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Why We Need TI-Oriented Language Learning and Teaching (TILLT)

ABSTRACT

The teaching of foreign languages to students in Translation and Interpreting (TI) programmes should be framed within the field of Language for Specific Purposes (LSP). This would make it possible to pinpoint specific curricular content and methodological traits that contribute to the enhancement of the communicative competence and initial development of TI competences. This paper analyses the students' perspectives on L2 teaching in a TI programme and how it should be undertaken to best comply with the linguistic demands imposed by translation and interpreting. A thematic analysis of 117 open questionnaires returned by students from Austria, Slovenia and Spain identified five areas to which the students attribute particular importance, and which should be considered when developing TI-oriented curricula.

Keywords: future translators and interpreters, TI-oriented Language Learning and Teaching (TILLT), Language for Specific Purposes (LSP)

Zakaj naj bo poučevanje L2 prilagojeno potrebam bodočih prevajalcev in tolmačev

IZVLEČEK

Poučevanje tujih jezikov za bodoče prevajalce in tolmače se uvršča na področje poučevanja tujih jezikov stroke. Z vsebinsko in metodološko prilagoditvijo kurikulov je mogoče prispevati k napredovanju tako sporazumevalne zmožnosti bodočih prevajalcev in tolmačev kot tudi k začetnemu razvoju njihovih prevajalskih in tolmaških zmožnosti. V opisni raziskavi so študenti prevajanja in tolmačenja so odgovarjali na vprašanja o svojih jezikovnih potrebah in nanizali predloge, kako tem (naj)bolje prilagoditi poučevanje tujih jezikov. V analizi 117 odprtih vprašalnikov, ki so jih izpolnili študenti iz Avstrije, Slovenije in Španije, smo prepoznali pet področij, ki jim študenti pripisujejo poseben pomen in za katera menimo, da bi jih morali upoštevati pri snovanju kurikulov, prilagojenih potrebam bodočih prevajalcev in tolmačev.

Ključne besede: bodoči prevajalci in tolmači, poučevanje in učenje L2 za potrebe bodočih prevajalcev in tolmačev, tuji jezik stroke

1   Introduction

Ever since Translation Studies became a fully-fledged discipline in the 1980s (Hurtado 2011), the main focus of research into translation and interpreting (TI) has been to decipher its nature and offer an epistemological framework that allows for its consolidation and scientific advancement. In spite of having experienced a period of flourishing, Hurtado (1999, 15) in the late 1990s warned of a considerable delay in applied studies in this discipline, with foreign language teaching in TI training being one area greatly affected by this. The vast amount of research produced by applied linguists has not shed any light on how to tackle the methodological challenges posed by TILLT. Therefore, despite being the driving force behind any activity of a translating nature, the translators' (and interpreters') language competence, and consequently their language training, have not received sufficient attention to date. Hence the need for studies that contribute to the understanding of the complexities involved in this form of teaching.

Due to the paucity of research in this area, this paper aims to offer insights into the state of TILLT by analysing the opinions and beliefs[1] that TI students hold about the language courses offered at university, and how these have contributed to their training as prospective translators and interpreters. To this end, an exploratory study based on linguistic and pedagogical needs has been carried out to define more precisely the role that language courses play in a TI programme.

In Section 2, an overview of relevant research related to language training in TI programmes, and a needs analyses in TI language training in the form of curriculum analysis and questionnaires among students and teachers, are provided. In Section 3, the aims, instruments, environments and results of our study are described. The results are first presented for each country participating in the study, i.e., Austria, Slovenia and Spain, and are finally presented in a comprehensive, overall analysis. Our conclusions in Section 4 highlight the most relevant insights and suggestions for further research.

2   State of the Art

2.1 L2 Training in TI Programmes

Language training for TI students needs to be different from general language training (cf. Hernández Guerra and Cruz García 2009). In fact, foreign language teaching for TI students presents itself as a specific teaching approach (Berenguer 1997; Möller 2001; Beeby 2004; Cruz García and Adams 2008; Clouet 2010; Cerezo Herrero 2019b). It can be regarded as a form of teaching that straddles the divide between translation and foreign language teaching (Berenguer 1996). This is possible through a curriculum design based on the analysis of the students' specific needs and career opportunities (Berenguer 1997), which will make the curricular content relevant and appropriate.

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[1]   In survey research (Lavrakas 2008), opinion is defined as "subjective attitudes, beliefs, or judgments that reflect matters of personal (subjective) preference". We understand opinions as the broadest category that includes both attitudes, i.e., "general evaluations that people hold regarding a particular entity" and beliefs, i.e., more detailed evaluative statements regarding that entity.

Berenguer's pioneering LSP model (1997) has served as a basis for subsequent investigations attempting to draw the contours of this teaching. Using Holmes' (1988) model of Translation Studies, Berenguer incorporates the teaching of languages for translation into the field of applied studies as an independent field of study. This classification attests to the need to have a specific branch in Translation Studies that includes TILLT.

On the other hand, Cerezo Herrero (2019b) goes a step further and makes a proposal based on the ESP model put forward by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), one of the most prominent ESP models so far; however, Cerezo Herrero (2019b) warns of the limitations that this model presents for foreign language teaching in TI programmes. The field of translation deals with a wide range of academic disciplines (Hurtado 1999). Hence the need to establish a branch with an interdisciplinary scope. Additionally, the model by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) does not address the methodological aspects which are considered fundamental in this training. Based on this, Cerezo Herrero (2019b) establishes, in the case of English, a specific branch called English for Translation Purposes flanked by two filters: a thematic filter, which encompasses the various fields established by the classification of Science and Technology fields by UNESCO, and a filter called Methodology that shapes TILLT.

