

REPORT OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF MOU UNIVERSITIES
Held in Salamanca, 3 and 4 May 2011

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1- The first conference of universities signatories of memorandums of understanding with the United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (MoU universities) was held in Salamanca on 3 and 4 May 2011. The Conference was organized jointly by DGACM and the University of Salamanca and hosted by the University of Salamanca.

I- Objectives of the conference

2- As indicated in its original concept paper, the main purpose of the conference was to launch a network of universities and tertiary-education schools that are committed to enhancing their programmes for training translators and interpreters so that they can better meet the United Nations' requirements.

3- This was to be achieved through agreement on concrete proposals in the following areas: (a) building synergies between the academic (research and training) orientation of Universities and the task-oriented, institutional nature of the UN's language services; (b) facilitating exchanges of information and good practices among universities in the areas of curricula, course materials, training methods (including virtual and distance training) technological support, student selection/evaluation criteria, etc.; (c) enhancing coordination between the universities and the UN with regard to a set of competencies considered essential for pursuing a language career at the UN; (d) examining ways to strengthen collaboration between the universities and the UN, including pedagogical visits, joint training activities, and internships/traineeships; (e) establishing an MoU Executive Committee.

II- Participants

4- The conference was attended by representatives of MoU universities, representatives of the UN secretariat and members of the Executive Committee of IAMLADP, including other UN system organizations and European Unions institutions (See list of participants, Annex XVI).

III- Programme of the conference

5- In accordance with the above-mentioned objectives, the conference organized its work into sessions focusing on the following six main themes (See detailed programme, in Annex I):

- Session 1: Why do so many applicants fail at the UN exams? - Cross-cutting issues in translation and interpretation
- Session 2: Adapting curricula and evaluation procedures to meet UN standards and requirements
- Parallel sessions 3a and 3b:
 - Interpretation: Building skills in the target language
 - Translation: Practical approaches to the training of future UN translators
- Session 4: Research and Training for/with UN staff
- Session 5: Working together: job expectations, traineeships, exchanges and networks

6- In addition to the main sessions, the following events also took place during the conference:

- A keynote presentation by Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban (Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management, and Chair of the Conference), on the topic “*Role of the MoU university network*”, followed by an interactive discussion;
- A master class in translation by Mr. Stephen Sekel (former Director of DD/DGACM, UN consultant);
- An interactive session with students on interpretation, led by Ms. Lynn Visson, former UN interpreter and consultant;
- Presentation of commemorative plaques to the MoU universities by Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban;

- The launching of the DGACM Language Outreach Portal.

IV- Proceedings of the conference

A) Opening ceremony

7- The opening ceremony was co-chaired by Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban and Mr. Daniel Hernández Ruipérez, Rector Magnifico of the University of Salamanca.

8- In his remarks Mr. Hernández Ruipérez welcomed the participants to the conference, especially those who had traveled to Salamanca from around the world. He expressed his gratitude that the University of Salamanca had been chosen to host the first conference of MoU universities. He wished success to the Conference, and expressed his hope that collaboration between DGACM and the MoU universities would continue and become stronger.

9- Mr. Carlos Fortea, Dean of the Faculty of Translation and Documentation, also welcomed the participants and wished them success in achieving the objectives of the conference.

10- In his opening remarks Mr. Shaaban congratulated and thanked the University of Salamanca and the Conference organizers for the excellent arrangements and for their kind hospitality. He thanked the participants for answering the call to participate in this important gathering. He gave a brief historical overview of the collaboration between DGACM and universities that train language professionals, explaining how the idea of organizing a conference of MoU universities was born. He explained the need for collaboration between institutions that train and those that employ language professionals, in a world where rapid technological mutations present both challenges and opportunities for language professionals and for those who train and employ them. He gave his vision of the first conference of MoU universities, which he expected to be a

hands-on, results-oriented gathering of practitioners, resulting in clear recommendations and practical outcomes. He then declared open the first Conference of MoU universities.

B) Keynote presentation on the role of the MoU university network

11- In his presentation, Mr. Shaaban underlined the main benefits of the MoU network for each category of stakeholders, namely that it represents for participating universities an opportunity to enhance their training; for non-participating universities a source of good practices that can be harnessed through exchanges of students and teachers and the sharing of teaching methods, tools and curricula; for the trainees it helps open the doors to a career in international institutions, offering stability, decent benefits and flexible working arrangements; and, finally, for potential employers a means to facilitate succession planning by alleviating the shortage of qualified candidates to be recruited. Mr. Shaaban indicated that the main areas of priority work for the network would include ensuring a continuous dialogue among participants, through regular contacts and consultation; sharing information, especially information related to career events; sharing methods and intellectual resources; harmonizing certification standards; and working closely with professionals in the field.

The presentation was followed by an interactive exchange of views:

12- Several representatives of universities inquired about assessment criteria used by the UN in selecting candidates for recruitment, and why such criteria are so stringent that most candidates cannot pass the competitive examinations. They indicated that the universities faced a dilemma in attracting large numbers of students to conference interpretation/translation programmes without making false promises that the training would lead to a career in international organizations, especially since students who cannot make it through those programmes may end up with no other career choices.

13- Participants from the UN noted that several factors may contribute to this high rate of failure, including the large numbers of students in some programmes and the fact that

professors of translation and interpretation must be current or former practitioners in the field of translation or interpretation. They explained that the high standards of selection applied in the competitive examinations are the result of member states' expectations of a highly qualified workforce.

14- Several solutions were considered, including more guidance from employers through participation of staff members in graduation juries at the universities, posting past exams and other materials online to help candidates prepare for the exams, help from IAMLADP on how to advertise to students, and exchanges of good practices among universities. It was hoped that the current review of the UN examinations process would be an intrinsic part of this process.

15- Participants also discussed the high cost of testing, especially when the yield in terms of successful candidates is very low. Possible solutions to this problem were examined, including using innovative pre-screening methods, such as electronic interviews (Skype). However, it was also recognized that high quality comes at a cost.

16- Mr. Shaaban concluded the discussion by expressing his hope that the conference would provide a good opportunity for the parties to work together, and stressed that the sessions should be results-oriented. He also indicated that this will not be the last MoU conference, and that he had already received offers to host the next session of the conference.

C) The sessions

17- During the rest of Conference's scheduled time, participants worked in sessions dedicated to each of the main sub-themes on the agenda. Each session produced a "vision paper", drafted by its main facilitator, describing the major issues discussed and the conclusions and recommendations reached at the end of the session. The vision papers do not necessarily provide a speaker-by-speaker summary of the discussion, but are rather

intended to highlight major themes touched upon by participants, with reflections and suggestions for ways of acting on agreed points. Participants who made detailed presentations to the session were invited to make available to the conference organizers electronic versions of their texts for posting on the conference web site.

18- Given the overall architecture of the conference's programme, there was a natural progression in the sessions, with each session feeding into the next. Thus, session 1 provided a general diagnosis of the main factors resulting in a low-success rate of candidates for United Nations competitive examinations, and this constituted a starting point for subsequent sessions. Accordingly, session 2, which covered both interpretation and translation, focused on how universities and training institutions could address the problems identified through changes to their curricula, teaching methods and evaluation procedures. These same issues were dealt with in greater detail in the separate follow-up sessions held for interpretation (session 3a) and translation (session 3b). Sessions 4 and 5 looked more closely at future perspectives of collaboration within the Network and expected outcomes in terms of exchanges, research, training and jobs.

Session 1: Why do so many applicants fail the United Nations Competitive Language Examinations?

Facilitator: Mr Igor Shpiniov (Special Assistant to the USG, Office of the USG/DGACM, New York).

Panellists: Mr. Stephen Sekel; Ms. Rima Al Hakim (Dean, Higher Institute of Translation and Interpretation, University of Damascus); Ms. Barbara Moser-Mercer (Director of the Interpretation Department of the School of Translation and Interpretation at the University of Geneva); Mr. Barry Olsen (Monterey University); Mr. Jesús Baigorri (Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of the Interpreting Section, Department of Translation and Interpreting, University of Salamanca); Mr. Harry Ping Dai (Professor and Associate Dean, Graduate Institute of Interpretation and Translation, Shanghai International Studies University).

19- Mr Shpiniov opened the discussion by formulating the main goal of the Panel, namely, to try to determine the main general reasons why good candidates sometimes fail the United Nations Competitive Language Examinations (LCEs), while highlighting the specific problems of each language occupation within the profession. He offered for consideration the following possible causes of failures:

(a) Insufficient knowledge of the main language: Translator/Interpreter training programmes tend to focus on the foreign languages to the detriment of the mother tongue (main language). Universities traditionally train students to communicate in foreign languages, considering mastery of the main language as a given, even though many trainees do, in fact, have shortcomings in areas of their main language, such as:

- i- The ability to express their ideas clearly;
- ii- Knowledge of grammar, syntax, vocabulary, style and register;
- iii- Understanding of general and UN-specific terminology;

(b) Another area with potential pitfalls is translation from a B language into an A language, and from a B into a C. UN language staff work from B and C into A; universities mostly train their students to translate/interpret from A into B and C. In many cases, not enough attention is given to working into the main language.

20- Concerning the terminology issue, he indicated that the new model of the LCE will focus on translation/interpretation skills rather than on terminology.

21- In the discussion that followed the presentation, the panellists made the following points:

(a) All reviewers of UN examinations pointed out weakness in the mastery of the main language, noting that this problem goes beyond the bounds of university training. Students arrive from secondary schools without good main language

skills. It was generally agreed that the world is witnessing a post-literate generation of young people, generally characterized by their inadequacy with the written word. This is affecting, not only translation, but also the other written language professions, such as proof-reading and editing;

- (b) Weak knowledge of passive languages is another problem. The network will need to analyze curricula and teaching methods in universities in order to identify weaknesses in course content, while also highlighting strengths and good practices.
- (c) Some students may fail the UN examinations because they have chosen to study translation/interpretation for the wrong reasons. It was noted that, in general, only people who are truly passionate about languages are able to master them sufficiently to become good translators/interpreters.
- (d) In addition to their field of specialization (law, economics, etc.), candidates need to have a broad general knowledge of a variety of subjects;
- (e) Pre-screening for the LCEs needs to be improved, by developing pre-screening methods and elaborating examination models to be delivered to academic organizations. Universities may be involved in the pre-screening processes. For instance, it should be possible for clusters of universities that work with one target language to set up mechanisms for the selection of possible candidates prior to the UN selection process.
- (f) Language skills needed to work for the UN are not in any way different from those required for conventional mastery of language. For each language there is only one type of valid skills. The UN is not looking for the equivalent of Shakespeare, but for sound communication skills. While stylistic beauty is a matter of taste, good communication skills are objective and measurable.
- (g) There is a real decline in Arabic language skills. The same decline is observed generally in the performance of interpreters interpreting into language B. Due to market demand for English as language B, many people are changing their English C to English B, resulting in numerous problems in areas such as

syntactic structure. Participants wondered to what extent academia could play a role in remedying such problems.

- (h) Another problematic area is that of general erudition or knowledge of current issues. Young people today are becoming increasingly less interested in politics. Applicants often do not follow the news and lack basic concepts that are fundamental to understanding current events, philosophy, history and geography, etc. In translation, many applicants do not have degrees in other subjects, such as law, economics, etc., which are useful both for proper language knowledge and for the specific areas required by the UN. In many cases, because of the lack of general knowledge, candidates are unable to derive meaning from context in the document on which they are working.
- (i) It is possible that some candidates are too young and immature, and need more exposure to the outside world before applying for UN examinations. Another contributing factor may be that the criteria used by the UN in its examinations are too rigorous, leading the organization to disregard inexperienced - though promising - young candidates. Here universities need more guidance and assistance from the UN. There is a need to teach applicants to work under pressure and to introduce them to competency-based interviews.
- (j) Versatility is another quality needed in UN translations. The UN is one of the broadest markets in terms of its thematic coverage, and in most cases it is not possible for its language professionals to specialize only one kind of text or subject.
- (k) Universities need to invest in providing guidance to students who possess a predisposition (raw talent) that can be polished. They should also select students who are suitable for the working environment of large organizations. It was hoped that the UN Language Outreach Portal, developed by DGACM, would be useful in helping universities understand the UN's criteria, and thus provide appropriate support to their students.
- (l) From the very start of the programs, interpretation students should be trained to listen carefully and intently.

22- Finally, participants noted that it was better not focus on cases of failure. Perhaps the UN could give more attention to borderline cases, to those candidates who barely missed the grade in the examinations and could attain the required level with a little bit of help.

Summary of the session's agreed conclusions:

- (a) The basic requirements for the UN are:
 - i- Mastery of the candidate's main language;
 - ii- Sound knowledge of one or more passive languages, current events and general culture;
 - iii- Knowledge of the techniques of translation and interpretation.
- (b) Targeted approaches are needed to identify the principal causes of failure.
- (c) The network needs to identify strengths and good practices that exist in some universities, so that institutions with lower rates of success at UN examinations can benefit from them.
- (d) The UN should develop clear guidelines for marking its examinations (evaluation criteria) and should raise awareness of such criteria among the network's members.

Session 2: Adapting curricula and evaluation procedures to meet United Nations standards and requirements

- Co-facilitators: Mr. Stephen Sekel, Ms. Rima Al Hakim, Hayssam Safar (Professor, University of Mons, Belgium)

23- As a general consideration, it was pointed out that universities and training institutions were educating students for a market that was much broader and diverse than the United Nations alone and hence could not tailor instruction exclusively to the United

Nations. Moreover, the aim of training was not merely to produce language specialists but rather well-rounded citizens. It was also pointed out that changes to curricula often required approval from several layers of administration, including in some cases government ministries, and hence could not be introduced quickly, whereas teaching modules geared to United Nations requirements could be easily developed and used without going through elaborate administrative channels. The development of such targeted learning modules could be a productive area for cooperation between DGACM and the MoU universities, and among MoU universities themselves. The United Nations is not asking universities to “teach to the test” but rather to gear their curricula to developing the core competencies that the United Nations expects in its language staff. The universities look to the United Nations to draw up a detailed “profile” of the translator and interpreter, compiling an inventory of all the different skills and competencies required, to guide universities in developing curricula and evaluation procedures, and for students in planning their academic programmes.

24- The United Nations requirement of two passive (B and C) languages posed problems for students whose level of proficiency in the second (C) language might not be up to the expected standard. The MoU network could serve as a framework for horizontal cooperation in this respect, with universities hosting students from other universities who needed to improve their proficiency in a C language that **is** the language of instruction in the host university.

- 25- A university “wish list” of assistance from the United Nations would include:
- (a) Designation of a specific person within the United Nations for contacts with each university
 - (b) Availability of up-to-date audio recordings and written statements
 - (c) Fostering contacts between United Nations language staff and students
 - (d) Providing assessment of student translations by UN staff members
 - (e) Providing model texts on specific subjects together with translations done by UN staff.

26- Universities placed a high value on pedagogical assistance from United Nations language staff and on internships in the United Nations for their students and trainers. Increased participation by United Nations language staff in teaching short-term courses and seminars would be greatly appreciated. Similarly, students interested in working for the UN could be encouraged to undertake translation projects or write their master's thesis on topics relating to the United Nations, which might designate language staff to serve as "thesis advisers or mentors." Skype and other technological tools are making it easier and more economical for United Nations language staff to be involved in distance training and evaluation (participating in end-of-studies examination juries, etc.).

