

Corpus Linguistics as a Tool for Translation Studies Analysis: A Bilingual Parallel Corpus of Students' Translations

Authors : Juan-Pedro Rica-Peromingo

Abstract : Nowadays, corpus linguistics has become a key research methodology for Translation Studies, which broadens the scope of cross-linguistic studies. In the case of the study presented here, the approach used focuses on learners with little or no experience to study, at an early stage, general mistakes and errors, the correct or incorrect use of translation strategies, and to improve the translational competence of the students. Led by Sylviane Granger and Marie-Aude Lefer of the Centre for English Corpus Linguistics of the University of Louvain, the MUST corpus (Multilingual Student Translation Corpus) is an international project which brings together partners from Europe and worldwide universities and connects Learner Corpus Research (LCR) and Translation Studies (TS). It aims to build a corpus of translations carried out by students including both direct (L2 > L1) and indirect (L1 > L2) translations, from a great variety of text types, genres, and registers in a wide variety of languages: audiovisual translations (including dubbing, subtitling for hearing population and for deaf population), scientific, humanistic, literary, economic and legal translation texts. This paper focuses on the work carried out by the Spanish team from the Complutense University (UCMA), which is part of the MUST project, and it describes the specific features of the corpus built by its members. All the texts used by UCMA are either direct or indirect translations between English and Spanish. Students' profiles comprise translation trainees, foreign language students with a major in English, engineers studying EFL and MA students, all of them with different English levels (from B1 to C1); for some of the students, this would be their first experience with translation. The MUST corpus is searchable via Hypal4MUST, a web-based interface developed by Adam Obrusnik from Masaryk University (Czech Republic), which includes a translation-oriented annotation system (TAS). A distinctive feature of the interface is that it allows source texts and target texts to be aligned, so we can be able to observe and compare in detail both language structures and study translation strategies used by students. The initial data obtained point out the kind of difficulties encountered by the students and reveal the most frequent strategies implemented by the learners according to their level of English, their translation experience and the text genres. We have also found common errors in the graduate and postgraduate university students' translations: transfer errors, lexical errors, grammatical errors, text-specific translation errors, and cultural-related errors have been identified. Analyzing all these parameters will provide more material to bring better solutions to improve the quality of teaching and the translations produced by the students.

Keywords : corpus studies, students' corpus, the MUST corpus, translation studies

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