A model for translation-oriented language competence inspired by models of translation competence was put forward by Schmidhofer (2020). This goes beyond the list of specific goals for this kind of training that was compiled in a previous study (Schmidhofer 2017). These goals comprised communicative and metalinguistic competence, viewing language as a tool for translators, integrating language in one's own life, creating a translator's identity, analysing texts critically, developing a conscious use of resources, evaluating one's own performance critically and being able to work autonomously. The proposed model comprises five competences (systemic competence, communicative competence, metalinguistic competence, research competence, and extralinguistic competence) and a metacompetence called monitoring. The competences described coincide to a large extent with the competences included in the CEFR, but other aspects are added that are mentioned in the CEFR framework only marginally, if at all.

2.2 Needs Analysis in TI-Oriented Language Teaching

Empirical research studies into language teaching in TI programmes are most common in the area of curriculum analysis, probably because this data is easily accessible. Even though the informative value of this data is limited, since it only reflects institutional specifications, it can show the amount of time, expressed in ECTS, that is dedicated to language teaching and learning, and the goals and the methodological guidelines laid down by different institutions. All comprehensive analyses published to date have been carried out in Spain and focus on Spanish universities.

The first curriculum analysis, to the best of our knowledge, was carried out by Möller Runge (2001, 93-175), analysing courses in German as a second foreign language at 18 Spanish universities. She points out that, at the time of her study, even though hardly any university required an entrance level for the C language (second foreign language), the hours of instruction, although varying considerably, were usually below the threshold of 650 hours,

which is the amount estimated by the Goethe Institut as necessary to reach an intermediate level (*Mittelstufe*). The number of hours that have to be completed on a compulsory basis before starting translation courses were even fewer. Möller Runge (2001, 172) also provides a list of descriptors that are commonly found in descriptions of language modules, from which she concludes that foreign language teaching in TI programmes should have unique features.

Based on these findings, she suggests designing guidelines in line with translation students' needs but concedes that most lecturers use general language coursebooks that they complement with extra material. Möller Runge maintains that the approach adopted by lecturers is based on intuition and experience "*pero, en realidad, no se apoya[n] en una metodología claramente definida para este grupo de destino*[2]" (2001,174).

Cerezo Herrero's study (2015b) offers a general overview of linguistic and socio-cultural training in the Translation and Interpretation degrees conferred by 24 Spanish universities. From the main data gathered, it can be observed that all analysed universities offer language training in their B language (first foreign language) and C language. C languages receive the most ECTS, since in these languages, usually German or French, training starts from a basic level. Although both foreign languages have a curricular presence in the study programmes, this author concludes that it would be necessary to increase the teaching load devoted to languages, since they are considered to be the driving force in Translation Studies (Delisle 1980, 41; EMT 2017, 6). Likewise, he advocates re-establishing the language admission test in order to homogenize the students' initial linguistic level and ensure that the teaching load devoted to different foreign languages be adequate.

The most recent study was carried out by Carrasco Flores (2018, 186-219), who also explores English language courses in 25 TI programmes offered at 24 Spanish universities, with special attention to the type of course (General English or English for Specific Purposes) and the materials used. According to his results, 76% offer Applied Linguistics courses. For these courses, he establishes a continuum between English for General Purposes (EGP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and states that in 52% of the programmes only EGP is taught, in 16% a combination of both, while ESP is taught only in 4%. For the remaining 28%, there is no relevant data available. From his qualitative analysis, Carrasco Flores concludes that "the high percentage of degrees that only offer EGP courses points to lack of awareness when it comes to the specificities of this language training" (2018, 216).

Additional insight into the linguistic needs of TI students is offered in research by Koletnik (2017, 2020a, 2020b). Since 2012, she has been continuously testing and monitoring her students' linguistic competence in English (B language) at the commencement of their academic TI studies. Based on data from eight generations of Slovenian students of English, with a total of 211 participants, she has found that their skills were notably advanced, with some 55% of the students reaching C1 on the CEFR scale and a further 20% reaching the C2 and B2 levels (2020a). In line with Cerezo Herrero (2015a), she is convinced that an adequate linguistic level should thus be established *ab initio* to enable more streamlined

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[2]   "…but they are actually not sustained by a clearly defined methodology for this particular group of learners" (translation by the authors).

language development in TI students. She further advocates that careful introduction and judicious use of bidirectional translation exercises in TI students' foreign language teaching, which complements monolingual teaching, is supportive of the development of their translation skills in both languages, L2 and L1 (2020b).

Koletnik (2017) also elicited the first year TI students' opinions on the way they were taught English in their language development classes, focusing mostly on grammar. To obtain answers from three generations of students, she carried out and analysed 40 qualitative, semi-structured interviews and qualitative questionnaires, as well as 56 quantitative questionnaires. In their responses, students expressed the wish for less theory and more hands-on grammar exercises through either translation or contrasting of the linguistic systems of languages A and B (2017, 152–53). The interviews further revealed students' opinion that translation is naturally linked to language teaching. Two main advantages of translation as a language teaching tool are, in their opinion, to consolidate grammar knowledge and develop vocabulary. To a lesser extent, the students also believed translation allowed for more practice, greater automaticity and more natural expression, leading to better retention and more autonomous learning. Ultimately, they collectively supported the use of translation in language development classes and expressed their wish that translation classes started on "day one" of their studies (2017, 168).