27- Participants from the United Nations were unanimous in stressing the importance of including course work at all stages of professional training designed to develop advanced proficiency in the mother tongue (main or A language) and to expand students' general knowledge and subject-area expertise (in fields of interest to the United Nations such as international law, economics and comparative government). Existing good practices included classroom activities to promote general knowledge (readings in current events) and develop listening comprehension and public speaking (presentation) skills. Activities to develop such knowledge and skills could be incorporated into existing course offerings.

28- Selectivity in admitting students to translation and interpretation programmes is desirable to ensure high standards and a good success rate in United Nations competitive examinations, which would enhance the reputation and standing of the university's training programme. Examples of existing good practices include the use of an entrance examination, interviewing applicants and requiring them to summarize a text in their main language as part of the application process. Universities could also provide students interested in careers in the United Nations with advice and guidance on the organization's requirements and on choosing elective courses of relevance to its activities.

29- The approaches to evaluation taken by academia on the one hand, and the United Nations on the other, are understandably different. For the universities evaluation served

a didactic purpose and was concerned with gauging a student's performance or achievement, whereas for the United Nations the aim was to identify solid aptitude and potential. A detailed matrix of evaluation criteria presented by Ms. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke (Head of the German Section and former head of the Multilingual Department of Translation Studies, University of Geneva) (See Annex XII) could be adapted for use by the United Nations. Practitioners in international organizations probably could not afford such an exhaustive approach, but the criteria could be grouped under three broad headings: (1) accuracy; (2) creativity; and (3) "skopos" (essentially client satisfaction). The United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV), for its part, has developed a matrix for assessing candidates for contractual translation assignments, temporary contracts and internships. For UNOV and the United Nations generally, proficiency in the main language is paramount. It was emphasized, however, that in any assessment system, individual criteria, even when assigned different weights, should not be used mechanically or viewed in isolation, but rather should enable the experienced evaluator to form an accurate overall opinion or judgment of a candidate's level and suitability.

30- For the Interpretation Service at United Nations Headquarters, the key criteria are accuracy, completeness, delivery, quality of the target language and resourcefulness in devising solutions to problems encountered in the test. For the translation services, accuracy, completeness, style (appropriate register and idiomatic expression) and consistency of terminology are most important. In both interpretation and translation, important non-technical competencies are also highly important, such as teamwork or team spirit, political sensitivity and the ability to work well under pressure, including stringent time constraints. Such competencies or character traits can only be gauged through a competency-based interview. Universities should communicate to their students, through information briefings and advice, such standards, criteria and expectations on the part of the United Nations.

Session 3a: Interpretation: Building skills in the target language

- Co-facilitators: Ms. Lynn Visson; Ms. Elena Kidd (Director of Studies, Postgraduate Interpreting and Translation, Department of European Studies and Modern Languages, University of Bath)

- Panellists: Mr. Jesús Baigorri (Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of the Interpreting Section, Department of Translation and Interpreting, University of Salamanca); Ms. Barbara Moser; Mr. Kirill Kasyanov (Interpreter, Russian Section, Interpretation Service, DGACM NY); Ms. Rasha Ajalyaqeen.

31- The session started with presentations by the five Panellists, followed by a general discussion.

32- Mr. Baigorri touched on a wide variety of problems facing students and their instructors in building skills in the target language, and emphasized the real problem shared by so many interpreters living abroad of keeping up with the latest developments in their mother tongue. While living abroad naturally provides excellent practice in at least one of the interpreter's foreign languages, a conscious effort is required to keep up with the changing lexicon and idiom of the mother tongue by following the media and press, listening to speakers, conversing and reading materials in the language. Even within the country of the mother tongue children from schools are arriving at universities with quite different vocabularies; the country field "mouse" has been replaced by the urban computer "mouse." Non-verbal cultural specific skills and gestures, too, are subject to change.

33- He identified the following issues as being of particular importance in the context of teaching interpretation: (a) providing the trainee with a maximum number of synonyms for vocabulary enrichment and for giving the interpreter a sense of register and style; (b) giving back translation tests to check on accuracy; "dialect" varieties of UNese (i.e., the UN jargon of UNDP differs from that of UNICEF); (c) the hailstorm of acronyms assaulting the interpreter at nearly every meeting; (d) working as a pivot and the importance of relay; (e) intensive work on compression, given the increasing speed

with which delegates are delivering their statements; (f) the importance of sight translation as an invaluable exercise even prior to booth practice; (g) the need to provide students with a wide variety of UN materials.

34- Ms. Moser focused on problems of curriculum development, in particular dealing with multiple trainers, and the need to work in an upward triangle from foundation skills to deliberate practice to expertise. She stressed frequent difficulties caused by interface problems between practically minded UN interpreters and trainers and theoretically minded university academics. A thoroughly competent professional interpreter or trainer from the UN – or any other organization – will be of little use to university students unless he/she is fully aware of the students' level of knowledge, preparation and training. The more information the visitor is given, the better – e.g., not "we need pedagogical assistance," but "we are looking for someone working with German and English into French to teach for two weeks in mid-April, by which time the students can successfully interpret a 4-5 minute speech on a general topic."

35- A trainer who walks into the classroom unaware of the level of student skills can frustrate the students with excessively difficult and complex materials, or bore them with texts and tapes that are too easy. In addition, the universities should coordinate with prospective employers regarding desired skills and knowledge of the graduates. The more preparation the students are given before each visit, the higher the yield; if a visitor is expected from the Human Rights Council, the students should have plenty of time to study the history of that organization, its agenda, speeches, and lexicon.

36- Visitors providing pedagogical assistance in universities were requested to provide feedback to students and to plan for follow-up visits. The better the preparation for the visits, the greater the yield for the students.

37- Mr. Krill Kasyanov (Russian booth, Interpretation Service, New York) stressed the need, for interpreters who use Russian as their main language, to know the difference between the Russian used at the UN today and the Russian spoken in their native country

in both the pre-perestroika period and at present. For today's young such trainees UNese may sound old-fashioned and artificial; many of them suffer interference in their native tongue from the heavy influence of English in the contemporary Russian media and press. He also stressed the importance of helping students gain self-confidence in using UNese Russian, as well as helping them in self-correcting, in learning an entire set of basic UN expressions before expanding their vocabularies through the use of synonyms, various idioms and collocations. Sight translation exercises were cited as being particularly useful, and so was the need to memorize and render automatic translations for expressions frequently used at the UN such as "targeted sanctions", "flagrant violations", "zero-sum game" or "rogue state."

38- Ms. Lynn Visson focused on the expectations and evaluation of trainees in the English booth, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that English booth trainees are in fact native speakers of the language, rather than so-called "bilinguals" with weaker English or even alinguals. Candidates for UN training ideally should go through a rigorous selection process, involving a personal or phone/Skype interview; it is imperative to hear the voice of the candidate and have an opportunity to assess his/her psychological stability.

39- While there may be an imbalance between the candidate's knowledge of the two foreign languages required (Russian and French or Spanish and French) this must be an easily remediable gap. Candidates for the UN training should be warned that the training course is a demanding programme, and must pace themselves, allowing for time to rest and absorb material learned, as overwork can easily lead to a language "crash." The training programme begins with exercises in English designed to expand vocabulary, register and synonyms. Work with sight translation precedes booth work. Candidates are encouraged to record their interpretation at all times and to keep listening to these recordings. It is particularly useful for candidates to repeat and re-record a speech paying attention each time to a different aspect of the interpretation: vocabulary, grammar, syntax, style, register, delivery, and then to record one final time putting all of these elements together.

40- Trainees must master the elements of the UN Charter, in particular the preamble, and show familiarity with General Assembly speeches, peacekeeping, the language of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Committees, and the basic agenda items of the Security Council. In addition, they must know the language of drafting, i.e. the terms for punctuation marks in all of their languages and the language of resolutions: "corrigendum," "agendum," "insert," "delete," etc.

41- Both UN trainers and schools should be encouraged to keep files of their training materials for future use; all too often these are discarded at the end of a short-term program.

42- Some trainers give exams at the end of each week of the UN training program (over the years these programs have ranged in length from one to six months), while others prefer weekly individual consultations with the trainees to discuss their progress and difficulties. In any case, practice in taking exams is imperative to dispel "stage fright" during a real test. And the trainee must see the UN exam – be it a freelance exam or one for a permanent post – as marking the beginning and not the end of his training; working at the UN is essentially going to school for life.

43- Ms. Rasha Ajalyaqeen addressed the criteria used in assessing examinations for Arabic interpreters. Problems flagged included students with a poor knowledge of standard Arabic, those who work on markets with a high tolerance for inaccuracies and become accustomed to sloppy renderings, and students who view their language as a mere tool rather than as a subject of national pride. Given the sensitive nature of the Middle East conflict, it is particularly important that Arabic interpreters have the ability to express thoughts and feelings accurately and faithfully, and as briefly as possible, in a highly politically sensitive environment and demonstrate an ability to remain calm in stressful conditions.

44- Ms. Ajalyaqeen noted that criteria for the Arabic exams stipulated no more than one “contresens”, and that knowledge of UN terminology did not necessarily imply knowledge of dozens of acronyms. Given the decreasing rates of success in examinations for the UN Arabic booth over the last few years, the need to improve the quality of academic training programs for Arabic interpreters was stressed, as well as the need for remedial language programs and academic bridge programs during the time between graduation from a university training program and the taking of UN exams.

45- Ms. Elena Kidd commented that universities should step up the number of tests in their interpretation programs to deal with the problem of nerves at UN exams, and advocated increasing the exchange of professionals between universities and the UN. She also flagged the problem of extremely high fees now being required by UK interpretation schools as the result of a nation-wide rise in tuition costs, and of the generally low interest of students in learning foreign languages.

46- Participants in the discussion following the Panellists' statements emphasized the need for bridging the gaps between interpretation schools and the UN program; Alison Graves of the outreach unit of the European Parliament pointed to the European Parliament summer program scheduled for July. Barbara Moser underlined the importance of workshops for the training of trainers, and the extent to which a good deal of training and examinations can be done virtually.

47- They commented on the difficulty of holding a class for only a single student with a particular language combination. They drew attention to the need, voiced by potential employers, for interpreters with good Russian and Arabic. It was noted that in many organizations changing standards are now frequently making English the language of choice rather than French.

Session 3b: Translation: Practical approaches to the training of future UN translators

- Co-facilitators: Mr. Stephen Sekel, Mr. Fernando Prieto Ramos

48- The United Nations consultant pointed out, by way of introduction, that there were two slogans current in education circles in the United States, namely “teach to the test” and “writing across the curriculum.” The former was generally viewed as a negative thing and was certainly not what the United Nations expected its university partners to do. There was no need to tailor course materials or approaches to the United Nations competitive examinations or to provide intensive coaching for students planning to sit for such examinations in order to provide a sound preparation for the examinations. That could be achieved in a variety of ways, even without any explicit reference to the United Nations. “Writing across the curriculum” was a concept that recognized the central importance of writing to every academic discipline and, as applied to translator training, it would mean incorporating in every course a component focusing on writing in the mother tongue. That alone would go a long way toward addressing the most serious shortcoming of candidates who failed the competitive examinations, namely poor writing skills in their mother tongue/target language. Developing students’ familiarity with specialized subjects dealt with in the United Nations – international law, development economics and project management, to name some of the more prominent – should also be part of the translation training curriculum.

49- Ms. Martine Azubuiké, Chief of the French Translation Section at the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV), described the approach adopted by her section – and to a large extent the other language sections as well -- to the testing and recruitment of young translators for short-term contracts. A test which included both general and specialized translation was used to evaluate the potential of applicants. There was no compromising, however, on writing skills in the target language, since a candidate deficient in this area was unlikely to improve on the job. The evaluation matrix used is attached. Three subjects that should be taught across the entire curriculum were advanced target language skills, general translation and law. Translators needed a firm grasp of the resources and grammar of their target language (e.g. sequence of tenses), and universities could be of assistance in that area by recommending reference books, grammars, etc. that could be used by the UN language services in training new recruits.

Other steps that could be taken in cooperation between the United Nations and universities included:

- (a) Using previous competitive exam papers to raise students' awareness of the crucial importance of general translation
- (b) Organizing a contest using the competitive exams of the previous year. In each university, students would create a group interested in taking part in the contest. Each group would translate the general text given in the previous exam. Each group (or city) would send their version of the general translation to the UN, for evaluation against their peers from other cities (i.e. for the French language, students from Paris would compete against students from, say, Geneva and Mons)
- (c) Using the annual Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization as a basic training text in translation classes
- (d) Encouraging the writing of Master's theses on general translation versus specialized translation and translation projects on international relations or using UN documents.
- (e) Offering International Relations as a possible specialization for translation students
- (f) Placing increased emphasis on legal translation.

50- Ms. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke said that economics and law were the two pillars of translator training at ETI and that the Faculty of Law, with which ETI cooperated, had valuable links with international organizations in Geneva. Noting that UNOV invited experts to make presentations to language staff, she said that she could put UNOV in touch with Universitas Austria, a professional association of interpreters and translators, which might be of assistance in identifying experts and arranging for lectures.

51- Mr. Anthony Pitt (International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that as ITU was a technical specialized agency of the United Nations, one would think that an

engineering background, for example, would be an asset for a translator, and yet telecommunication was such a broad field that some specialists could be “too specialized.” For that reason, general ability and translation technique were in a way more important for ITU translators. Because UN organizations were constantly under pressure to deliver, they tended to think in short-term ways, but he agreed that in recruitment the organizations should evaluate young candidates’ potential.

52- Presentations were given by Mr. Abdelaziz Hamdy (American University in Cairo (AUC)), Mr. Fernando Prieto Ramos (Ecole de Traduction et d’Interpretation (ETI), University of Geneva), Ms. Fayza El Qasem (Ecole supérieure d’interprètes et de traducteurs (ESIT)), and Mr. Fernando Toda (University of Salamanca), highlighting the approaches followed by their schools and the curricula currently taught. (Electronic versions of these presentations are attached.) It emerged from all four presentations that these universities -- and most likely other MoU universities as well -- have already been doing much of what the United Nations has been seeking through the MoU relationship, even though course materials and methods may not be specifically geared to the United Nations. The competencies that are being developed in these training programmes are definitely the same as those that make up the profile of the successful UN translator.

53- Mr. Lidi Wang, Beijing Foreign Studies University, said that up until the 1980s United Nations translators for Chinese came through a UN-sponsored programme that was geared almost exclusively to the United Nations. That situation no longer existed and in the last decade or so, translator training in China had become more general in content. In China there was a great deal of interest in the United Nations language competitive examinations. Training of Chinese translators needed to take into account the special difficulties of translating into Chinese from other languages that were so different from it in structure. Training should also place greater emphasis developing interpersonal and communication skills that were important for success as a translator. In that connection it was to be hoped that the United Nations could provide increased opportunities for internships at its various offices.

54- Owing to a shortage of time, the co-facilitators suggested that any participant who wished to react to the UNOV or university presentations could submit written comments either to the co-facilitators or the conference organizers at the University of Salamanca.

Agreed conclusions

Session 4: Research and Training for/with UN Staff

- Co-facilitators: Ms. Lynn Visson, Ms. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke

- Panellists: Mr. Nikolai Garbovskiy (Director of the Higher School of Translation and Interpretation, Lomonosov Moscow State University); Mr. Jesús Baigorri; Mr. Henri Awaiss (School Translation and Interpretation, St. Joseph University, Beirut); Ms. Nathalie Gormezano (Academic and Research Director, ISIT, Paris)

55- The session started with presentations by the Panellists, followed by a general discussion.

