Maria-Cristina Miuțescu, *A Diachronic Overview of the Competences Required in the Translation Industry. A Case Study of Today's Romanian Translation Market*, Editura Universității de Vest din Timișoara, 2024, 296 p.

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It has become axiomatic that, in the context of globalization and the dynamization of socio-cultural, economic, and political relations between nations speaking different languages, translation is essential to facilitate communication. Its vital role means that the professionalization of translators, by equipping them with specific skills, has in turn become a major concern, especially in educational institutions that train translators through dedicated programs.

In Romania, university programs with this objective are relatively new compared to those of traditional translation schools, which have been recognized at the European level for decades. For a long time, translation skills were only briefly and limitedly addressed (with a particular emphasis on linguistic transfer skills) in philology programs. Only in the last 20 years or so have university programs—at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels—explicitly dedicated to training professional translators emerged and gained momentum. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that these programs have not yet reached their full potential, although visible and solid progress has been made.

Miuțescu's book focuses on the acquisition of translation skills in university education by grounding her analysis on a master's program aimed at this objective—the Theory and Practice of Translation program at the West University of Timișoara. The analysis thus has the characteristics of a case study, conducted on several interconnected levels: the content of the study program, the actors in the teaching process—teachers and students —and the employers of graduates on the labour market in Timișoara.

The book is structurally and conceptually coherent, consisting of seven chapters, preceded by a brief introduction and followed by conclusions, a list of bibliographic resources consulted, and six appendices containing the pilot and edited versions of the three questionnaires (for teachers, students, and employers) on the basis of which the data interpreted by the researcher were obtained.

After brief remarks in the "Introduction" regarding the general context of the analysis, the thematic structure of the book, and its potential implications at the curricular level, in Chapter II, "Contextualization of the study"*,* the author identifies the niche in which her study fits, clearly stating the hypotheses that constitute the starting point of her analytical approach and the questions that guide the research (three main questions to which supporting inquiries are subsumed). She also provides terminological clarifications regarding concepts such as *translation competence, translation sub-competence, translation skills and abilities, translator education,* etc., specifying how she sees the connection between them. I appreciate the concern for this kind of clarification, which is often neglected and can potentially cause inconsistency and confusion for the readers.

The author carefully contextualises her study, providing an overview of the

theoretical framework on which it is based. On the one hand, in Chapter III – "Translation competence (TC): early approaches and diachronic highlights", she highlights key moments and aspects in the evolution of translation from Antiquity to the present day, in various geographical areas and in the development of Translation Studies as a methodologically consolidated academic discipline, with clear research directions and tools.

On the other hand, Chapter IV – "Translation competence models (TCMs): diachronic depiction of macro- and micro-level constituents" reviews models of translation competence between 1970 and 2010, highlighting their essential elements. I note here the author's concern to focus the discussion on models proposed not only by individual scholars, but also at the institutional level, for example, by bodies such as the Directorate General for Translation of the European Commission in the form of the European Master's in Translation Competence Framework or by the Petra-E association, which has put forward a multi-level competence framework for literary translators. The author makes an important personal contribution to the general discourse on translation skills by designing and explaining a model that, from her perspective, aligns with the requirements of the translation job market. It is based on three essential competences: textual, transfer (presupposing bilingualism, biculturalism, and the ability to use digital tools), and evaluative, and on two types of skills (pre- and post-editing), with the translator's engagement in the translation process being influenced by factors such as adaptability, interpersonal relationships, the ability to organize work in terms of time management, etc. Although perfectible, this model demonstrates the author's profound understanding of the literature related to translation competences and her clear perspective on how she is undertaking her topic.

Chapter V, "The acquisition of translation competence (ATC) and industry-driven impact on professional training", offers a thorough and insightful examination of the relationship between competence acquisition and the demands of the translation industry, underlining the strong reciprocal influence between curricula and professional practice. It effectively traces the development of translator training, showing how Translation Studies emerged as an independent discipline and progressively incorporated complex sub-competences—linguistic, textual, cultural, and transfer-related—later enriched with soft skills and digital competences such as CAT tools, in response to market needs.

One of the chapter's strengths is its clear explanation of the conceptual shift from objective-based learning, which focuses on knowledge accumulation, to competence-based training, emphasizing integrative and contextualized performance. The discussion of influential frameworks, particularly those proposed by Amparo Hurtado Albir and adopted in EU reference models (e.g., EMT, Petra-E), is valuable. It classifies competences into methodological, extralinguistic, instrumental, and problem-solving categories, complemented by transversal skills such as digital literacy and entrepreneurship. By presenting this wide array of competences, the author convincingly underscores the translator's multidimensional and evolving profile.

Another strong contribution of the chapter is its overview of Romanian postgraduate programs, which not only provides a localized perspective but also situates these within broader European trends towards practice-based training. The analysis highlights how curricula integrate theoretical grounding, discourse analysis, and technological proficiency in ways that align closely with industry expectations. Equally noteworthy is the discussion of the EU translation industry's expansion, specialization, and adoption of quality standards, which is presented as a key driver for curricular innovation and

adaptation.