Language lecturers have been targeted by only one large survey, carried out by Möller Runge in connection with her curricular analysis (2001). She conducted a survey among 57 Spanish lecturers who teach TI courses with German as a C language. Her results show that the vast majority of teachers are dissatisfied with the students' language level and consider their level insufficient for translation/interpreting activities. The problems the teachers mentioned comprise almost all aspects of language use. As for the reasons, most participants named the structure of the curricula as the most important cause of this unsatisfactory situation, stating that curricula do not include enough teaching hours; however, the criticism also included lesson content, which, according to the participants, focuses too much on everyday situations (2001, 90–91).

3 Our study

3.1 Aim of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to find out more about the students' opinions of the language training received as part of their TI programmes. The overarching research question we seek to answer is thus: How do students evaluate their language training within TI programmes with regard to its usefulness for subsequent translation and interpreting activities?

3.2 Questionnaire

With the exception of Koletnik (2017), there is hardly any data on student perspectives in this context; we therefore decided to carry out an exploratory study that would allow us to break ground in this area. To this end, we designed a questionnaire with the following open questions.

- Q1: Have the language courses prepared you sufficiently to be able to translate in translation courses?

- Q2: What content/procedures/techniques/materials/references, etc. that you learned about in your language courses were the most useful for your translation courses?

- Q3: What content/procedures/techniques/materials/references, etc. that you learned about in your language courses were the least useful for your translation courses?

- Q4: What are your suggestions for improving language training in TI programmes?

The reason for choosing open questions was that they allow the students to discuss their experiences and opinions. According to Hyman and Sierra (2016, 2–3), open questions "offer respondents an opportunity to provide a wide range of answers", and thus allow the researcher to obtain an in-depth response and, consequently, deeper insight into the researched phenomenon. Also, such questions do not hint at "correct" answers, and thus are more fully reflective of a respondent's attitude.

The questionnaire was translated into the main languages of the surveyed participants, i.e., German, Slovene and Spanish, to ensure that all participants expressed their thoughts as accurately as possible. Answers were later translated into English by the authors.

The answers to Q1 were partly quantifiable and could be, after a thorough analysis of received responses, categorized into the following five categories: *Yes*, *Rather Affirmative*, *Partly*, *Rather Critical*, and *No*. The answers by category could thus be translated into percentage points and numerically presented in pie charts.

The descriptive answers to Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4 were analysed qualitatively using inductive (bottom-up) thematic analysis, which was employed to identify, analyse, and report themes, i.e., patterns, within the data (Braun and Clarke 2006, 79). Owing to its theoretical autonomy, thematic analysis provides "a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data" (Braun and Clarke 2006, 78), and is particularly useful when searching for themes across the entire dataset. Themes were identified mainly – but not exclusively – by their prevalence across the dataset; when the prevalence criterion could not be employed, we used researcher judgement. Prevalence was measured, i.e., counted, at the level of the data item, taking into account the relative share of each population (i.e., in Austria, Slovenia, and Spain).

3.3 Participants

3.3.1 Austria

In Austria, the questionnaire was completed at the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019 by 60 undergraduate students who had at the time completed all language modules[3] and various translation and introductory interpreting courses. The L1 of most participants was German[4]. Questionnaires were completed anonymously in class or at home and later handed in via a university mailbox.

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[3] *Modules,* as used in many curricula, comprise a series of related courses.
[4] The students' mother tongue was not asked, as this might reveal students' identities.

The BA degree in Translation Studies that is offered at the Austrian university has a duration of three years, with a workload of 60 ECTS each year. The curriculum comprises three consecutive language modules each worth ten ECTS. These modules must be completed for two foreign languages, the languages offered being English, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian and German as a Foreign Language for non-native German speakers. The entrance level is B2 for English and German as a foreign language and B1 for French, Italian and Spanish. No entrance level is required for Russian[5]. From the third semester onwards, students have to take translation courses into German and into one foreign language. The curriculum also comprises a few introductory courses in interpreting.

3.3.2 Slovenia

In Slovenia, the questionnaire was administered to translation students in October and November of 2020 via the online survey platform 1ka[6]. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. Responses were received from 32 undergraduate and graduate students. Of those, 22 surveys were completed in full and were later considered representative and analysed.

Twelve representative surveys were completed by the third year BA students, and 10 were returned by the first- and second-year MA students, all with English and/or German as their B language. All BA students had courses worth 36 ECTS developing their B language competence, and one practical, bi-directional Slovenian-language B translation course (3 ECTS), starting in semester four of their second year. In addition to these courses, all MA students passed another two language courses (6 ECTS), two additional translation courses (6 ECTS) and an introductory course on interpreting to conclude their BA translation training. Their MA-level training included several specialized translation courses and theoretical courses in each semester, as well as traineeship.