56- Ms. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke addressed the urgent needs of the UN in the next 5-10 years and emphasized the need to make full use of the resources available through members of the *Conférence Internationale permanente d'Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes* (CIUTI) and of those institutions not currently parties to the MoUs. She emphasized the need for teachers of interpretation to work intensively with UN staff/consultants on international issues, problems in Africa and the language of peacekeeping, and how helpful UN staff could be in training students in these specific areas. Stress was placed on the need for good internal communication within departments of the UN and for external communication with other institutions and universities. Dr. Jahnke suggested that good use be made of UN staff who could act as consultants while on home leave or on mission in a location near one of the MoU universities, and she touched on the problem of effectiveness and efficiency in communication and the need to train interpreters in both areas. She proposed for colleagues' consideration a research project on emotional language in a political context

now underway at the University of Geneva, soon to be made available to interested individuals.

57- Mr. Ibrahima Diallo (Training and Outreach Coordination Officer, DGACM, New York) followed up on Ms. Jahnke's comments by suggesting that there should be more visits by university personnel to the UN and by UN personnel to universities. These can be carried out in connection with staff external studies programs, or with short-term university programs generally ranging from two weeks to one month, which provide training in language or in a specialized subject matter such as law. He emphasized the need for greater formalization of the UN outreach program, for the holding of regular annual events in various universities, courses in the technology of translation, and for establishing a data base that would systematize such opportunities so that UN staff would be well informed on possibilities for study – e.g., the annual seminar on legal Spanish held in Salamanca. The Language Outreach Portal, he noted, now permits for the creation of such an integrated system.

58- Mr. Nikolai Garbovskiy emphasized the problem of mother tongue competence, and the development of textbooks appropriate for language training programs. He stressed the need for interpreters to improve their B and C languages as well, and that study in Russia was particularly important for Russian Language interpreters, given the enormous changes in that language over the past decade. Dr. Gorbovskiy advocated cooperation in the creation of bilingual and multilingual glossaries, and described the opportunities available for training at various schools and faculties of Moscow State University, inter alia in such areas as law and economics. He encouraged the UN to share with the universities its empirical experience in the development of translation, interpretation and terminology studies. He also stressed the need for UN experts to provide assistance to Russian and Chinese interpreters in areas such as classical and Biblical references in which training has been lacking in these countries.

59- Mr. Jesús Baigorri reported on some of the courses organized at the University of Salamanca, including those established in response to specific requests, refresher courses,

and courses on legal translation. He stressed the usefulness of the "exchanges without money" program established in 2008, e.g. having a UN permanent interpreter give workshops at the University of Salamanca in return for the right to attend university lectures. This "Salamanca model" was established within the framework of IAMDLAP and with pedagogic assistance from CIUTI. Such a "no-money" exchange framework is clearly a win-win situation for all concerned.

60- Mr. Igor Shpiniov followed up with a specific examples of how UN staff on home leave combined teaching translations and interpretation classes at the Herzen Institute in St. Petersburg with the right to attend lectures and classes there e.g., teaching classes in the morning and attending courses in the afternoon, and suggested that this type of exchange could be of interest to other universities as well, since this is an excellent opportunity for combining UN staff training with student training. He emphasized the efforts now underway at the UN to identify experienced trainers.

61- Mr. Henri Awaiss of the Ecole de Traducteurs et d'Interprètes de Beyrouth (Université St. Joseph) said that the university welcomed UN staff and underlined the importance of the ongoing training of translators and interpreters, of "lifelong learning" to keep them abreast of the latest developments in their fields. He introduced a new dictionary of medical terminology and various projects for Arabic terminology, and discussed the work of CERTA, the research and terminology catalogue of publications and works on translation and interpretation. Mr. Awaiss ended with an intriguing question: If the universities change their demands and positions, will the UN also change?

62- Ms. Nathalie Gormezano presented a collaborative research project from ISIT consisting of a new and highly user-oriented database for scientific terminology and intercultural knowledge. She emphasized that the objective of the database was to provide data in all of the UN languages, including terminology, phraseology and contextualization designed to meet UN needs. Ms. Gormezano suggested a collaborative project among MoU member universities to adapt data to needs and to develop a broad

database. An article on a justice project on law in France related to the recently established database is scheduled for the next issue of the "Meta" journal.

63- During the discussion, the theme of exchange of experience on a non-paid basis was continued by Barbara Moser, who cited the example of the peacekeeping project ETI conducted in cooperation with the ICRC (staff share experiences in Pakistan and Afghanistan) on the topic of interpreters in conflict zones. Volunteers from the ICRC, UNHCR and the ILO work with student interpreters, both in person and virtually. Those interpreters with a background in pedagogy are particularly valuable for such programs.

64- Mr. Diallo stressed the feasibility of visits to universities by UN staff interpreters on home leave. Several Chinese colleagues referred to the problem of winnowing hundreds of potential applicants to Chinese university interpreter training programs down to a reasonable number of candidates. The idea was proposed of using e-files for candidates for UN internships and increasing use of virtual techniques. Mr. Diallo emphasized that the new Portal offered a potential in this respect.

Session 5: Working together - job expectations, traineeships, exchanges and networks

- Co-facilitators: Mr. Michael Ten-Pow (Chief, English Translation Service, DGACM);
Mr. Jesús Baigorri

- Panellists: Ms. Barbara Moser-Mercer; Mr. Harry Ping Dai; Mr. Professor Fernando Toda (Head of the Department of Translation and Interpretation, University of Salamanca).

65- Members of the panel acknowledged the impact of the current budgetary environment on future MoU activities and highlighted the need for increased reliance on horizontal cooperation among universities, including the sharing of best practices and leveraging the strengths of individual members.

66- Ms. Barbara Moser-Mercer made a presentation on E-collaboration in interpreter training via web-streamed master classes and structured cooperation in such areas as curriculum progression and the planning of pedagogical support. All of the relevant information, including system specifications, was available online and, where necessary, the University of Geneva, which was one of the pioneers of computer-supported collaborative learning (E-learning), would be pleased to provide advice in the implementation of e-pedagogy.

67- The panel and participants explored various ways of strengthening the internship programme in the light of the experience gained thus far. Ideas included the possibility of study visits by university faculty members and traineeships in which trainees would be paid a stipend but would also be assigned part of the regular workload of the receiving service or unit. The latter proposal sought to address a perceived weakness in the current system insofar as candidates for internships who met all of the academic and other requirements were unable to avail themselves of internship opportunities because they lacked the financial resources to do so. The possibility was also mentioned of the establishment of a trust fund with contributions from Member States to expand the internship programme.

68- Mr. Jesús Baigorri examined various possibilities for networking, including exchanges of faculty and students between MoU universities and specialization within the MoU network. Mr. Fernando Toda noted the possibilities for networking within the framework of the European Masters in Translation (EMT), the European Masters in Conference Interpreting (EMCI), and the OPTIMALE (Optimising Professional Translator Training in a Multilingual Europe) networks. For his part, Mr. Harry Ping Dai noted the need for agreements to cover unconventional language combinations. Other initiatives proposed included the establishment of a dedicated forum for former interns and trainees to share their experiences.

69- Mr. Michael Ten-Pow stressed the need for MoU universities to come up with creative ways of expanding and strengthening cooperation activities. It was important to

build on the momentum created by the Conference and to channel the enthusiasm that was so patently on display among participants. At the same time, stakeholders, universities and DGACM alike, must resist the temptation to lower standards as a means of addressing the problem of the shortage of qualified candidates for Professional language posts.

D) Parallel events

70- In the afternoon of the first day of the Conference, three simultaneous activities took place: (a) a master class on translation, (b) an interactive discussion with Salamanca students on interpretation issues (in replacement on the master class on interpretation, which was canceled because the instructor, Mr. Christian Rolling, Chief of the French Booth in New York, was unable to attend the Conference); (c) a lecture on the history of translation into Spanish within the UN. The following is a synopsis of each of the three events

Master class on translation

- Facilitator: Mr. Stephen Sekel

- Topic: “A case study in the pitfalls of “diplomatic translation” in an international organization: the dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)”

71- Taking as the starting point of the lesson an actual communication from the United Kingdom (in English) as a group, the class extracts points from the text in order to identify the linguistic and political challenges for the translator.

72- The instructor provided a brief definition of “diplomatic translation” and highlighted its distinctive features vis-à-vis other kinds of translation (e.g. literary, technical, legal).

73- The instructor endeavoured to show that a proper translation of such a text requires that the translator have substantial knowledge of the history of the issue (both the general chronology and the previous communications on the subject sent to the United Nations both by the two parties directly concerned and by other parties, including regional organizations, i.e. the OAS). The translator must also be attuned to the political sensitivities of the parties, which are often reflected in specific preferences as to nomenclature and terminology in both languages. He mentioned the main sources of information and reference materials available to United Nations translators.

74- He then explained the time constraints that often apply to translation in the United Nations context, stressing that the institutional translator must combine excellent technical skills with speed and an ability to work well under pressure.

75- The class as a group produced a Spanish translation of selected extracts from actual documents and then compared the translations with the official Spanish version translated by the UN Secretariat (See Annex XIII for the PowerPoint presentation on the topic).

Interactive discussion on interpretation with students

- Facilitator: Ms. Lynn Visson

- Panellists: Mr. Kirill Kasyanov; Ms. Marta Herrero (Salamanca graduate and Spanish interpreter, United Nation Office in Geneva, UNOG); Mr. Zhengren Li (UNOG); Ms. Rasha Ajalyqeen.

- Topic: “A case study in the pitfalls of “diplomatic translation” in an international organization: the dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)”

76- The UN interpreters discussed the nature of their work and how to prepare for meetings, emphasizing the following aspects:

- (a) the need for the interpreter constantly to keep up with the mother tongue as well as with the foreign languages
- (b) the need to keep up with current events and politics
- (c) the need to keep up with UNese and new UN vocabulary
- (d) the ability to use coping mechanisms, gisting, keeping up with speed
- (e) issues of working with texts and with translation of texts
- (f) the importance of knowing the UN competencies and the ethics of interpretation and the vital significance of teamwork

77- The students responded with questions as to how they could best prepare for work at the UN and for taking the UN exams. They were referred to the UN website and the career site, and were encouraged to contact UN interpreter colleagues for additional information.

Lecture “ Notes for a History of Translation into Spanish within the UN”

- Lecturer: Mr. Miguel Sáenz, Professor and former United Nations translator

78- Mr. Sáenz gave a review of Spanish translation at the United Nations, with examples from the Charter and major UN Conventions. He explored the internal dynamics that influenced the choice of terms and nomenclatures, which outside speakers of Spanish might find a bit unusual. He also presented a number of examples showing, *inter alia*, how issues of gender sensitivity were debated and decided (See Annex X for the full text of the lecture in Spanish).

E) Final plenary session

79- After two days of intensive work the Conference held its final plenary session in order to adopt its conclusions and recommendations and consider the future perspectives of the MoU Network.

Next sessions of the Conference

80- The Chair of the Conference opened the plenary by announcing that partners in the MoU Network had agreed to make the Conference an annual event, to be hosted every year by a different member university, in accordance with the principle of geographical and linguistic balance. He also announced that the University of Mons (Belgium) had graciously offered to host the 2012 session. He invited interested member universities to forward proposals to host subsequent sessions of the Conference to him by September 2011.

Establishment of the MoU Executive Committee

81- The Chair of the Conference announced that, in order to allow time for more extensive consultations, this item would be postponed to the next session of the Conference,. He invited member universities to review the proposed terms of reference of the Executive Committee and nominate candidates to the Committee.

Distribution of Commemorative plaques to the universities

82- The Chair of the Conference, in the name of the United Nations, presented to the representatives of MoU universities special plaques commemorating the signing of the MoU with each university.

Launching of the DGACM Language Outreach Portal

83- In his remarks, Mr. Shaaban explained that the purpose of the Portal is to provide relevant information to potential candidates who would like to join the workforce of the

United Nations Language Services, and to facilitate exchanges of information, documents and ideas among the members of the MoU Network.

84- He added that the Portal's public section provides information on UN language careers, what each professional group does, the tools they use and the required academic profile and qualifications, as well as a list of all the universities that have signed memorandums of understanding with the Department, including general information on each university's translation and interpretation programmes, profiles of the people who have been designated to serve as focal points on both sides and a link to the university's website.

85- In addition, there is also a password-protected section set aside for a more private exchange of information, documents and announcements related to activities within the MoU network. He invited users to send suggestions to the Training and Outreach Coordination Officer, who is the Portal's webmaster. He also asked MoU universities to forward any materials or announcements they would like to have posted.

86- He said that the Portal was DGACM's modest gift to the Network of MoU universities and hoped that, despite geographical distances, it would contribute to bringing the Network's members closer to one another.

87- The Training and Outreach Coordination Officer then presented the Portal's various sections to participants.

Closing ceremony

88- In her remarks Ms. Ángeles Serrano García, Vice-Rector for Research, University of Salamanca, spoke on behalf of the Rector of the University of Salamanca. She indicated that the University of Salamanca was one of the first universities to sign an MoU with the United Nations, and that the collaboration between the two parties had been strong ever since. She said that the University of Salamanca was honored to have

been chosen as a host for the first MoU conference. She thanked the participants and the Conference's organizers for their hard work, and wished them a safe return.

89- In his closing remarks, Mr. Shaaban also thanked the participants for answering his call. He expressed his gratitude to the University of Salamanca and the City of Salamanca for their warm welcome and generous hospitality. He invited all partners in the MoU network to take practical steps after the gathering to ensure continued strengthening of the training of conference interpreters and translators by enhancing curricula and teaching methods in all participating universities while at the same time agreeing on common standards for certification. He wished a safe trip to those leaving Salamanca, and declared the conference closed

V- Conclusions and recommendations

A) Agreed conclusions

1- The Conference adopted the following agreed conclusions

Cross-Cutting Issues

1. MoU universities will introduce remedial programmes to strengthen their students' mastery of language A (their main working language).
2. MoU universities will raise awareness within their programmes of the key competencies – both general and linguistic – required for working at the UN.
3. The UN will provide traineeships for trainers.
4. MoU universities will standardize their evaluation criteria. The first step will be for each university to invite professors from other universities to participate in its examination juries. Competencies required by the UN will serve as a basis for the evaluation criteria.

5. MoU universities will create a common bank of curricula, syllabi, teaching materials, manuals, etc., which will be available on the Language Outreach Portal.

Adapting Curricula and Methods

6. The United Nations will draw up an inventory of the skills and competencies required of its translators and interpreters to serve as a guide for universities in adapting curricula and methods and advising students and, for the UN, as a basis for designing tests to measure such skills and competencies and evaluating candidates for language posts.
7. MoU universities will further develop horizontal cooperation among themselves in the fields of (a) adapting curricula and methods to UN requirements; (b) exchanges of students who wish to improve their proficiency in their second language, when such a language is used in the host university.
8. Personal contacts will be facilitated between teachers and students of MoU universities on the one hand, and between them and UN language professionals on the other, for the purpose of sharing current, up-to-date UN materials, assessing and providing feedback on the student's translations of such materials, and providing model translations produced by UN professionals. In this connection, expanding the internship programme is highly desirable.