Finally, the chapter excels in linking theory with methodology, showing how translation competence models guide curricular design and research. By emphasizing ATC as a dynamic, spiral process that evolves from novice to expert knowledge, the argument convincingly calls for systematic curricular adaptation to market-driven realities.

Chapter VI, "Data mining: micro- and macro-level aspects concerning the questionnaire design and the SWOT analysis", marks the applied turn of the study, bridging the theoretical foundations of translation competence (laid in the previous chapters) with the empirical case study. Its focus lies on the design, implementation, and analysis of the questionnaires, alongside the application of comparative and SWOT methodologies.

The chapter opens by contextualizing the case study, situating it in Timisoara (Romania), and defining the three key participant groups: graduates of the *Theory and Practice of Translation* M.A., employers in the Romanian translation industry, and academic staff teaching in the programme. By involving these three categories of actors, the researcher attempts to offer a comprehensive view of translation competence acquisition from both academic and professional standpoints and actually manages to do so in the findings sections that follow. While modest in scale, the study prioritizes direct feedback from participants rather than observation-based methods, thus underscoring the importance of first-hand perspectives.

A detailed examination follows of the two sets of questionnaires (the pilot and the edited versions), which targeted the same groups of respondents at different times. The author carefully explains each step of her research design, emphasizing the transition from the pilot questionnaires to the refined ones, thereby demonstrating transparency in the evolution of these research instruments. The questionnaires were structured around macro- and micro-level aspects of translation competence acquisition, including participant profiles, recruitment expectations, job descriptions, curricular assessment, sub-competence development, and feedback on programme strengths and weaknesses. Key adjustments in the second round of questionnaire application included refining question wording, adding open-ended items for qualitative insights, and providing contextual clarifications (e.g., curriculum board membership).

The analytical methods used are then introduced: comparative interpretation, applied both within the same group (on the two occasions when the pilot and, respectively, the edited questionnaires were applied) and across groups, to highlight convergences and discrepancies in perceptions of translation competence, professional demands, and curricular adequacy; SWOT analysis, employed in the concluding stages, to synthesize strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the academic-professional interface. This latter method identified shared ground between responses and offered a concise framework for curricular evaluation.

Finally, the chapter emphasizes adherence to research ethics. As evidence of the author's ethical awareness, confidentiality and anonymity were strictly preserved (no personal details were requested, participants were informed of data use and storage, and responses were treated collectively). This ensured compliance with academic integrity and ethical standards over the two-year collaboration with the respondents.

"Interpretation of findings: TC-derived congruity and dissimilarity between the academic and professional environments", as discussed in chapter VII of the book, form the

practical core of the study. Here, the findings from the applied questionnaires are interpreted against the theoretical background outlined in the earlier chapters. It offers a rich comparative analysis of how translation competence is constituted, perceived, and required across both academic training and professional practice.

The comprehensive methodological approach in this chapter particularly captures one's interest. The author does not limit herself to statistical results but combines quantitative findings with qualitative reflections, drawing from open-ended feedback and trainer assessment. This triangulation not only enhances the validity of the interpretations but also allows for a nuanced picture of the state of translator training in Romania. Equally important is the way the chapter identifies areas of convergence—such as the strong emphasis placed by both academia and industry on linguistic, textual, and cultural sub-competences—while also exposing the discrepancies, particularly the insufficient development of technological and interpersonal skills.

In the last chapter of Miuțescu's book, "Summary and conclusions", the main final remarks are made in correlation with the research questions initially formulated. They read as follows: on the whole, the master's degree program in Translation Theory and Practice reflects the objectives formulated in European documents such as the Petra-E (2016) and EMT (2017) competence frameworks or the EN 15038 and ISO 17100 standards, and meets the requirements of the labor market, succeeding in training students in the skills necessary for them to be successful professionals (however, specific digital skills, remain, for the time being, insufficiently addressed). Those who wish to work in the translation industry are required not only to have skills strictly related to linguistic and cultural transfer but also to possess transdisciplinary skills such as time management, documentation, project management, and teamwork, which are also developed by the program in question.

Maria-Cristina Miuțescu's book represents a valuable contribution to the field of translation studies, combining meticulous theoretical synthesis with straightforward practical utility. It serves as a model for conducting a thorough assessment of the quality of university programs aimed at training professional translators. The careful adherence to each stage of the analysis, the well-justified choice of research methods and instruments, and their consistent alignment with the research hypotheses and objectives—all formulated precisely from the outset—demonstrate a rigorous scholarly approach. Furthermore, the clear and pertinent presentation of the research findings, the author's objective stance towards her own study, acknowledgment of its limitations, and identification of potential avenues for further research testify to both Miuțescu's dedication as a researcher and her evident abilities in analysis and synthesis. Skilfully written, her book is of unquestionable utility mainly in the translation education environment, but its impact extends into the translation market as well.