3.3.3 Spain

In Spain, the questionnaire was administered to BA students in the last year of their degree in Translation Studies in October 2020. The questionnaire was completed in person through Google Forms. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. A total of 35 students participated in the study. Twenty-five respondents had English as their first foreign language (B language) and French or German as their second language (Language C). They had completed six English language training courses (36 ECTS) and four language courses in their C language (24 ECTS). The other ten participants had English as a second foreign language. Nine of them had German as their B language, and only one had French as a first foreign language. They had completed 24 ECTS in English and 36 ECTS in their respective B language. The main difference between the two languages is that the students are required to undertake both direct and inverse translation and interpretation in their B language, whereas in the C language they are only expected to do translation and interpreting tasks from this language into their mother tongue.

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[5]   The entrance level is congruent with the languages and levels taught in Austrian schools.
[6]   https://www.1ka.si.

As for specific training in translation and interpreting, the participants had already taken several translation courses in their B language: Direct Translation B-A (12 ECTS) and Specialized Translation I B-A (6 ECTS). None of them had yet taken any interpreting courses. On the other hand, as far as the C language is concerned, they lacked any prior academic experience with translation or interpreting in this language.

3.4 Findings

3.4.1 Austria

Among the Austrian students participating in the survey, answers to Q1 varied between a short clear-cut *yes* or *no* and longer, wordier answers that required some interpretation. It should also be mentioned that some students assigned different values to the teaching in their foreign languages (they have to study at least two). The distribution can be seen in Figure 1.
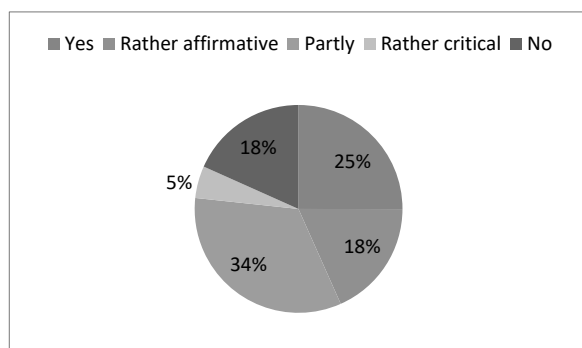

FIGURE 1. Training has been sufficient: Austria.

Answers were not limited to a general evaluation but comprised, in many cases, additional comments. Participants highlighted the usefulness of grammar courses, particularly contrastive aspects and the courses' orientation towards translation. Translation orientation was also mentioned in a few more general comments. A group of six students, for example, remarked that courses were seldom geared towards translation and were laid out just like general language courses.

Answers to Q2 were the longest. We identified 36 mentions of translation: 14 students reported directly that they found translation exercises helpful. Some participants also specified the type of translation exercises they found helpful, such as translation of examples, sentence translation or short translations, or "learning how to translate grammatical structures, e.g., from English into German" (AT21). Another large group of answers referred to translation strategies with eight mentions and translation problems with five mentions. Four participants highlighted that they found sight translation useful.

Another frequent topic in the answers of the Austrian students was grammar, with 33 participants mentioning this. Fourteen participants underlined the usefulness of contrastive grammar. The next topic in terms of frequency was vocabulary. Nine students stressed the usefulness of glossaries, and 13 mentioned different areas of vocabulary work, such as

synonyms, collocations or idioms. Working with texts was another topic that was frequently mentioned. Nine students highlighted the importance of textual analysis and seven the usefulness of text production. Six found working with parallel texts helpful, even though none specified any details about this text work. Regarding the use of resources, we identified four mentions of dictionary work and research tips without further specification. Some answers also referred to the teachers' role and attitude, where six participants mentioned correction by teachers, particularly of written texts.

In Q3, students most frequently referred to teaching techniques and classroom procedures. Student presentations were mentioned by twelve respondents, i.e., a fifth of all participants. Five students criticized group work and found it unhelpful. Lectures and typical textbook exercises were mentioned by three students each. Criticism was also noticeable in terms of vocabulary, which received eleven comments, with learning words in isolation being the most frequent subject of negative comments. As one student pointed out, "vocabulary tests were useless because we do not need such specific vocabulary in the BA courses" (AT13). Two students mentioned learning vocabulary by heart as minimally useful, which combined with one mention of learning grammar rules by heart and an additional one of learning a translation by heart makes the technique of rote learning noteworthy in this context. Among the nine comments referring to text work, answers varied considerably, and only textual analysis was mentioned by three students as being unhelpful.

In Q4, exactly half of the students mentioned that classes should be more targeted towards translation; ten students wrote about general translation orientation and twelve about translation in general, and six specifically mentioned translation problems and solutions. On the other hand, two students were in favour of giving more attention to general language competence. Another aspect that was very frequently mentioned was contrastive analysis, with 16 answers in total, eight of which specifically mentioned grammar. One student suggested "comparing the grammar of both languages right from the beginning" (AT3). Content-wise, one-fifth of the students suggested linking the classes more tightly with the translation profession, without specifying how. As far as individual language skills are concerned, ten students suggested that more activities involving oral expression be included, which might be interpreted as a hint that they feel insufficiently prepared for interpreting activities. As one student put it, "In our programme, not enough time is assigned to the development of oral competence". Textual analysis was mentioned by three students. Eight students also mentioned vocabulary development, with two specifically mentioning bilingual glossaries. With regard to teaching techniques and teachers' involvement, the answers were quite scarce, with three students suggesting language courses should be taught in the foreign language only, and three requiring more detailed feedback from teachers.