Interpretation

9. To ensure structured cooperation, pedagogical assistance will be discussed in advance with the beneficiary schools to allow students to prepare for visits by professional interpreters.

10. The UN will consider strengthening its assistance to universities in the UK which train students in Russian, French or Spanish, due to the serious recruitment problems encountered by those universities following the introduction of high tuition fees across the UK.

Practical Approaches to Translator Training

11. Universities will help identify textbooks and reference materials dealing with topics that are important to UN language services (example: grammar, style manuals, law and educational systems). The list could be shared among members of the network and other interested universities and international organizations.
12. University experience in screening applicants for admission to their training programmes will be shared with the UN as a guide for the latter's pre-screening of candidates for its competitive examinations.

Training and Research

13. The UN will communicate with national ministries of education on the need to ensure students' proficiency in their mother tongue before they graduate from high school.
14. Training programmes will allocate more time to studying subject matters of importance for the UN.

Working Together

Participants in the conference:

15. Discussed various ways of strengthening the internship programme in the light of the experience gained thus far. Ideas included exploring the possibility of study visits by university faculty members and traineeships in which trainees would be paid a stipend but would also be assigned part of the regular workload of the host service or unit.
16. Explored various possibilities for networking, including those offered by the European Masters in Translation and by the Optimale Project and the establishment of a dedicated forum for former interns and trainees to share their experiences, including with prospective interns/trainees.
17. Highlighted the need for increasing reliance on horizontal cooperation among MoU universities, including the sharing of best practices and leveraging the strengths of individual members, such as the experience of the University of Geneva in computer-supported collaborative learning (e-learning).

B) Other Recommendations

Evaluation

1. Formalize the UN's criteria for evaluating language professionals, including a grading matrix or grid, and sharing them with the universities in order to help modify curricula and focus training. Organize joint exercises to practice using such a matrix/grid in order to ensure consistency and uniform application.
2. Organize visits by UN staff members to participate in supervising mock examination exercises, as a means to familiarize students with the process in realistic situations and to emphasize UN standards and requirements.

Common projects and the sharing of resources

3. Increase use of UN corpora, available online through Official Documentation System (ODS), as a tool for translation training, as well as critical evaluation of texts and analysis of the different translation techniques used in practice by UN translators, and as a means to build knowledge of the various topics dealt with by the UN. It is important, however, to emphasize the need to build translation competency and proficiency in general, rather than limiting the learning process to specific UN texts.
4. Encourage collaboration between university faculty and UN translators in developing terminology databases, and have staff translators evaluate student translations, pointing out errors and sharing best practices. These activities could be carried out via email or through the UN Language Outreach Portal.
5. The AUC offered its interpretation facilities to the UN to use for its upcoming interpretation examination. The University of Damascus offered the opportunity for staff members to take specialized courses at the university, as well as exchange opportunities for students or staff members wishing to enhance their Arabic language skills.
6. Create a forum/section on the Portal, listing the criteria and procedures for applications to all of the 18 MoU universities;
7. Provide guidance on how the UN can assist educational institutions in making maximum and proper use of UN resources within the time available to teach students the basic skills and materials UN interpreters must know.
8. Establish a commission of MoU and UN representatives to work on standardizing admission criteria to translation and interpretation programmes; post sample entrance exams provided by universities.

9. Encourage close cooperation between UN trainers and university staff to produce appropriate modules for bridge programs between the university programs and UN internship/training, making full use of virtual technology to assist students who are unable to attend such programs in person.
10. Use the Outreach portal to allow UN staff to indicate the locations where they will be on home leave or on missions during which they will be near MoU universities, and to allow university staff to indicate when they expect to be near a UN offices. Such visits can allow for no-compensation exchanges.
11. Use the Outreach portal to allow MoU universities to provide a list of short-term courses they are offering that may be of interest to UN staff, and opportunities for UN staff to teach in such courses in exchange for university privileges.

Use of virtual technology

12. Create exchange programmes where UN staff teach for short periods at technologically advanced MoU universities in return for training in the use of virtual programs and techniques for teaching interpretation.
13. Create a section of the Portal listing and coordinating all existing data banks and glossaries (with the participation of UN terminology staff and making use of the extensive glossaries compiled by members of UN language Services).

ANNEX I

Programme of the Conference

Tuesday, 3rd May 2011

9.00- 9.30	<i>Registration</i>
9.30- 10.15	<p>Opening</p> <p>Plenary session, co-chaired by:</p> <p>Mr Daniel Hernández Ruipérez, Rector of the University of Salamanca.</p> <p>Mr Shaaban M. Shaaban, Under-Secretary-General, DGACM</p>
10.15- 11.15	<p><i>Keynote Speech</i></p> <p>Role of the MoU university network Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban (USG/DGACM)</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>
11.15- 11.30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11.30- 13.00	<p><i>Session 1</i></p> <p>Why do so many applicants fail at the UN exams? Cross-cutting issues in translation and interpretation <u>Facilitator:</u> Mr. Igor Shpiniov (Special Assistant to USG, Office of the USG/DGACM)</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Mr. Jesús Baigorri (University of Salamanca), Mr. Harry Dai (Shanghai International Studies University), Mr. Barry Olsen (Monterey Institute of International Studies), Ms. Anne Fassotte (United Nations, NY), Ms. Rasha Ajalyaqeen (United Nations, NY), Mr. Stephen Sekel (UN Consultant)</p>
13.00- 15.00	Lunch (courtesy of University of Salamanca)
15.00- 17.00	<p><i>Session 2</i></p> <p>Adapting curricula and evaluation procedures to meet UN standards and requirements <u>Facilitators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Stephen Sekel (former Director of DD/DGACM, UN consultant) • Ms. Rima Al Hakim (Dean of The Higher Institute of Translation and

	<p>Interpretation, University of Damascus)</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Mr. Hayssam Safar (University of Mons), Mr. Alexandr Ponimatko (Minsk State Linguistic University), Ms. Elena Kidd (University of Bath), Ms. Rima Al Hakim (Damascus University), Ms. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke (University of Geneva), Mr. Jesús Baigorri (University of Salamanca), Mr. Fernando Toda (University of Salamanca), Mr. Sergey Shilov and/or Ms. Irina Alexeevna (The Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia).</p>
17.00-17.45	<p><i>Coffee & University Presentation session:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecole de Traducteurs et d'Interprètes de Beyrouth (ETIB) - Université Saint-Joseph – Beyrouth • Université de Mons • Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia • Minsk State Linguistic University • Université de Genève • University of Damascus <p>Entrance Hall (Ground Floor), in front of the Conference Room</p>
17.45-18.45	<p>Parallel Events</p> <p><i>Lecture: Notes for a History of Translation into Spanish within the UN.</i> Mr. Miguel Sáenz (UN translator: New York, Geneva, Vienna)</p> <p><i>Master Class: Translation.</i> Mr. Stephen Sekel (former Director of DD/DGACM, UN consultant). For USAL students and MoU participants, depending on room capacity. (Aula 12 -Room 12- first floor)</p> <p><i>Experience-sharing meeting: Interpretation.</i> Mr. Zhengren Li (Head, Interpretation Service, UNOG/Chinese booth, Mr. Kirill Kasyanov (Russian booth), Ms. Lynn Visson (English booth), Ms. Rasha Ajalyaqeen (Arabic booth), Mr. Marta Herrero (Spanish booth). For USAL students and MoU participants, depending on room capacity. (Computer lab 3+Interpreting lab 2 -ground floor-)</p>

Wednesday, 4th May 2011

9.30-11.30	<p><i>Parallel Sessions 3</i></p> <p>3a (Salón de Actos - Conference Room- ground floor)</p> <p>Interpretation: Building skills in the target language</p> <p><u>Facilitators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Lynn Visson (former UN interpreter, consultant) • Ms. Elena Kidd (Director of Studies, Postgraduate Interpreting and Translation, Department of European Studies and Modern Languages)
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	<p>University of Bath)</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Mr. Jesús Baigorri, Ms. Barbara Moser, Mr. Kirill Kasyanov, Ms. Lynn Visson, Ms. Rasha Ajalyaqeen</p> <p>3b (Aula 12 -Room 12- first floor) Translation: Practical approaches to the training of future UN translators <u>Facilitators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Stephen Sekel (former Director of DD/DGACM, UN consultant) • Mr. Fernando Prieto (Chair, Specialized Translation MA Program, and current Head of the Spanish Translation Section and the Multilingual Department of Translation Studies, ETI, University of Geneva) <p><u>Speakers:</u> Mr. Vladimir Parshikov (United Nations Office in Geneva), Ms Martine Azubuike (United Nations Office in Vienna), Mr. Abdelaziz Hamdy (The American University in Cairo), Mr. Fernando Toda (University of Salamanca), Ms. Fayza El Qasem (ESIT, Université de Paris 3, Sorbonne Nouvelle), Mr. Fernando Prieto Ramos (University of Geneva)</p>
11.30-11.45	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11.45-13.15	<p><i>Session 4</i></p> <p>Research and Training for/with UN staff <u>Facilitators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Lynn Visson (former UN interpreter, consultant) • Ms. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke (Head of the German Section and former Head of the Multilingual Department of Translation Studies, ETI, University of Geneva) <p><u>Speakers:</u> Ms. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke (University of Geneva), Mr. Nikolay, Mr. Jesús Baigorri (University of Salamanca), Ms. Nathalie Gormezano (ISIT)</p>
13.15-15.15	Lunch (courtesy of University of Salamanca)
15.15-16.45	<p><i>Session 5</i></p> <p>Working together: job expectations, traineeships, exchanges and networks <u>Facilitators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Michael Ten-Pow (Chief, English Translation Service, DGACM) • Mr. Jesús Baigorri (Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of the Interpreting Section, Department of Translation and Interpreting, University of Salamanca)

	<p><u>Speakers:</u> Ms. Barbara Moser (University of Geneva), Mr. Jesús Baigorri (University of Salamanca), Mr. Harry Dai (Shanghai International Studies University), Mr. Fernando Toda (University of Salamanca)</p>
<p>16.45-17.45</p>	<p><i>Plenary meeting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the Language Outreach Portal. • Establishment of Executive Committee. • Follow-Up to the Conference • Presentation of commemorative plaques to the MoU Universities <p><u>Co-Chair:</u></p> <p>Ms. M^a Ángeles Serrano García, Vice-Rector for Research, University of Salamanca</p> <p>Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban, USG/DGACM</p>
<p>17.45-18.15</p>	<p><i>Closing of the Conference. Plenary.</i></p> <p>Ms. M^a Ángeles Serrano García, Vice-Rector for Research, University of Salamanca</p> <p>Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban, USG/DGACM.</p>

ANNEX II

Opening remarks by Mr. Daniel Hernández Ruipérez, Rector Magnifico of the University of Salamanca

(To be added later)

ANNEX III

Opening remarks by Mr. Carlos Fortea, Dean of the Faculty of Translation and Documentation, University of Salamanca

(To be added later)

ANNEX IV

Opening remarks by Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management, Chair of the Conference

- Dr. Daniel Henandez Rupierez, Rector Magnifico of the University of Salamanca;
- Dr Carlos Fortea, Dean of the Faculty of Translation and Documentation
- Honourable Representatives of MoU universities;
- Dear partners from the European Parliament and the European Commission;
- Dear members of the IAMLADP Executive Committee and Representatives of Agencies of the United Nations System;
- Dear Participants in the Salamanca Conference of MoU universities
- Ladies and gentlemen

Let me first congratulate and thank the University of Salamanca and the Conference organizers for the excellent arrangements and for their kind hospitality. Thank you all for answering our call to participate in this important gathering. It is my pleasure to share this moment with all of you.

The idea of holding a conference of all universities that are signatories of memorandums of understanding with the United Nations was born in early 2010. More than two years after the beginning of this new and promising venture, it was fitting for all the actors to meet in one place in order to take stock of what has been achieved so far, to identify any shortcomings that need to be addressed and chart a course for our continued common endeavour in the years to come.

When I was appointed Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management in 2007, I saw the need for the United Nations to take an initiative because it faced the same challenges as other organizations, with massive retirements of translators, interpreters, editors and other language staff expected in the coming years, and a shortage of qualified candidates with the right language skills to replace them. It was obvious, however, that the United Nations, being a global organization, had different needs in terms of geographical coverage and language combinations.

DGACM started in 2007 the process that brought us to this venue today with both formal and informal contacts, with a number of schools of higher learning around the world, which included informational meetings, awareness-raising visits, workshops organized with the participation of UN language staff in several universities. As a result of those efforts, an uptick in the number of successful candidates from the beneficiary universities was observed. We at the UN took that as a proof that a more proactive approach to attracting, training and retaining qualified language staff worked better than total reliance on market forces. The Outreach to Universities Programme was launched

and the first memorandum of understanding was signed with the University of Westminster in April 2008.

Today the network of universities that have signed a standard MoU with the United Nations includes 18 training institutions in Africa, Europe, North America, China, Russia and the Middle East. We are currently examining several prospective candidates from Latin America, to ensure that that part of the world is represented in our network.

Dear participants, ladies and gentlemen,

After this brief historical review, let us now reflect on the present and the future of our common project.

The language professions are experiencing an unprecedented technological mutation. Nascent technology tools and methods such as remote interpretation, automatic speech recognition and processing, translation memories, electronic referencing, online corpuses, machine translation and many others are transforming the language professional's work in unprecedented ways. This transformation presents both challenges and opportunities for language professionals, for those who train them and for those who employ them. It calls for nimbleness and adaptability in all spheres of the profession. We, as partners within the MoU Network, have to find collaborative ways and means to ensure that together we are blazing a trail for training tomorrow's language professionals, equipped, not only with the fundamental knowledge of languages and the basic techniques of their trade, but also with the technological savvy to compete in tomorrow's market and to serve tomorrow's global community.

Far from being a theoretical exercise, I envision this conference as a hands-on, results-oriented gathering of practitioners, resulting in clear recommendations and practical outcomes, among which the establishment of an Executive Committee of our MoU network, to be entrusted with defining the orientation of our partnership and guiding its actions. I call on all participants to keep these practical results in mind, so that we can come out of this gathering with concrete results.

The challenges are considerable, but they are not insurmountable. I am confident that this gathering of eminent professionals, dedicated to excellence in the training of the next generation of language specialists, will prove to be more than capable of overcoming those challenges and charting a course for the future.

Thank you.

ANNEX V

Keynote speech on the roles of the MoU network by Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban

Dear Participants, ladies and gentlemen

As I indicated in my opening remarks, one of the main outcomes expected from this conference is the establishment of a structure for our collaborative network.

In today's session, I propose to discuss with you what may be considered the main benefits of establishing a functional network of universities that are signatories to memorandums of understanding with the United Nations (MoU network for short), before offering a few thoughts on what actions the network can take to ensure the realization of those benefits

I- Benefits of establishing an MoU network

There are three major benefits to be expected from the creation of the MoU network, depending on which group of players we consider:

A) For participating universities

Training institutions are the principal players in the network, since its main objective is to create horizontal linkages among universities, which will allow them to work together on issues pertaining to the training of conference translators and interpreters. It is an opportunity for them to enhance training in ways that open the doors of employment for their graduates in a prestigious market of international multilateral diplomacy. Conference interpretation and translation, along with their associated technologies, represent together a niche market, which offers successful trainees opportunities for stable employment, decent benefits and flexible work arrangements, including home-based freelancing. In addition to international and regional organizations, global businesses and the local private and public sectors in many countries are potential employers of any young interpreter or translator who graduates with solid qualifications and an in-demand language combination.

