a routine-automatic process depending on the genre they belong to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Genre as a conceptual template (logical relation between information and internalisation)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BILINGUAL, EXTRA-LINGUISTIC & PSYCHO-PHYSIOLOGICAL SUB-COMPETENCIES (PACTE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension in the source language • Thematic knowledge • Cognitive faculties of memory and attention <p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNICATIVE & TEXTUAL, THEMATIC & PSYCHO-PHYSIOLOGICAL SUB-COMPETENCIES (KELLY)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension of different types of texts from different fields • Basic knowledge of the disciplines • Automation of translation tasks
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5. Teaching proposal

The worksheet below is presented as an example of the possible ways everything we have outlined above could be applied to teaching. For this example we have taken the case of the patient information leaflet. This genre from the field of medical text translation is a very routine case that is characterised by the fact that it varies very little from one culture to another. The column on the left shows the areas that can be taken into consideration in the analysis for the translation of source texts. The right-hand column shows a list of issues that genre competence can help the budding translator to resolve and which are directly related to the acquisition of translation competence.

FIGURE 5. WORKSHEET. PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

<i>SOURCE: Analysis</i>	<i>TARGET: Analysis-Production-Analysis</i>
Socio-communicative perspective	
Writer Reader Communicative purpose Genre system and information flow Legal and regulatory framework Sociocultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any differences as regards the writer, the reader and the communicative purpose? • Will the target text fit into the same genre system? • Does the genre system in Spanish (laboratory documentation, summary of the characteristics of the product, specifications sheet for the physician, press note, advertising, etc.) work in the same way as in English? • What standards govern the writing and publication of patient information leaflets in Spanish? Are they the same for the source text? • Are patient information leaflets originally written in Spanish generally more, less or equally helpful in comparison to those written in English?
Formal perspective	
Macrostructure (types of information in the sections and their internal structure) Microstructure Styles used for the headings Terminology (different denominations for drugs, anatomical structures, diseases, etc.) Phraseology Modality (degrees of <i>obligatoriness</i> ,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the macrostructure of the target text coincide with that of the source text? • Is the style used in the headings the same in the two languages? • What denomination is used for the drugs in the source text and which should be used in the target text? • To what extent is the phraseology fixed in

certainty, etc.) How the reader is addressed Degree of syntactic complexity etc.	the genre in the two texts? • Is the degree of <i>obligatoriness</i> and certainty stressed to the same extent in the target text as in the source text? • Does or should the target text address the reader with the same degree of proximity or distance as the source text? • Are the sentences (or should the sentences be) as simple or complex as those in the source text?
Cognitive perspective	
Intelligibility Relevance (mnemonic and emphatic elements) Inference Ambiguity Prior knowledge about the topic Expectations	• Is the source text easy to understand? • Is the target text as easy to understand? • Is the information it contains relevant to the patient and in the right order? • What elements have to be inferred in order to understand the text properly? • Are there any ambiguous elements that need clarifying? • How much prior knowledge is the reader of the patient information leaflet assumed to have? • What information do readers expect to find when they read it?

5. Conclusion

Finally, we can conclude by stating that there does seem to be a certain amount of convergence between the proposed definitions of translation competence and the theory of text genres.

In this regard, we suggest that text genre can be a very useful educational aid when it comes to planning and carrying out the teaching of specialised translation; this is particularly true in the case of developing communicative and textual competence, but, as we have seen, can be extended to other translation competencies.

Lastly, in our opinion and as we have pointed out earlier, the proposal we have outlined in this paper can be useful not only for developing *translation competence* but also in the development of other skills used by a translator or linguistic mediator in his or her professional practice (writing, correcting, proofreading, etc.) which involve any of the abilities and knowledge proposed in the definition of the concepts that have been considered here.

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