3.4.2 Slovenia

Based on their answers to Q1, the majority (13) of the total of 22 Slovenian students believed that they were sufficiently prepared for translation in their language courses. Two responses could be interpreted as "rather affirmative", while three students said they were only "partly" prepared. No students' answers could be assigned to the "rather critical" category, while four students thought language courses did not provide a good foundation for translation classes.
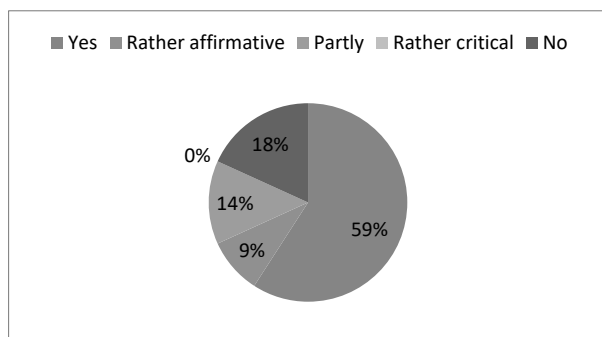
Figure 2. Training has been sufficient: Slovenia.

In their comments on Q1, four Slovenian students expressed their belief that learning about grammar was helpful and the key to successful translation – despite one isolated opinion to the contrary. Seven believed that the language courses they took were, in general, relevant for their future translation orientation. Nevertheless, three students responded that these courses were too theory-driven and lacking in translation-oriented exercises. Student opinions were also divided on vocabulary development: three students thought this was given enough consideration in language courses, while two thought vocabulary development was inadequate. Finally, an important positive observation was that through language classes the students felt able to broaden their horizons and receive a broad spectrum of knowledge that was not only language related. As one student put it, "teachers gave us a broad spectrum of the knowledge we need for this [translation exercises]. And also a lot of personal experience" (SI4).

In their answers to Q2, five Slovenian students pointed to grammar exercises as being helpful. In terms of particular in-class activities, they specifically benefited from shadowing exercises and from activities with practical translation-related value (two mentions each). Five students recognized the benefits of targeted vocabulary development – as can be inferred from the following answer where one student (SI3) mentioned "strengthening and development of vocabulary and language comprehension" – and transmitted documentation and research skills, particularly teacher's research tips (five mentions), dictionary use (four mentions) and learning about translation tools (two mentions). In general, they appreciated their teachers speaking from personal experience and presenting practice-related examples, which is an argument in favour of language teachers with professional translation experience.

As for Q3, twelve Slovenian respondents particularly disliked theory-related classes, which is to some extent driven by the fact that they shared several courses with students from the English and German philology degrees, as noted in the following statement (SI14): "The content of the course [...]; I find it more useful for students of English Studies and not for translators". It could thus be inferred that they would rather attend language courses that addressed their specific linguistic needs as future translators. Other comments included unappealing teacher presentation techniques, i.e., uninteresting PowerPoint presentations (three mentions), followed by a dislike for oral presentations by the students (two comments), and dealing with unattractive and/or repetitive topics (two mentions).

In their suggestions for TI-oriented language instruction, four Slovenian students called for a more practical approach and two for a more translation-related approach. Five students mentioned the wish for greater involvement of native speakers and translation practitioners as guest lecturers. In terms of linguistic skills, two students wanted even more vocabulary exercises, and three more oral production and more language competence development in general. Six students also recognized the importance of motivation mirrored in the selection of current and varied topics, as can be inferred from the following suggestion: "Themes about current events in the world, or interesting informative articles/documentaries that would broaden our horizons" (SI21). Finally, two students acknowledged the importance of feedback.
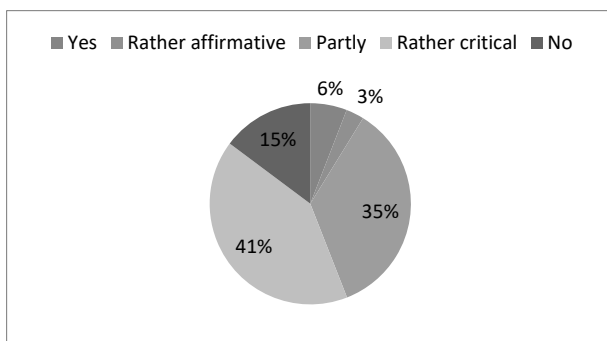
3.4.3 Spain

Figure 3. Training has been sufficient: Spain.

Regarding Q1, most respondents conceded that the foreign language course load was not enough to help them tackle their subsequent translation courses, especially in their C language (14 mentions). One of the main reasons they mention is the difficulty in assimilating all curricular content in so few contact hours in class. In addition, they maintained that it was necessary to go deeper into vocabulary to guarantee that the necessary linguistic competence for translation courses be achieved. This led the majority of the sample to state that language courses should cater to the specific linguistic needs of TI students and be different from other language courses offered in Philology degrees, official languages schools or academies (15 comments). As stated by one respondent, "In my opinion, teaching languages to Translation students in the same way that they are taught to Philology students is not the most appropriate way. I think it would be more useful if these courses followed a more translation-based approach" (ES10). Thus, one of their main concerns regarding these courses was that they focus too much on official language examinations, instead of teaching the language so as to enable students to carry out intercultural mediation activities (eight comments).