Close collaboration with one of the biggest institutional employers – the United Nations - will help participating training institutions in attracting both talented students and teachers, which will in turn enhance their reputation and standing as centers of academic excellence.

B) For potential employers

For international and regional organizations, global business and other potential employers of language professionals, the network will lay the foundation for effective succession planning. The United Nations and its partner organizations, which include other agencies, funds and programmes of the UN system, as well as non-UN organizations, that employ language professionals, are all suffering, to various degrees, a shortage in qualified conference interpreters and translators. This shortage is expected to become more acute in the coming years as the current generation of translators and interpreters reaches the age of retirement. In the case of the Department for General Assembly and Conference management (DGACM), we are already experiencing a wave of retirements, which will only grow during the next five to ten years, and as a result of which the Department will have to replace up to 40 percent of its current staff in language services. This is a problem that we have to address in radically new ways because if we do not, it may worsen and jeopardize our language services, which, as you all know, are one of the main pillars of any organization whose business model involves dialogue among people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The basic element of succession planning is to make sure there is always a new generation of professionals ready to take over from the old, equipped with skills and competencies that are equal, if not superior, to those being lost. Succession planning must therefore take into account both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the training of such professionals.

Creating a network of trainers and potential employers of conference translators and interpreters is a step in the right direction. It will allow us to combine our ideas, resources and efforts in order to make sure that this spectre of severe and disruptive shortages does not materialize.

C) For non-participating training institutions

Given limited capacity, the United Nations will not be able to continue to sign memorandums of understanding with all interested universities. In fact, we are not very far from reaching the limits of what we can manage effectively, especially if we take into consideration the fact that most of our efforts in the field of outreach are based on dedication and imaginative work of staff members who have taken it upon themselves to perform these tasks in addition to their regular duties, without expecting any additional benefits.

We are therefore counting on you, the current members of the network, to extend a friendly hand to any training institutions outside this network, which share our goals and are ready to work with us to achieve them.

In this spirit of good neighbourliness, each MoU signatory can act as a regional hub or centre of excellence, from which good practices in the field of training conference translators and interpreters can be disseminated to other non-signatory universities, through exchanges of students and teachers and sharing of teaching methods, tools and curricula.

This is particularly useful in parts of the world where public and private financing are limited and training resources scarce. Together we can try to make high quality training available to many more talented young men and women who would otherwise be excluded from such educational opportunities, because they lack the financial means to go to the best equipped universities.

II- Possible areas of priority work

In order for the MoU network to achieve its goals, I believe the first and most important step is to identify areas of focus, elaborate clear, practical strategies to tackle them successfully, and draw up a realistic work plan that takes into account our capacities and resources.

The main areas of focus as I see them would include ensuring a continuous dialogue among participants, through regular contacts and consultation; sharing information, especially information related to career events; sharing methods and intellectual resources; harmonizing certification standards; and working closely with professionals in the field.

Dear participants, ladies and gentlemen,

These are a few ideas that I wanted to share with you, leaving it to this Conference and the future MoU Network Executive Committee to enrich and perfect them and to provide more detailed implementation blueprints.

I hope that the launching of our network will be the catalyst that allows us to continue to progress towards the achievement of our common objectives

Thank you for attention.

Now, I open the floor for an interactive discussion.

Dear Participants, ladies and gentlemen

In order to provide relevant information to potential candidates who would like to join the workforce of the United Nations Language Services, and in order to facilitate exchanges of information, documents and ideas among the members of our network, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management has been working on creating an online clearing house for all those who would like to take part in this effort.

It is a website, which we decided to call “The Language Outreach Portal”. Its address is “www.unlanguage.org” and it is divided into a public section and a password protected section.

The public section provides information on UN language careers, what each professional group does, the tools they use and the required academic profile and qualifications. It also contains a list of all the universities that have signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department, including general information on each university’s translation and interpretation programmes, profiles of the people who have been designated to serve as focal points on both sides and a link to the university’s website.

In addition, you will find other types of information and links, which we hope will be useful to students and graduates, as well as to professors who teach in those fields.

The current username and password to access the restricted section are (username: university; password: Unispace123, with a capital U). This is a space we have set aside for a more private exchange of information, documents and announcements related to activities within the MoU network. You are invited to send any materials or announcements you would like to post to the DGACM Training and Outreach Coordination Team, whose contact information can be found on the Portal, under the “contact us” link. I encourage especially to share, through the Portal, materials having to do with the training interpreters and translators.

Dear Participants, ladies and gentlemen

This is our modest gift to the Network of MoU universities. We hope it contributes to bringing us all closer to one another, despite the geographical distance. But we are also keenly aware that it is not perfect. We know it will take a lot more work to

make it a vehicle of collaboration that allows each user to reach his or her own destination quicker, without too much mechanical hassle.

We welcome your input on how to improve the Portal. In order to achieve this objective, I have instructed the Training and Outreach Coordination Team to take your suggestions into consideration and to incorporate them into future updates of the Portal, as much as their capabilities allow them to.

Thank you for listening. We now invite you to watch a quick preview of the website.

Happy browsing.

ANNEX VII

**Closing remarks by Ms. Ángeles Serrano García, Vice-Rector for Research,
University of Salamanca**

(To be added later)

ANNEX VIII

Closing remarks by Mr. Shaaban M. Shaaban

At the end of two days of intense work and fruitful contacts, in this beautiful and historic city of Salamanca, I would like to thank all of you again for answering our call, and for your pioneering efforts and valuable input, which allowed this conference to succeed.

I would like to address special thanks to our hosts, the University of Salamanca and the City of Salamanca, for their warm welcome and generous hospitality.

My special thanks also go to the members of Organizing Committee here in Salamanca and around the world for their tireless efforts made during the past months in order to put together all the necessary ingredients for a successful gathering.

Last, but not least, let me express my sincere gratitude to all those who worked behind the scenes, whose names you may not find on the attendance list, but whose contribution has been just as vital.

It has been a wonderful opportunity for all of us to meet in one place and get to know each other, because despite the wonders of modern communication technology, nothing can replace a face-to-face meeting in which partners interact directly and exchange views freely.

Dear participants, ladies and gentlemen,

After most of us leave Salamanca, let us take practical steps as agreed at the Conference to ensure that our network does not remain ink on paper, but become a living, dynamic and enduring endeavour, which all of us will continue feeding with ideas and hard work. We will continue to exchange views and further develop the collaborative efforts which started before this conference, and which have been recognized by its participants.

I hope that the next time we all meet again, maybe in a different city, the training of conference interpreters and translators will have made steps in the direction that we all desire, which is to enhance curricula and teaching methods in all participating universities, while at the same time agreeing on common standards for certification.

We at the UN will help you in keeping our joint network alive and in achieving its objectives. I invite all of you to do the same.

This Conference of MoU universities will be held annually. I now invite Professor Alain Piette, Dean of the Faculty for Translation and Interpretation of the University of MONS to speak at his request.

(UMONS expresses interest in hosting the Second MoU Conference in the first week of May 2012... Participants welcome.)

I encourage any interested university member of this network to forward expressions of interest addressed to me, signed by the Rector, by 1 September 2011. We will follow the principle of geographic and language balance in hosting the conference.

I suggest we adopt the following agreed conclusions (Chair reads the conclusions).

The Executive Committee will be established observing the principle of geographic balance and equality of languages. The next two hosts will be members of the Executive Committee. All universities members of the network interested in becoming members of the Committee should write to me in the same way I have described before. Consultations will take place between universities located in the same geographic regions to ensure equitable geographic and linguistic balance.

Thank you very much and a safe trip to those of you who are travelling.

ANNEX IX

Additional clarifications from the Arabic Interpretation Service Section of the United Nations Headquarters, New York

UN evaluation strategies:

- An interpreter is expected to express the thoughts and the feelings of the speaker faithfully and accurately, through a short and grammatically correct route, in a politically sensitive environment.
- The UN Generic Job Profile expects the interpreter to “demonstrate a high level of concentration; split second accuracy, ability to work under continuous stress and deliver clear interpretation, mastery of subject matter. He/she is expected to show persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges and remain calm in stressful situations”.
- Exam Evaluation Strategies are based on the above. Candidates are evaluated in three main areas: (a) accuracy/completeness; (b) delivery and; (c) quality of target language(s).
- Language quality includes vocabulary (example: dairy products are not yogurt), grammar (use of definite/indefinite articles, prepositions, relative pronouns etc...), collocation, register and syntax.
- Other technique-related issues include resourcefulness and endurance (under stress or when faced with a challenge).
- Speeches are arranged in an ascending degree of difficulty. The first speech is eliminatory & common in parts A & B to level the playing field for candidates. Candidates who fail their part A – into Arabic are eliminated. Examiners often listen to a couple of sentences in part B to identify potential candidates for training schemes.
- More than one *contre-sens* in a 7-8 minute speech is not tolerated. Claims of poor sound quality must be verified on the spot. Recordings are checked for quality control.

- *Lack of knowledge of UN terminology* has never been a reason for failing a UN exam. Oral instructions are given to repeat acronyms in English. Handouts give translations of acronyms in both A and B components.
- The board of examiners has noticed a structural weakness in candidates' language and interpretation skills in A and B combinations. Endurance suffers drastically after 15-20 minutes of interpretation. Exam results for Arabic for the period 2001-2009 were as follows (numbers of successful candidates): 2001 (8); 2004 (11); 2007 (8, one disqualified in the interview); 2009 (1).

Language and language quality issues:

- There is noticeable apprehension in academic circles about UN evaluation criteria in UN exams. The parties need to agree on the premise: is there one good Arabic, English or French or is the quality in the ears of the listener?
- *The point to be emphasized is that there aren't different languages:* one good for the UN, the other for the rest of the world. Example: Arabic is the standard Arabic one hears on television on news networks and reads in the press. Evaluation of English does take into account the fact that it is a second language. Accent without excesses is tolerated. A reasonable grammatical structure without egregious mistakes is accepted.
- The Board of Examiners noticed that many candidates for the Arabic booth suddenly switched from French as B language to English B, under market demand pressures. Their English constructs and even vocabulary remain those of French.
- Experience shows that one cannot remedy basic deficiencies – namely grammatical deficiencies – in language skills through time,. Those with a polished language, who are well read, who continue to make an effort to keep in touch with the language, will always improve. Those with structural grammatical or vocabulary issues, who have good interpretation skills will squeak through but are unlikely to shine. They are likely to continue to make the same mistakes.
- It an examiner's responsibility to select candidates who can hit the ground running. The Board of Examiners selects interpreters at various expertise levels, provided that they possess a minimum balance between skills and language quality in both A & B. The low yield of successful candidates has been attributed inter alia to the decline in language quality due to poor education and to local market conditions that accept less than optimal performance.

UN expectations versus expectations by candidates and training institutions:

- UN qualifying criteria are clear: a university degree in Interpretation and/or translation, or a liberal arts University degree with interpretation experience.
- Information circulars, exam notices and announcements stipulate that the applicant must have a perfect command of his/her main language (or A language), in addition to an excellent knowledge of a second language. Candidates must hold a university degree from a recognized school of interpretation in which at least one full academic year is devoted to interpretation. Alternatively, applicants must hold a degree from a university or institution of equivalent status in which their A language is the language of instruction and have 200 days of work experience as conference interpreters. Applicants who graduated from a university in which the language is not the language of instruction can be allowed to sit for the exam provided that they received their secondary education in that language.

Fields of Cooperation

- UN staff are generally short on theory but long on practice. They need to deconstruct experience to extract theory from practice in order to optimize benefits to participants in pedagogical assistance. Universities should be able to share research results in the fields of interpretation and translation assessment. Techniques for dealing with speed should be analyzed (compression or gisting?).
- We should find ways to leverage the cooperation with MoU universities by asking them to cater to continuous learning needs of UN staff, including through remedial courses, depending on the comparative advantage of each university. In this respect the example of the Arab Media Institute of Journalists (a LAS sub-entity) could be emulated to provide UN interpreters with techniques, including breathing techniques, correcting pronunciation and delivery
- Academic bridge programs, such as the one undertaken by the Qatar foundation when it invited universities to “University City” may also provide some answers. They can be developed locally to include more focus on language, less attention to technique, especially for those who have passed the aptitude/admission tests. Admission tests may benefit from incorporating booth exercises of limited duration – a paragraph to test reflexes and basic skills.

ANNEX X

Lecture “ Notes for a History of Translation into Spanish within the UN”, by Dr. Miguel Sáenz, Professor and former United Nations translator

Notas para una historia de la traducción al español en las Naciones Unidas

Cuando me propusieron que hablase sobre la historia de la traducción al español en las Naciones Unidas dije que la tarea era superior a mis fuerzas. No soy historiador sino, simplemente, traductor y, aunque mi contacto con las Naciones Unidas haya sido casi constante desde 1965, fecha en que ingresé en ellas como funcionario, los datos que puedo ofrecer se basan, casi exclusivamente, en mi propia experiencia. No existe, o no he sabido encontrar, una obra sobre la traducción parecida a la excelente Interpreters at the United Nations: A History (Salamanca, 2004), de Jesús Baigorri-Jalón, responsable de la Sección de Interpretación de esta Universidad.

Por un momento, pensé titular mi intervención, imitando a Dostoievski, Notas del subsuelo (*Zapizki iz padpolia*), pero luego pensé que no sería apropiado: una gran parte de mi actividad como funcionario se desarrolló en el piso catorce de la Sede de las Naciones Unidas en Nueva York, con espléndidas vistas sobre el East River. Además, quisiera que estas notas fueran, más que cualquier otra cosa, optimistas.

El origen de la traducción al español en las Naciones Unidas está envuelto en leyendas. Por extraño que parezca, nadie parece saber a ciencia cierta quién tradujo la Carta de las Naciones Unidas al español. He hablado con viejos revisores pero ninguno está seguro. Personalmente, me inclino a creer que fue el argentino Honorio Roigt, luego primer jefe de la sección española de traducción, quien se ocupó de esa tarea, aunque quizá no la realizara solo. En cualquier caso, se trata de un texto que sigue impresionando y que, con los años, ha cobrado una hermosa pátina: “NOSOTROS LOS PUEBLOS DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS RESUELTOS / a preservar a las generaciones venideras del flagelo de la guerra...”.

En ese texto se encuentra ya el fundamento de algunos de los tabús que los traductores al español aprenderían a respetar durante años. La Organización se llamaba la “Naciones Unidas” y no la “Organización de las Naciones Unidas”, y el uso de siglas (ONU, NU) quedaba proscrito. Los artículos de la Carta serían los únicos que se escribirían con mayúscula (Artículo), lo mismo que sus Propósitos y Principios.

Un problema en aquellos años fue que España, sencillamente, no era miembro (Miembro con mayúscula) de las Naciones Unidas. La resolución 32 del primer período de sesiones de la Asamblea General recordó que la Conferencia de San Francisco de 1945 había adoptado una resolución (la traducción decía “adoptar”, otro tabú luego para el traductor español, que aprendía que las resoluciones se “aprobaban” y no se “adoptaban”), según la cual el artículo de la Carta relativo a la admisión de nuevos Miembros no se aplicaría a aquellos Estados “cuyos regímenes se hubieran instalado con el apoyo de las fuerzas armadas de países que lucharon contra las Naciones Unidas”.

