# Practising translation problem-solving to counteract domain loss and the erosion of specialized discourse in non-Anglophone cultures

Geneviève BORDET
Université Paris Diderot Laboratoire CLILLAC-ARP
gbordet@eila.univ-paris-diderot.fr

Due to the influence of the United States, English has long enjoyed a dominant position in the publishing world. This domination has impacted the dissemination of information in specialized fields internationally. English native writers can be claimed to enjoy a significant advantage insofar as they can more easily express their originality. Innovation tends to be formulated in one language only, thus precluding other cultures from developing their own conceptualization through specific lexico-semantic patterns. The risk is an impoverishment of creativity due to the domination of western world's epistemological patterns. Countering this risk involves finding ways to ensure that specialized languages, as the expression of different discourse communities, are kept alive. This paper advocates engaging in translating from academic writers' native language into English, and vice-versa. It is argued that a reflective practice of translation offers an effective means of identifying the various cultural voices in a field of research, using the translation process as a magnifying glass for the observation of cultural gaps within globalized fields of knowledge.

Reports of specialized translation master's students discussing their translation decisions are studied so as to identify examples of conflicting views of the world in emerging and controversial fields such as "shadow banking" or "celebrity marketing", in English and in French. The students' justification of their decisions is examined in order to determine how they combine contextual knowledge and corpus observation to assess cultural divides and offer solutions to transfer meaning. Special focus is set on the clues which help students establish the connection between lexico-semantic variations and conflicting epistemological patterns. The observation of this decision process should clarify the conditions under which a reflective practice of translation helps developing writers' awareness of domain loss. These findings result in recommendations for a didactic use of translation as part of becoming an effective academic writer.

## Bibliography

Baker, M. (1998). Réexplorer la langue de la traduction: une approche par corpus. *Meta: Journal des traducteursMeta:/Translators' Journal*, *43*(4), 480-485.

Bennett, K. (2013) English as a Lingua Franca in Academia, The Interpreter and Translator Trainer, 7:2, 169-193,

Bennett, K. (2007). "Galileo's Revenge: Ways of Construing Knowledge and Translation Strategies in the Era of Globalization". *Translation and Conflict*, Ed. M. Salaama-Carr. Special edition of *Social Semiotics.* 17/2:171-193

Ferguson, G. (2007). The global spread of English, scientific communication and ESP: questions of equity, access and domain loss. *Ibérica: Revista de la Asociación Europea de Lenguas para Fines Específicos (AELFE)*, (13), 7-38.

Laviosa, S., & Cleverton, V. (2006). Learning by translating: a contrastive methodology for ESP learning and translation. *Scripta Manent, Journal of the Slovene Association of LSP Teachers*, *2*(1), 3-12.

Laviosa, Sara (2011) Corpus linguistics and translation studies. In Perspectives on Corpus Linguistics Edited by Vander Viana, Sonia Zyngier and Geoff Barnbrook; Benjamin's Publishing.
Salager-Meyer, F. (2008). Scientific publishing in developing countries: Challenges for the future. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *7*(2), 121-132.

Swales, J. M. (1997). English as Tyrannosaurus rex. *World Englishes*, *16*(3), 373-382.

Tymoczko, M. (1998). Computerized corpora and the future of translation studies. *Meta: Journal des traducteursMeta:/Translators' Journal*, *43*(4), 652-660.

## Biodata

Genevieve Bordet is an associate professor in the Department of Applied Linguistics of the University Paris Diderot. She is join-head of a master's degree in specialized translation. Her research focuses on two issues. One addresses the rhetorical and lexicogrammatical devices used by native and non-native writers to build an "academic voice" in PhD abstracts. This includes studies of the cohesive role of referential chains based on the use of "this", collocational variations and "labeling nouns". A second research area centers on trainee translators' work and focuses on the impact of genre, domain and text on decision-making in specialized translation.