As for Q2, many respondents regarded translation and contrastive linguistics as essential in this training (16 comments), followed by the use of dictionaries (eight mentions), glossaries, corpora or databases (seven comments), and to a lesser extent, documentation strategies (three comments). With regard to linguistic skills, writing was valued above others, since it helped them prepare for inverse translation courses (four mentions). This is at odds with prior research, which highlights the importance of reading (Berenguer 1997; Brehm 1997).

However, this preference could be determined by the high level of English with which the students access university; moreover, this production skill could help them not only in dealing with inverse translation courses, but also in perfecting their competence in the foreign language. In line with the answers to Q1, vocabulary was also perceived as a major component in TILLT (five comments). In particular, students found specific vocabulary, collocations, idioms and synonyms of special relevance in this training. Among other useful resources they mentioned audio-visual material and songs, because both offer more direct exposure to real language.

As for Q3, it is worthwhile highlighting that the participants praised the kind of teaching that is practice- rather than theory-driven (six comments). Following this line of thought, grammar was not regarded as an essential teaching component in TILLT (five comments). Likewise, formal language exams were also labelled as unhelpful (six comments), since they do not connect the language with translation courses. As one student stated, "language subjects should be taught differently so that they help more when translating and should not just teach the grammar of the language. In general, the language courses of this degree should be more practical and not as theoretical" (ES32).

In their responses to Q4, the students called for a more translation-oriented approach (eight comments) and the use of translation as a pedagogical resource (six comments). In the same vein, more contrastive work was viewed as necessary (eight comments). Instead of focusing attention almost exclusively on tests, students thought that projects and other activities aimed at improving foreign language competence should be encouraged (five comments). Therefore, evaluation procedures should be changed and adapted. On another front, more hours should be devoted to language courses (two mentions). In terms of pedagogical materials, the participants oppose the use of textbooks because their objectives do not meet the specific needs of TI programmes. Activities should be contextualized and simulate tasks performed by a professional translator/interpreter, while fostering the communicative and plurilingual competence of the students. Specialized vocabulary should also be a top priority in TILLT. In brief, language courses should assist in improving translation competence rather than language per se.

3.5 Comparative Analysis of Results

Q1. Categorical answers to Q1 were translated into absolute values and adjusted according to the percentage of the total sample they represented (Austria n=60 ≈ 50%; Slovenia n=22 ≈ 20%, and Spain n=35 ≈ 30%). They reveal that, on average and across the entire dataset, for 26% of students the language skills acquired in the language courses were sufficient preparation for their translation classes, and they "rather" sufficed for a further 12% of students. Thirty percent maintained that these skills were "partly" sufficient, while a further 15% were rather critical of their adequacy, with 17% opting for a straightforward "no".

The answers to the remaining questions were analysed qualitatively, following the premises of thematic analysis. After extracting the data from the questionnaires, generating initial codes and collating the relevant data items, prevalence was measured at the level of the data item for individual countries and compared across the entire sample. One data item equalled one

Q1: Have the language courses prepared you sufficiently to be able to tackle translation courses?

■ Yes ■ Rather affirmative ■ Partly ■ Rather critical ■ No
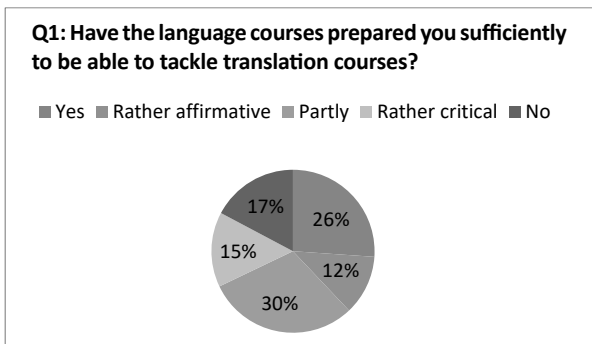
17% 26%

15% 12%

30%

FIGURE 4. Summarized results for Q1.

opinion and/or comment expressed by a respondent in the questionnaire. When determining prevalence, the relative share of each population (Austria, Slovenia, and Spain) was, again, taken into account. Consequently, and as a rule, two or more instances were considered as possibly significant for the Slovenian sample, three or more instances for the Spanish sample and five to six instances for the Austrian sample. However, some flexibility was allowed in interpreting statements, and researcher judgement was used in determining relevant instances and their count.

Thematic analysis identified the following overarching TI-oriented language learning and teaching (TILLT) themes and sub-themes, which are summarized in the Coggle diagram in section 3.5.4:

1. Translation-orientation,
2. Content and topics,
3. Language skills to be developed,
4. Documentation work, and
5. Teacher attitudes.

3.5.1 Translation Orientation

The most frequent observation by respondents from all three countries was the expected relevance of TILLT for translation orientation and its ability to cater to the specific linguistic needs of emerging translators and interpreters. To some extent, this criterion has already been met in Slovenia; for the majority of Austrian and Spanish respondents, it remained number one on the priority list of requirements. Another indispensable element of TILLT, as observed by respondents from all three countries, was translation, or rather "more translation" (SI5), in various forms and types, ranging from translation of words, sentences and short texts, to sight and oral translation in general, as well as shadowing exercises. Another overwhelming belief expressed primarily by Austrian students was that TILLT should include the presentation of typical translation problems in conjunction with the methods and strategies for solving them.