El idioma español, sin embargo, no corrió nunca peligro de no ser admitido como idioma oficial en las Naciones Unidas, dado que más del 30% de los países que asistieron a esa Conferencia eran de habla española (salvo error, 18). Con todo, la realidad es que España no tuvo voz (aunque México se la prestara) durante esos años.

Lo cual no quiere decir que exiliados españoles no participaran desde el primer momento en las actividades de la Organización, porque, como es sabido, la guerra civil española irradió hacia el exterior un número impresionante de republicanos, muchos de ellos de alto nivel intelectual. No voy a abrumar ahora a los no españoles (ni a los españoles demasiado jóvenes) con una larga relación de nombres, pero no me resisto a mencionar a Alfredo Mendizábal, catedrático de Derecho Natural de la Universidad de Oviedo, que, católico y liberal, amigo y traductor de Maritain, consiguió enemistarse por igual con ambos bandos de la contienda. Su labor como traductor temporero en las Naciones Unidas fue importante hasta que – al parecer por desacuerdo con la expresión “derechos humanos” (en contraposición a “derechos del hombre”, que era la clásica en derecho internacional español) - decidió abandonar la traducción. La Asamblea General

había decidido ese cambio en 1952, basándose en gran parte en que la Carta había preferido la expresión “derechos humanos” en varios de sus artículos. Cabe señalar únicamente, aunque el chiste sea malo, que la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño de 1990 sigue llamándose así en español y no “Convención sobre los derechos infantiles”, sin duda porque ninguna niña ha protestado.

Lo cierto es que los tres primeros jefes de la sección de traducción en Nueva York (Honorio Roigt, Marcelo Aberastury y Roberto Unanue) fueron argentinos, y el cuarto (Guillermo Caprario) uruguayo. Sobre cada uno de ellos se podría hablar mucho (Honorio Roigt, por ejemplo, autor de un libro clásico sobre los ferrocarriles argentinos, fue siempre respetuosamente conocido por “Don Honorio”, incluso cuando hacía años que había dejado de ser jefe de todos los servicios de conferencias), pero eso me apartaría demasiado del propósito de estas “notas”.

De todas formas, hay que destacar la importancia que ha tenido siempre, en la traducción al español en las Naciones Unidas, el exilio. Y no sólo el que fue consecuencia de la guerra civil española, sino también el exilio argentino, el uruguayo, el chileno, el cubano... Y, si se añade a las Naciones Unidas en sentido estricto la constelación de organismos especializados pertenecientes a su “familia”, la dispersión de los traductores de habla española por el mundo resulta sorprendente. Así, por poner sólo un ejemplo, la relación de poetas peruanos que en algún momento trabajaron en las Naciones Unidas (desde Emilio Adolfo Westphalen hasta Luis Loayza, pasando por Raúl Deustua) parecería una antología de la poesía peruana contemporánea. En alguna ocasión me he atrevido a señalar esa extraña afinidad entre poesía y traducción, citando al premio Nobel Octavio Paz, pero a veces me pregunto si no se trata, sencillamente, de que vivir de la poesía resulta difícil en cualquier país.

De todos modos, siempre me ha parecido asombroso, por ejemplo, compartir despacho en las Naciones Unidas con un exembajador chileno, con un exdecano de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad de Montevideo, con (José Luis Valente) uno de los mejores poetas españoles del pasado siglo, con un novelista de talla universal como el argentino Julio Cortázar o con el premio Cervantes y también argentino Juan Gelman, o bien con diputados, magistrados, catedráticos o políticos reputados... La pregunta es inevitable: todas esas personas, además de destacar en sus respectivas especialidades,

¿sabían realmente inglés y francés, por no hablar de árabe o ruso? Y, lo que es más importante, ¿sabían traducir? Yo creo sinceramente que la respuesta debe ser afirmativa. Lo que ocurre es que su formación había sido práctica, que tuvieron que aprender sobre el terreno porque jamás habían pasado por una Facultad de traducción e interpretación, ya que estas facultades, sencillamente, no existían. Y no hay que olvidar que la mayoría de los traductores, de la nacionalidad que fueran, no eran escritores, ni políticos, ni diplomáticos, sino, ante todo y sobre todo, buenos traductores.

Cuando llegué a Nueva York en los años sesenta, en plena guerra fría, el sistema de traducción estaba ya bien establecido: un sistema que se ha mantenido básicamente hasta hace relativamente poco. Por de pronto, y sin perjuicio del mayor compañerismo, había dos castas bien diferenciadas: traductores y revisores. Todo documento pasaba por cuatro manos y dos pares de ojos. El traductor respondía ante el revisor y el revisor respondía ante la Historia. El sistema presentaba enormes ventajas, sobre todo desde el punto de vista docente: el traductor aprendía de las correcciones introducidas en su texto por el revisor, y el revisor aprendía también (y actualizaba su castellano) al revisar textos de traductores mucho más jóvenes. El tránsito de traductor a revisor no era en modo alguno automático ni dependía del simple transcurso del tiempo. Para ser revisor, un traductor no sólo tenía que acumular muchas horas de trabajo sino que demostrar además que se le podían confiar cualquier texto difícil o delicado.

Una consecuencia (y una dificultad) de la pluralidad de nacionalidades representadas en la sección de traducción española era que todos – traductores y revisores – tenían que aceptar que el español, el castellano, no era patrimonio exclusivo de ningún país. A partir de 1955 España entró en las Naciones Unidas como miembro de pleno derecho, por resolución 995 del décimo período de sesiones de la Asamblea General y el número de traductores españoles aumentó lógicamente, pero, dado el alto grado de cohesión entre el español culto de los 21 países de habla española, nunca hubo dificultades insalvables, y la sección española cumplió, y sigue cumpliendo, su segunda misión principal: la de conservar y renovar el idioma español. Es cierto que hubo que hacer transacciones: una computadora se llamaría computadora (del inglés *computer*) y no ordenador (del francés *ordinateur*), por la simple razón de que aquél era su nombre en

la mayoría de los países de habla hispana. En las Naciones Unidas siempre ha habido quien asegura que es capaz de reconocer si el autor de una traducción procede, por ejemplo, de la Argentina, México o España, pero yo no lo creo, aunque sí creo que es posible a veces identificar, simplemente por su estilo, al traductor que la hizo.

Además, en su afán diario por forjar un castellano culto, la Sección de Traducción ha tenido siempre muy claras dos cosas: para quién traduce y quién fija en definitiva las normas de la lengua española. Son los países miembros los que sancionan o aprueban la terminología, muy especialmente en lo que se refiere a sus propios nombres. Si un buen día Muammar al-Qaddafi decide que Libia se llamará Jamahiriya Árabe Libia, porque la palabra *jamahiriya* no puede traducirse adecuadamente a otro idioma, la sección española no tiene nada que opinar al respecto. Y si la Costa de Marfil [*Ivory Coast*] desea ser llamada en todos los idiomas Côte d’Ivoire, tampoco hay nada que decir. Por otra parte, la sección acata en principio las decisiones de la Real Academia Española, por ejemplo en materia de ortografía, y así, se muestra dispuesta ahora a sustituir Iraq por Irak y Qatar por Catar, pero, como se subraya en una reciente nota terminológica, solo “a reserva de la opinión decisiva de los países interesados”.

Para mí las Naciones Unidas fueron siempre un lugar donde se podía aprender a diario a escribir español. Si quisiera recurrir a otro autor ruso, sería ahora Máximo Gorki. Aunque yo había pasado ya por un par de universidades españolas, las Naciones Unidas fueron para mí, en todos los sentidos, “*mis* universidades”. Y el antiguo Manual de instrucciones para los traductores recogía tres principios que, como orientación, me siguen pareciendo plenamente válidos: “uniformidad terminológica, claridad sintáctica y concisión estilística”. Hoy, con más precisión, se enseña a los traductores, como señala María Nóbrega, “equivalencia semántica (fidelidad e integridad), equivalencia formal y equivalencia funcional”. Términos que se explican por sí mismos.

A propósito del idioma ruso, hay que decir que siempre ha habido en las Naciones Unidas excelentes traductores y traductoras del ruso al español, aunque en número reducido, dado que el volumen de documentación escrita en ese idioma es considerablemente menor que el de la documentación en inglés. Y quisiera recordar ahora a las hermanas Irene y Laura Andresco, ya fallecidas, cuyas traducciones de Tolstoy se siguen reeditando en español. Hay que destacar también el papel desempeñado

en la historia de la traducción y la interpretación por los comúnmente llamados “niños rusos”: niños enviados durante la guerra civil española a la Unión Soviética, en donde recibieron una formación especializada que incluía la conservación y aprendizaje de un magnífico castellano. Algunos de ellos han desempeñado hasta hace muy poco puestos de traductor o de intérprete en las Naciones Unidas. Y no puedo dejar de mencionar ahora, al hablar de traductoras al ruso de las Naciones Unidas, a Amaya Lacasa, que tradujo, por ejemplo, El Maestro y Margarita de Mijaíl Bulgakov.

Los traductores conocedores del chino han sido siempre una rareza en la sección española, dado que normalmente se traduce de las traducciones del chino al inglés. En cuanto al árabe, quisiera rendir homenaje también a la espléndida labor realizada por la profesora Dolores Cinca, de la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, fallecida hace ahora exactamente doce años. Dolores Cinca, en 1973, al convertirse el árabe en idioma oficial de la Organización, se trasladó a Nueva York con un plantel de arabistas en ciernes, algunos de los cuales se incorporaron definitivamente a la sección. Hoy las Naciones Unidas cuentan en Ginebra, por ejemplo, con Jaime Sánchez Ratia, uno de los mejores arabistas españoles, traductor del inmortal Tawq al-Hamāmah (*El Collar de la Paloma*), de Ibn Hazm al-Andalusí.

Me gustaría subrayar la importancia de algunas conferencias internacionales en la creación del español de las Naciones Unidas. Hay que decir de antemano que, por una especie de acuerdo tácito, Nueva York y Ginebra se repartían la prestación de servicios de traducción e interpretación en las grandes conferencias, de una forma en cierto modo análoga a como en el siglo XV hizo el Papa Alejandro VI, al dividir el mundo conocido entre Castilla y Portugal.

Hubo al menos una conferencia, no de las Naciones Unidas sino de los Países No Alineados, en la que esos servicios fueron prestados simultáneamente por Nueva York y Ginebra... y por el ESTI, el Equipo de Servicios de Traductores e Intérpretes cubano. En la VI Cumbre de Países No Alineados, celebrada en La Habana en 1979, los traductores cubanos, trabajando hombro con hombro con sus colegas de las Naciones Unidas, aprendieron la peculiar forma de traducir de la Organización y comprendieron la necesidad de abandonar el “monocultivo” (magníficos traductores, los cubanos dominaban por lo general sólo otro idioma además del español). Por su parte, los

traductores de las Naciones Unidas aprendieron de los cubanos lo que era trabajar sin límite de jornada, impulsados por un ideal. Consecuencia de esa conferencia fue la incorporación, temporal o permanente, de varios traductores cubanos a la sección española de Nueva York, e intentos posteriores del ESTI por centralizar (a precios imbatibles) las traducciones externas al español de las Naciones Unidas. Los intentos no prosperaron porque algunos países consideraron impensable confiar todas esas traducciones a un solo país de habla española, cuyo régimen, además, tenía una posición política significada.

No he asistido a algunas conferencias importantes de las Naciones Unidas ni participado en ellas, pero sí a otras que me parecen esenciales desde el punto de vista del lenguaje que crearon. Por ejemplo, la conferencia de Viena que elaboró la Convención de Viena sobre el Derecho de los Tratados de 1969, definiendo y precisando la terminología jurídica internacional. Al artículo 32 de esa Convención se debe la intangibilidad de la traducción de las actas resumidas de la Comisión de Derecho Internacional, que ha resistido a todas las reducciones de documentación hechas en el sistema. En su calidad de “trabajos preparatorios” (la verdad es que los expertos siguen hablando, en todos los idiomas, de *travaux préparatoires*) esas actas son un elemento indispensable para la interpretación de los tratados internacionales, como ha subrayado el profesor Fernando Prieto Ramos, de la Universidad de Ginebra.

La Conferencia de Río de Janeiro sobre el Medio Ambiente y el Desarrollo de 1992 introdujo una novedad interesante, y no sólo en la terminología del medio ambiente: fue la UNOG la que le prestó servicios de traducción desde Ginebra, por lo que, debido a la diferencia horaria, los delegados se encontraban por la mañana, traducidos a seis idiomas, los documentos que habían elaborado la víspera. La Conferencia Internacional sobre la Población y el Desarrollo celebrada en El Cairo en 1994 fue probablemente la primera a la que no se enviaron traductores al lugar de celebración. Y, habiendo seguido de cerca, como delegado de España, la Tercera Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Derecho del Mar [1973-1982], que preparó una Convención (la famosa Convención de Montego Bay, rica en definiciones, debo decir que nunca he presenciado una colaboración más estrecha entre traductores y delegados en los comités de redacción... ni en definitiva más estéril: tras unas negociaciones muy complejas, la desconfianza de las

grandes Potencias hacia el menor intento de modificación puramente lingüística de un texto era tan grande, que preferían mantenerlo tal como había sido acordado, sin alterar una sola coma, aun a costa de la elegancia de estilo y hasta de la sintaxis.

La Cuarta Conferencia de Beijing sobre la Mujer de 2005 fue importante porque supuso la implantación de un idioma español feminista, desde entonces indiscutible. A ella se debe la introducción definitiva de la palabra “género” en castellano, con un nuevo significado, y también la (todavía no totalmente lograda, porque la Real Academia Española parece querer limitarla al ámbito de la sociología política) de la palabra “empoderamiento” para traducir “*empowerment*”.

Con respecto al “género” hay una anécdota que no me resisto a contar. En 1998, cuando se estaba elaborando en Roma el Estatuto de la Corte Penal Internacional [*International Criminal Court*] (las traducciones se hacían en su mayor parte en Ginebra), había que hacer inevitablemente referencia directa o indirecta a documentos de derechos humanos en los que la temida palabra “sexo” aparecía con frecuencia. En un momento dado, se añadió al texto del Estatuto, al comienzo mismo, una nota a pie de página que decía más o menos: “La palabra “género” no significa en el ámbito de este Estatuto más que “sexo” y no tiene ningún otro significado”. Hoy esa nota ha pasado al párrafo 3 del artículo 7, redactada en términos más razonables: “A los efectos del presente Estatuto se entenderá que el término “género” se refiere a los dos sexos, masculino y femenino, en el contexto de la sociedad. El término “género” no tendrá más acepción que la que antecede”.

En los años ochenta hubo restricciones económicas importantes en las Naciones Unidas, lo que supuso, no sólo el fin de las grandes conferencias, sino también la casi total supresión de los exámenes convocados para cubrir vacantes de traductores al español. Ello hace que, todavía hoy, se aprecie una brecha entre las edades de las distintas generaciones de traductores. Por otra parte, se implantaron “controles de calidad” que, en la práctica, eran más bien controles de cantidad y, si la calidad de la traducción no se resintió a pesar de la falta de personal, fue sin duda gracias al recurso a los “temporeros” (*freelancers*). Especialmente los viejos revisores jubilados eran una inestimable fuente de energía y conocimientos que sólo quería ser aprovechada. Por otra parte, la paulatina

introducción de la traducción asistida por computadora y de bases terminológicas ayudó a mantener los niveles de uniformidad y calidad.