Particularly relevant to all respondents was that language courses should be practice- and not theory-driven, and that "more practice" (SI19) was required. In short, in TILLT, translation

should be used as both a language teaching tool and a goal (cf. Carreres 2014), and should be primarily practice-driven.

3.5.2 Content and Topics

In terms of content, respondents from all countries underscored the importance of grammar and grammar exercises, possibly in conjunction with or through translation exercises, as voiced particularly by the Austrian respondents. In this context, Austrian and Spanish students indicated that contrastive grammar should be integrated into TILLT to a greater extent.

This belief was, however, not shared by all students across the entire dataset; individuals from all countries voiced their displeasure with memorizing grammatical rules and too many unhelpful grammar exercises. The importance of vocabulary development and acquisition, e.g., through learning about collocations, synonyms, and idioms, as well as by preparation of glossaries was unequivocally supported. The Austrian students, however, argued that this should not be done in isolation, with their Spanish counterparts adding that a well-thought-out approach should be used, particularly when learning specialized vocabulary and contrastive lexis. Another general observation was that "more contrastive work is needed" (AT50) in all areas.

In terms of topics, the Austrian students stated that these should be related to real life and, again, translation-relevant, while their Slovenian counterparts considered the motivational aspect and added that topics should be varied and related to the current events. They also commented that, in order to broaden their horizons, knowledge from different domains should be acquired in their language courses.

3.5.3 Language Skills

The Spanish students agreed that greater importance should be given to (foreign) language competence development in general by assigning more contact hours to language courses. Students from all three countries recognized the importance of developing receptive and productive skills, particularly of text reception through reading and of text production through creative writing, note taking and summarizing, and, indirectly, also through textual analysis. A particularly sore point in all three countries seems to be oral production, which is either inappropriate or missing from language courses, and thus should be assigned greater importance.

3.5.4 Documentation Work

All students underscored the importance of learning about dictionaries and their use; some Austrian students, however, warned against too much emphasis being placed on dictionaries. Highly appreciated by all students were teachers' research tips, e.g., about online tools and websites where students "can check things they don't know much about or are unsure of" (SI15). In this context, the idea of a "dictionary of English usage as a type of specialized language dictionary", as put forward by Gabrovšek (2020), would be useful for the purposes of future translators and interpreters.
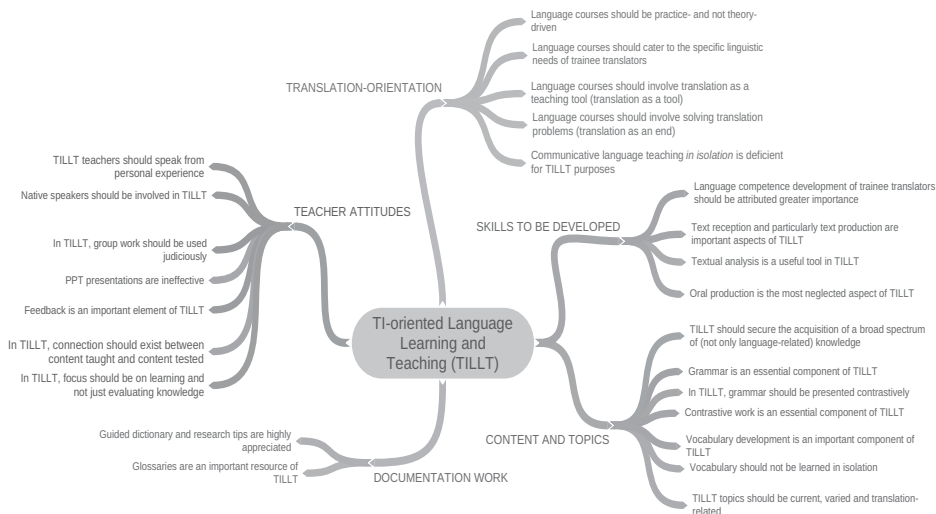
FIGURE 5. Summarized results of thematic analysis.

3.5.5 Teacher Attitudes

In terms of teachers' contributions and attitudes, and teaching techniques and materials, the Slovenian students were particularly appreciative of the teachers who taught from personal experience and professional practice, and wished that more native speakers and professional TI practitioners collaborated on TILLT. In terms of teaching techniques and materials, students from all three countries agreed on the ineffectiveness of PowerPoint presentations as used by their teachers, and the Austrian and Slovenian students acknowledged the importance of feedback. Additionally, the Austrian students warned against injudicious use of group work, while their Spanish colleagues recognized the shortcomings of communicative language teaching for emerging translators and interpreters, an unwelcome disconnect between the content taught in class and content tested, and a displaced focus on evaluating language proficiency instead of on learning.

4   Discussion

The themes identified above (translation-orientation, content and topics, language skills to be developed, documentation work, and teacher attitudes) corroborate previous research (cf. Berenguer 1997, Möller Runge 2001, Clouet 2010, Koletnik 2017, Schmidhofer 2017, Carrasco Flores 2018, and Cerezo Herrero 2019a) and open new and interesting avenues for investigation into language learning and teaching for emerging translators and interpreters (TILLT). The themes, again, confirmed our conviction that TILLT should be placed within the field of Language for Specific Purposes (LSP), with specific thematic and methodological filters (Cerezo Herrero 2019b). Foreign language courses in TI programmes cannot be restricted to one thematic area, since translators and interpreters need to be ready to cope with any thematic field. Additionally, the linguistic demands on practitioners posed by translation and interpretation make it necessary to rely on a specific methodology to help link language courses with prospective TI courses.