Me hubiera gustado hablar más de los “temporeros”, verdaderos elementos uniformadores y polinizadores de las organizaciones del sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Con la aparición de la informática, con la multiplicación de los medios técnicos puestos al alcance de los traductores, no sólo en Nueva York, Ginebra, Viena y Nairobi, sino en los distintos organismos internacionales, el trabajo de los temporeros se ha hecho cada vez más complicado. Un traductor, hoy, tiene que estar dispuesto a moverse con soltura entre memorias de traducción, programas de cotejo de textos, discos ópticos, Google, Isys, dtSearch, Trados, etc. sabiendo que, dentro de un par de años habrá nuevas herramientas que necesariamente tendrá de aprender a manejar. Sin embargo, esto es algo que no se aplica solo al español sino a todos los idiomas.

Hubiera querido hablar también de las diferencias existentes en materia de traducción entre los distintos organizaciones, aunque no conozco, ni mucho menos, todas ellas. En la Organización de Aviación Civil Internacional, la OACI hubo un tiempo en que todos revisaban las traducciones de todos, e intérpretes y traductores eran prácticamente intercambiables. La UNESCO se ha caracterizado siempre por la acusada politización de sus funcionarios: es imprescindible recordar aquí al que, exiliado, fue jefe de su sección española durante algunos años, José María Quiroga Plá, yerno de Unamuno, poeta y traductor de Proust, cuya biblioteca personal y correspondencia se conserva en Salamanca, en la Casa Museo Miguel de Unamuno.

La UNOV de Viena ha hecho contribuciones impagables a la terminología del Derecho Mercantil Internacional y la labor de la CNUDMI ha mostrado que no era posible enviar al exterior la traducción de guías, convenciones, leyes modelo o reglamentos de derecho mercantil cuya cuidadosa redacción y terminología había exigido años de trabajo y deliberaciones.

Y casi todas las organizaciones internacionales ensayan continuamente nuevas formas de utilizar su personal de la forma más rentable, sin perjuicio de la calidad. La revisión se sustituye muchas veces por la autorrevisión o “travisión”, y se introduce el a mi juicio absurdo concepto del “monitoreo”, que consiste básicamente en revisar sin que parezca que se revisa. En diversas ocasiones, la Asamblea General de las Naciones

Unidas se ha preocupado por el alto volumen de documentos autorrevisados, que supera el nivel máximo del 45% establecido en su día. Es importante señalar, sin embargo, que siempre ha habido en las Naciones Unidas una especie de segunda revisión, que es la que realizan las dependencias de mecanografía, cuya eficiencia es legendaria, al dar una lectura final a los documentos.

Hace ya años que la Organización Mundial del Comercio introdujo un sistema original de contratación, con traductores que firmaban contratos de un año y trabajaban en el exterior, sometidos a la obligación de pasar un mes al menos en la sede de Ginebra, actualizando sus conocimientos. El sistema se ha aplicado en otras organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas, y en los contratos llamados *offsite* (*ex situ* parece una buena traducción), limitados en principio a los revisores experimentados, puede encontrarse muy bien el germen de una forma más extensa de traducción futura. Los traductores traducirán en sus respectivos lugares de residencia, y unas secciones de las distintas sedes, mucho más reducidas, se ocuparán de la coordinación... y de la revisión. La enseñanza tradicionalmente impartida por esas secciones tendrá que pasar en gran parte a universidades con programas de estudios especializados.

En este sentido, no debo terminar estos apuntes históricos sin hablar de la labor realizada por la Universidad de Salamanca. No soy quizá la persona más indicada para hacerlo, pero, como no formo parte de ella (a pesar de los lazos de amistad y agradecimiento que me unen), puedo expresarme con más libertad.

Ya en el año 2000 esta Universidad firmó un convenio sobre prácticas de traducción con la Organización Mundial del Comercio. En 2002 concertó otro convenio de colaboración con el Departamento de Información Pública de las Naciones Unidas para la traducción gratuita al español, por estudiantes de la Universidad, de su sitio web. El entonces Secretario General Kofi Annan citó ese convenio, que recibió un premio de la Organización, como modelo de cooperación entre las Naciones Unidas y la sociedad civil. Y en 2005 la Universidad suscribió un convenio con ONUSIDA para traducir al español su sitio web.

En 2009 la Universidad de Salamanca firmó el memorando de entendimiento con el Departamento de la Asamblea General y de Gestión de Conferencias que han suscrito

todas las universidades aquí presentes y que es el origen de la presente conferencia, una conferencia que es ya parte inseparable de la historia de la traducción al español en las Naciones Unidas.

Termino. Me sorprende ver que podría hablar mucho más de este mundo fascinante, pero no lo voy a hacer. Podría decir que esta historia tiene un final feliz, pero no sería cierto, porque se trata de una historia sin fin, de una verdadera Historia Interminable: es evidente que, mientras haya Naciones Unidas, habrá traducción al español en las Naciones Unidas. Sin embargo, como dice Dostoievski al final de sus Notas del subsuelo, “nos parece que podemos detenernos aquí”.

ANNEX XI

***Matrix for the evaluation of translators by the United Nations Office in Geneva
(UNOG)***

Candidate's name and age:	Test date:	Text n° :
Corrector's name:		Title of the text:
Eliminated after a first read through of the target text only	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eliminated after a comparative reading with the source text <input type="checkbox"/>
The candidate's mother tongue does not seem to be the target language of the translation	<input type="checkbox"/>	The correction of the following texts is recommended <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET LANGUAGE		
Usage		
Grammar		
Style		
Spelling		
Punctuation		
LOGIC AND ACCURACY		
Opposite meaning		
Failure to make any sense		
Inaccuracies		
Omissions		
Additions		
CREATIVITY		
Good ideas		

General impression :

Recommendation :

ANNEX XII

Evaluation criteria for translators, presented by Dr. Hannelore Lee-Jahnke

TRANSLOG-PROCESSED TRANSLATION EVALUATION CHART

(adapted from: Lee-Jahnke, H. «Aspects pédagogiques de l'évaluation en traduction», META, XLVI, 2, 2001, pp. 266-7 and Lee-Jahnke, H. & Cormier M. «Terminologie de la traduction», Amsterdam et Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999)

NRO.	PARAMETER	DEFINITION
1	Accuracy (6 to 0)	This category includes negative factors. Scores are considered as: 6 (best performance), 4 (average), 0 (poorest performance). The fewest the errors found, the highest the score will be.
	1.1. Distortion	
	Incorrect meaning (target text based)	A translation error where a sense is attributed to a word or a segment from the source text that it does not have in the context in which it appears. The demarcation line between an incorrect meaning and a misinterpretation is sometimes difficult to establish. (TT, p. 147) The meaning of the original text is not conveyed properly in the target language; it may involve choice of prepositions, lexical items/terms, articles, verb tense/mood. (ATA)
	Misinterpretation (source text based)	A translation error where the translator misunderstands the text or lacks general cultural knowledge, with the result that a word or segment from the source text is given an entirely erroneous sense from that intended by its author. In terms of information loss or distortion, a misinterpretation represents a more serious error than the selection of an incorrect meaning, but is less significant than creation of nonsense. (TT, p. 159) The result is wrong because the translation was based on a misunderstood source text, e.g. misreading a word or misinterpreting the syntax of a sentence. (ATA)
	1.2. Interference (cognates, calques and others)	
	From the source language	A translation error that results from ignorance or a methodological error and that introduces a characteristic peculiar to the source language into the target language. Interference can be morphological, lexical, syntactic, stylistic, or typographical, (TT, p. 148) SL material has not been properly processed, e.g. translatable passage/lexical item/term have been left untranslated; translation is too literal giving awkward and/or incorrect results or units of weight/measurement, dates and numbers have been improperly transferred. (ATA)
	From the target language	TL material has been improperly processed; e.g. untranslatable lexical items, such as proper names, institutional names, addresses, ID numbers, professional titles, etc. have been translated; the translation is too free, which may result in meaning distortion, change of emphasis or blurring of the author's intent. (APP/ATA)
	Failed collocation	The wrong preposition or habitual word combination in the target language has been chosen, thus rendering a translation which may range from unnatural to inaccurate. (ATA)
	Calque	A lexical item that has been formed by a literal translation of the component elements of a foreign word. Calques that are fully lexicalized in the target language are listed in dictionaries as integral elements of a language. (TT, p. 122)

	1.3. Logic relations	
	Ambiguity	<p>The property of text or text segment that allows for more than one semantic interpretation. (1) Ambiguity can be lexical, syntactic or stylistic in nature. (2) Ambiguity can be intentional or not. In puns, it has both lexical and stylistic value. If ambiguity is unintentional and cannot be easily resolved from the context, the text can be difficult to understand. (TT, p. 116)</p> <p>The meaning is clear in the source text but ambiguous in the translation. (ATA)</p>
	Contradiction	<p>A contradiction occurs when one asserts two mutually exclusive propositions, such as, "Abortion is wrong and abortion is not wrong." Since a claim and its contradictory cannot both be true, one of them must be false. Few people will assert an outright contradiction, but one may fall into an inconsistency, which is an implicit contradiction. (http://www.philosophy.uncc.edu/mleldrid/logic/logiglos.html)</p> <p>Two opposing assertions are stated simultaneously, in the same situation and in the same translation. (APP)</p>
	1.4. Information accuracy	
	Omissions	<p>A translation error where the translator fails to render a necessary element of information from the source text in the target text. It is important not to confuse "omission" with either implicitation, which involves the justified exclusion of a source text element, or with loss. (TT, p. 165)</p> <p>Something essential to the meaning is left out. (ATA)</p>
	Additions	Something is inserted that is not clearly expressed in the original text. (ATA)
	Options	More than one option for a particular lexical item or expression is given. (ATA)
	Changes / Data transfer errors	Numbers, figures, dates, names, alphabetical order, etc. have been inaccurately transferred to the translated text. (APP)
	1.5. Terminology and lexis	
	Inaccurate terminology / lexis	The meaning of the lexical item or term chosen is inconsistent with the meaning of the source text. (ATA)
	Terminological / lexical inconsistency	A lexical item/term used consistently in the source text is translated inconsistently in the target text. (ATA) In general, lexical networks should be respected as much as possible. (APP)
	1.6. Language	
	Grammar	There is lack of agreement between subject and verb, incorrect verb tenses or verb forms, incorrect case of nouns, pronouns or adjectives and the use of an adjective where an adverb is needed. (ATA)
	Syntax	There are sentence fragments, improper modification, lack of parallelism and unnatural word order. Syntactic errors that obscure the meaning are considered more serious. (ATA)
	Spelling	Spelling and punctuation conventions in the target language are ignored, including the use of case (upper/lower), accents and other diacritical marks, quotation marks, commas, semicolons and colons, as well as paragraphing. (ATA)
2	Creativity (6 to 0)	This category includes positive factors. Scores are considered as: 6 (best performance), 4 (average), 0 (poorest performance). The best these factors have been handled, the highest is the score.
	Cultural matters	Sensitivity to cultural as well as linguistic factors, recognizing that each language contains elements which are derived from its culture (such as greetings, fixed expressions and realia), that every text is anchored in a

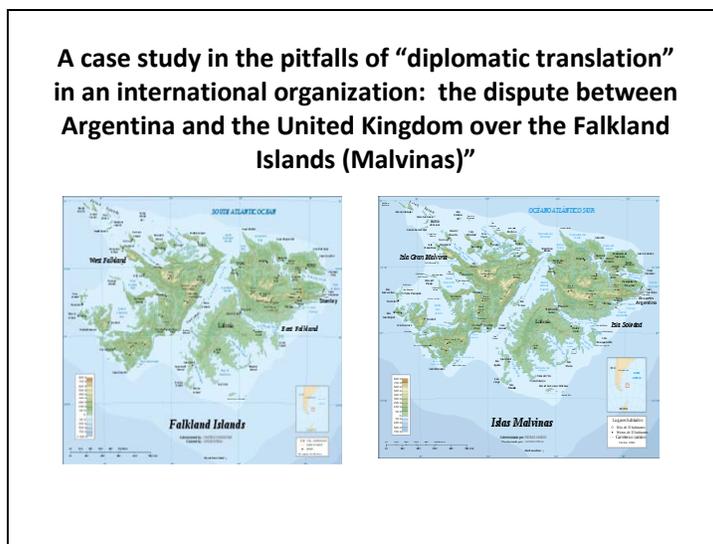
		specific culture, and that conventions of text production and reception vary from culture to culture. (DTS, p. 35)
	Sociolect	The language used by a given social group or subgroup during a specified time period. (1) Professional jargon and argot are sociolects. (2) During translation, the sociolect-related elements of a source text can be maintained (source-oriented translation) or omitted (target-oriented translation), taking into account the acceptable norms (constraints) and projected expectations of the target audience. (TT, p. 179)
	Isotopy	Arrangement of semantic fields contained in a text that provides such a text coherence of meaning. A semantic field made up of hyponyms, hyperonyms, meronyms, homonyms and synonyms used to give coherence to a text is an example of semantic isotopy. (Manuel Romera, “Manual de Retórica y Recursos estilísticos”, URL: http://retorica.librodenotas.com/Recursos-estilisticos-semanticos/isotopia)
	Register	A property of discourse that takes into account the nature of relationships among speakers, their socio-cultural level, the subject treated, and the degree of formality and familiarity selected for a given utterance or text. (1) Register is particularly apparent with respect to lexicon, where care should be taken to select the appropriate register for a given situation and target audience. (TT, p. 172) The language level and degree of formality of the source text should be preserved [in an equi-functional translation]. This means that the right familiar or technical lexical items and the adequate familiar or polite forms of address have been used and that the use of anachronistic or culturally inappropriate expressions has been avoided. (ATA)
	Lexical network	A group of words that form a thematic subset within a text. (1) Translators must know how to spot the semantic threads that hold phrases together in the fabric of the text. They also need to know how to preserve the collocational coherence of the lexical network in the target language and they must endeavor to respect the coherence of an extended metaphor. (2) A text can contain several interwoven lexical networks of varying lengths. (TT, p. 151)
	Collocation	Two or more frequently used words that can be consecutive or non-consecutive, that form a unit of meaning, and that are accepted by common usage. Sometimes deliberately “incorrect” collocations are used for stylistic or rhetorical effect. (TT, p. 125)
	Metaphor	A rhetorical element that generally involves using a concrete word to express an abstract concept and which takes the form of an elliptical comparison based on an analogy between two objects, two concepts, or two situations that possess a common characteristic. (TT, p. 157)
	Plays on words	Positive type of ambiguity produced intentionally by the writer, in which the linguistic form is part of the message. (TT, pp. 74 y 83) Puns have both lexical and stylistic value. (TT, p. 116)
	Connotation	The set of subjective, emotional, and variable elements, which together with the denotation comprise the meaning of a word. (1) It is important to clearly differentiate connotation, which relates to the evocative and expressive properties of a word, and denotation, which relates only to its conceptual content. (2) Connotations related to general use in a language are collective and are distinguished from connotations related to individual use, which produce different emotional reactions in each person. (TT, p. 128)
	Style	The text’s distinctive manner of expression—flowery, staccato, conversational, instructional—should be reflected in an equi-functional translation when appropriate in the target language. Awkward or clumsy renditions that obscure the meaning may also be penalized. (ATA)

3	Skopos (6 to 0)	Scores are considered as: 6 (best performance), 4 (average), 0 (poorest performance). The best the translation <i>skopos</i> has been reached, the highest is the score.
	Target audience	A person or group of people to whom a text or utterance is addressed. (1) The translation of pragmatic texts often requires that the translator knows who the target audience will be because this information determines many of the choices that are made. In the case of literary work, the translator must also take into account the public for whom the translation is intended, but to a lesser extent. (2) An individual to whom a text is addressed can be cited as an <i>addressee</i> , but the term <i>target audience</i> can also be interpreted as either singular or plural. (TT, p. 183)
	Translator's intention	General approach that is adopted by a translator in producing a text and which results in the choice of a particular translation strategy. The translator's approach (ex.: target-oriented or source-oriented) is based on his or her concept of faithfulness. In other words, translators coordinate their personal judgment with the constraints of translation. (TT, p. 196)
	Writing conventions (manual, advertisement, report, abstract, etc.)	One of a set of rules that govern the formal presentation of texts, where different conventions are consigned to orthographic, grammatical or typographic codes. There are writing conventions that govern abbreviations, units of measure and time, numbers and symbols, the use of capital letters, punctuation, proper names, administrative and commercial correspondence, etc. (TT, p. 201)
	FINAL SCORE	

ANNEX XIII

PowerPoint presentation on “Translating for the United Nations” by Mr. Stephen Sekel

Slide 2



One could say “international organization” in place of the United Nations, since the peculiarities and pitfalls that obtain are the same as when translating in any institutional context.