A recurring belief expressed by the students in our study is that their language courses simply *must* be targeted towards translation. Indirectly, and particularly in the case of Spain, this confirms Möller Runge's (2001) and Carrasco Flores' (2018) opinion that if courses are not adapted to the translation scenario − in terms of content, topics, activities, methods, strategies, and, not unimportantly, the number of contact hours − they remain too superficial for the needs of future translators and fail to motivate the students to learn. By the same token, because translation is a hands-on activity, language classes should be practice- and not theory-driven, an idea which was also commonly expressed by students in their questionnaires, and previously recognized by Schmidhofer (2020) and Koletnik (2017).

In more detail, we identified the following key elements as missing or insufficiently present in the language classes of students taking part in our survey:

a) Translation as a language teaching tool AND a competence (an end) that is developed through language exercises (Carreres 2014);
b) Contrastive study of the languages under instruction (Berenguer 1996); and
c) Greater focus on development of students' productive and receptive language skills in general.

Grammar and vocabulary were, again, identified as two areas deserving explicit attention, as previously recognized by Carrasco Flores (2018), and Koletnik (2020b). However, there seems to be a thin line between too much and too little, and a well-thought-out and judicious approach is advised, involving, in particular, a contrastive grammatical analysis and presentation, as well as the contextualized study of (specialized) vocabulary.

In terms of language skills, two observations are noteworthy. The first is the belief shared by all students that oral production seems to be the most neglected area of language teaching and learning, with oral activities either unsuitable for the development of TI students' language skills or altogether missing from instruction. The second is the importance of textual analysis for translation-oriented text production, expressed primarily by Austrian students, which confirms previous observations by Schmidhofer (2017) and Berenguer (1997). Without doubt, both aspects have important implications for TI students and should be given more consideration in TILLT curriculum development.

The Slovene students in particular identified the importance of a broad spectrum of knowledge – linguistic and non-linguistic – that should be acquired by TI students, which once again confirms observations by Cerezo Herrero (2019b). This is particularly important in the light of findings by Pokorn et al. (2019) that the breadth of a translator's knowledge exerts an important, positive influence on translation quality.

Another significant theme we identified was working with sources. Students indicated that they found guided dictionary and research tips important and stressed the usefulness of collecting and preparing glossaries. As these approaches would help students develop greater learner autonomy (Schmidhofer 2017), which is paramount since much of the language development must take place outside the classroom, this aspect should also be considered an important pillar of TILLT.

Many of the comments related to teachers, teaching methods and classroom activities. As mentioned above, students appreciated teachers who spoke from their own experience, offering practical research tips and advice on solving language and translation problems. Consequently, this raises the issue of the skills needed by a TILLT teacher. Given the importance of contrastive study of languages and the assumed presence of translation as a language teaching tool and a skill, TILLT teachers should at least be well-versed in both languages and possess at least some translation skills. That said, students also appreciated input by native speakers (of B language), thus favouring tandem teaching.

Further to this, students underscored the significance of constructive feedback – an issue which has been abundantly addressed by translation scholars in the past (cf. Dollerup 1994; Washbourne 2014), although not in immediate conjunction with TILLT – and frustration with PowerPoint presentations when used without proper context or careful planning. Moreover, although group work can be a suitable method to motivate students and encourage learning, Austrian students in particular mentioned the ineffectiveness of such work for their purposes, while their Spanish counterparts highlighted the need to establish a better connection between course content and assessment. The latter also stressed that the focus of TILLT courses should be on learning and not just on the evaluation of knowledge.

5   Conclusion

In this article we have presented the results of an exploratory, qualitative study into the opinions and beliefs of students in TI programmes regarding the suitability of their language courses for TI activities, using participants from Austria, Slovenia and Spain. The most important conclusion that applies to all countries is that there is a real need for a TI-oriented language learning and teaching (TILLT) approach, and that the communicative language teaching approach, even though not inadequate per se, is insufficient for the needs of TI students. This is supported by the fact that the students stress the need for TI orientation and consider activities related to translation or with a contrastive focus as particularly useful. Apart from providing interesting insights into the area of TILLT, our results might also serve as a reference for institutions, departments and teachers designing TI study programmes.

Certain limitations of this study need to be acknowledged. For example, only one university per country has been taken into account. In addition, the fact that students were asked to participate on a voluntary basis limited the number of responses in some countries. As such, the sample was not proportionate in all three countries, and the final observations might be slightly skewed. Additionally, within- and inter-cohort analysis could have yielded further results if the B and C languages of all participants had been considered, since the learning process is not immediately comparable across languages. Nevertheless, the study sought to establish common opinions and beliefs regarding foreign language teaching in TI programmes. This study thus helps us gain a better understanding of the nature of foreign language teaching in TI programmes and of how, according to students from Austria, Slovenia and Spain, it can be shaped to meet their specific linguistic needs with regard to TI activities.

We consider this study to be a starting point for further research in this field. Even though it provides interesting preliminary insights into the students' opinions, we believe that it needs

to be complemented by a larger quantitative and qualitative study that we intend to initiate in the near future. Other lines of research that might be pursued in this field include curriculum analysis on a wider scale than has been attempted to date, or research into the opinions of teachers and the methods they employ in this field.

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