I should say at this point that “master class” is certainly embarrassing and most likely a misnomer. To clarify expectations at the outset, I hope to provide an idea of the special conditions and constraints that UN translators face and conduct a hands-on exercise translating a real UN text.

Slide 3



Meetings with full services: around 4,600 per year; documents: nearly 109 million words, or around 328,000 pages of translation (UN standard page 330 words)

Diplomatic translation (including parliamentary documentation)

Letters from Member States

Treaties (multilateral and bilateral)

Resolutions and decisions

Reports

Declarations

Meeting records

Administrative Circulars

Judgements

Some United Nations documents - committee reports, resolutions and decisions and even communications from Member States, as we are about to see - contain much boilerplate text (repetitive, formulaic language), hence the importance of translation memory and terminology management tools (or simply good "institutional

memory”).

On the subject of tools: The UN uses various CAT tools, including SDL Trados and Multitrans, and some tools developed in-house (mainly a repository of bitexts for all the language pairs (30), which contains every document processed by the central text-processing service (whether official or not); you can become acquainted with the tools that the UN uses, but by the time you are working in house, they will no doubt have been refined and adapted, if not replaced completely by new tools. That is why I believe that translator training should teach students to translate (which means developing judgement and acquiring broad general knowledge) as if such tools did not exist.

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Slide 4



Official Documents System (ODS) contains all documents from 1993 onward and some older documents.

UNTERM is the UN's multilingual terminology database, containing over 85,000 entries.

Slide 5

Special requirements and constraints

- Official nomenclature and terminology, including place names (disputed territories)
- Seminal /basic documents of the United Nations
- All previous documents on the issue under consideration (“connaissance du dossier”)
- Time constraints, which are sometimes statutory

Translation in the real world -- whether for business, the legal system or international organizations – is not a free-form, creative exercise in which the translator is at liberty to render the message as he or she sees fit. Diplomatic or conference translation is not literary translation.

UN practice developed in consultation with the parties and its own legal, political (Protocol) and technical (cartographic) experts ; disputed names: Persian Gulf, Sea of Japan, Myanmar v. Burma

Charter, landmark resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council (e.g. GA resolution 1514)

Rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council provides: “The Secretary-General shall immediately bring to the attention of all representatives on the Security Council all communications from States, organs of the United Nations, or the Secretary-General concerning any matter for the consideration of the Security Council in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.”

The reader of a diplomatic letter, like the recipient of a love letter, is likely to parse every sentence for its subtle meaning. For the translator it is important to convey precisely not only the content of the message but also its tone and the author’s intent. The author of a diplomatic letter is often striving for subtlety or sarcasm, which may be difficult to capture in the target language.

Slide 6

- The issue has been before the United Nations since 1964
- At the 65th session of the General Assembly (2010/2011), no fewer than 18 letters on the issue were circulated as official documents
- Positions taken by the [European Union](#), the [Union of South American Nations](#), the [Andean Community](#), [Mercosur](#) and the [Ibero-American Summit](#)

To give you an idea of the nature of this exchange, this polemic between A and UK:
covering letter to document A/65/553:

“Siguiendo instrucciones de mi Gobierno, tengo el honor de dirigirme a usted con el objeto de transmitir copia de la nota presentada por el Gobierno de la República Argentina al Gobierno del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte en respuesta a su nota del 21 de octubre de 2010, circulada como documento A/65/539, relativa a la nota de protesta presentada por el Gobierno argentino en relación con los ejercicios militares británicos en las Islas Malvinas y circulada como documento A/65/504 (véase el anexo). »

I will not even attempt to sketch the history of the conflict for fear that I might appear to be taking one side or the other, which, even if I did, as an international civil servant I am duty bound to act impartially in the performance of my official duties. There are Argentines and British nationals serving in the UN Secretariat, perhaps even dealing with the question of the Falklands Islands (Malvinas), and yet they need not be disqualified from doing so in view of the neutrality that is incumbent upon them by virtue of their status as UN staff members.

Slide 7

**How to refer the dispute while
preserving neutrality?**

Agenda item 45:

English: Question of the Falkland Islands
(Malvinas)

Spanish: Cuestión de las Islas Malvinas (Falkland
Islands)

In all documents emanating from the UN Secretariat, this formula must be used.

Slide 8

**La República Argentina reafirma sus derechos de
soberanía sobre las Islas Malvinas, Georgias del
Sur y Sandwich del Sur y los espacios marítimos
circundantes, que forman parte del territorio
nacional.**

The English formula referring to the three different island groupings is used at the express request (insistence) of Argentina. “While “the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands” (with the definite article only at the beginning) certainly sounds better to me, and conveys the idea that all three

are groups of islands, I think Argentina wants to clarify the difference between their formulation, “las Islas... Georgias del Sur”, and the UK references to “South Georgia” in the singular. The delegation originally suggested “the Malvinas, South Georgias and the South Sandwich Islands”, which sounds even worse; I thought the repetition of “Islands”, while not particularly graceful, was at least grammatical and consistent.

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Slide 9

The Argentine Republic reaffirms its sovereignty rights over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are part of its national territory.

Slide 10

“The Government of the United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, and their surrounding maritime areas.

There can be no negotiation on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands unless and until such time as the Falkland Islanders so wish. They have made clear that they wish to remain British.”

Slide 11

El Gobierno del Reino Unido no tiene dudas acerca de su soberanía sobre las Islas Falkland, Georgia del Sur y Sándwich del Sur y los espacios marítimos circundantes.

No puede haber negociación alguna sobre la soberanía de las Islas Falkland hasta, y a menos que así lo deseen sus habitantes, quienes han dejado claro que desean seguir siendo británicos.

Slide 12

The United Kingdom's relationship with all its overseas territories is a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of each territory, including the Falkland Islands, to determine if it wishes to retain a link to the United Kingdom.

Slide 13

El Reino Unido mantiene con todos sus territorios de ultramar una relación moderna, basada en compromisos, valores compartidos y el derecho de cada territorio, incluidas las Islas Falkland, a determinar si desea mantener un vínculo con el Reino Unido.

Slide 14

The British Government attaches great importance to the principle of self-determination as set out in Article 1.2 of the Charter of the United Nations and Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. That principle underlies our position on the Falkland Islands.

Slide 15

El Gobierno del Reino Unido otorga una gran importancia al **principio de libre determinación** enunciado en el párrafo 2 del Artículo 1 de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y el artículo 1 del **Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos**.
Nuestra posición con respecto a las Islas Falkland se basa en ese principio.

Slide 16

...such misunderstandings could be easily avoided if...Argentina were to agree to regular military-to-military discussions, communications and confidence-building measures....

Slide 17

**...estos malentendidos podrían evitarse fácilmente si...
Argentina conviniera en mantener periódicamente conversaciones y comunicaciones entre militares, así como en establecer medidas de fomento de la confianza entre militares....**

Slide 18

“estos ejercicios son violatorios de la obligación que la resolución 31/49 de la Asamblea General impone a la Argentina y al Reino Unido de abstenerse de adoptar decisiones unilaterales que innoven sobre la situación imperante en las Islas,

4. Insta a las dos partes a que se abstengan de adoptar decisiones que entrañen la introducción de modificaciones unilaterales en la situación mientras las Islas están atravesando por el proceso recomendado en las resoluciones arriba mencionadas;

Here Argentina departs from the wording of the resolution it is citing. This creates a dilemma for the English translator, who must decide whether Argentina is intentionally using a different wording and hence simply to translate it, or whether the departure is inadvertent, in which case he/she should follow the wording of the English version of

the resolution (which is “...to refrain from taking decisions that would imply introducing unilateral modifications in the situation....”

ANNEX XIV

Presentation on translation in the Arab culture by Dr. Faiza El Qasem (ESIT, Paris)

Translation has been a prominent feature of the Arab culture throughout most of its history and has considerably impacted Arabic at the levels of lexicon, vocabulary and, to a lesser extent, syntax. The impact has been ongoing and regularly on the increase to the extent that it could be argued that modern Arabic is largely shaped by a multitude of translation processes (mainly from English and French) in many of its aspects. The impact is not necessarily limited to language but also covers the wider field of technical and scientific knowledge where Arab culture currently draws rather heavily from European cultures, mainly through the medium of translation. Both language and culture are therefore facing a multi-faceted external “pressure” to which they need to adjust and accommodate.

The process referred to can be termed “pragmatic translation”, which *is* a multi-faceted process of borrowing, creation, imitation, adjustment and adaptation. At the linguistic level, its impact is demonstrated by coining new words, terms, introducing new forms of expression or borrowing (transposing) syntactic structures from source languages. Indeed, we notice that the contact between Arabic and other languages is dominated, within the translation processes, by a general tendency of transposing words, phrases, sentences or photo-copying foreign structures which could in the long term have a negative impact on the integrity of the language. As far as terminology and neology are concerned, borrowing from another language is normal, but what must be avoided is transposing style which is part of the sense to be conveyed. The more style is important in a text the more translators should stay away from the original form¹.

This short introduction on the importance of translation will allow us to highlight its place in the academic field. Almost all Arab countries have a translation institution or a diploma preparing students for translation studies. Generally, translation studies institutions in the Arab world differ from the Paris school (ESIT) in that ESIT prepares a Master degree while most translation schools in the Arab countries enrol their students after the General certificate of Education (baccalaureate). Another main difference lies in the fact that students following translation courses at ESIT originate from all parts of the Arab world (Maghreb and Machreq), unlike the majority of students in Arab schools or universities who are mainly nationals. This implies that their « profile » as well as their experiences, socio-cultural environment and education are different. The advantage for the teacher is that he/ she deals with plural practices (*pratiques plurielles*) which reflect sometimes certain habits of writing—but seem to share the same point of view on translation: focusing on individual words, phrases or even sentences in order to ensure accuracy and faithfulness of the translation.

To counter balance this reductive approach, the teacher insists, first of all, on the necessary language skills and competencies: the acquisition of an operational communicative competence in writing or in oral communication. The latter cannot be

¹ Fortunato Israël, quoted by Marianne Lederer, Interpretive approach, in Handbook of Translation studies, 2010 John Benjamins Publishing Company.

reduced to a perfect mastery of language, it implies also building a conceptual understanding and organizing ability.

Few students, for example, are able to express themselves orally or in writing correctly. It should not be a surprise if they are asked to improve their skills in their own native language, or more exactly their working language, as their language competence still falls short of the required standard both in terms of grammar and syntax. Literal Arabic, as we all know, has not exactly the status of a mother tongue. We noticed from our visits to Arab universities that literal Arabic is not always used in classrooms to explain some problems relevant to translation! But the future translator will only use literal Arabic in his profession.

There are many reasons for this state of affairs: inadequate teaching at the secondary level, an unfavourable learning environment that impedes the acquisition of the necessary skills in each one of the two languages, and the acquisition of cultural knowledge that tends to be « more specific and less general »

Therefore, there is a need to put some rigour and coherence into our conception of translation teaching: Students should not only acquire a know-how but a general attitude towards translation as a whole, they should be aware of the importance of their working languages and their future professional environment. The second task is based on a clear definition of the translation process which focuses on the global contextual meaning or message articulated in a given communication act. This means precisely that translation is not a matter of language but of discourse implying an interlocutor and a recipient. The message conveyed is made of linguistic meanings plus the relevant extra-linguistic knowledge supplied by hearers/ readers. These elements are essential in the process of communication. In essence, translation is a matter of expressing what speakers/writers mean in a way that does not sound strange to hearers/ readers. Since ideas and thoughts are not expressed in the same way by different languages, translators have to create equivalences between texts.

Based on that, students will understand that meaning cannot be reduced to the sum of the lexical meanings, as seen in certain bad translations

The other symbolic stumbling stone is that Arabic has evolved rapidly over the last century; some translations dated from a few decades may seem obsolete whereas the recent ones could seem awkward and incomprehensible, even for a specialist. Another complicating factor is the lack of cultural consistency between some Arab countries, in the legal systems for example, not to mention the regional linguistic diversities.

L'ESIT may be considered as an ideal platform where Arab students meet each other and discover the complex realities of the Arab world through the texts to be translated. Translation fully plays here its role of helping to bridge the existing cultural gap between the Arab World citizens.

If we shift now to the type of texts to translate, we need to give students institutional texts that help make them aware of the evolution of Arabic in relation to English: the imitation of the structure of the foreign language,

following the juxtaposition pattern proper to the English syntax, abundant neology, lexical density but also the importance of terminology and phraseology adopted in institutional communication.

In a nutshell, what seems of paramount importance is to develop the students' capacity to translate any type of text and-build up their cognitive inputs. Most of our students who pass the UN exam have a very good mastery of their working language coupled with a high level of culture.

ANNEX XV

Presentation on remodeling a linguistic approach to translation by Dr. Abdelaziz Hamdy, American University in Cairo

Some Basic Concepts for the Trainer & the Trainee

There is no question about the fact that the main concern of the one whose linguistic product is received in translation and of the one who receives the product translated is the extent to which it "says" exactly what the original says. The issue is a crucial one; very grave indeed, and the criterion for judgement is crystal clear. However, the core and crux of the issue is how this can be achieved. When specialists in any discipline discuss or address an issue, the first thing they need to agree about is the "language" they will use. In other words, they need to have clear definitions of the terminology they will use in their discipline, otherwise all their arguments will be to no avail. By the same token and to no lesser extent, translation specialists need to be clear about certain basic concepts.

For quite a long time and up till this moment people attending any sort of gathering under the title of translation, can hardly think of translation except in terms of literary texts and literature. Then they will quickly speak of the "labor of love" translators have to go through when they translate. I cannot forget that at a translation colloquium in Egypt, a prominent translator was explaining the hardships he had gone through in order to translate one of the novels of Naguib Mahfouz by telling the audience how many years he had to spend in Al-Hussain folk neighborhood before he could start translating such a culture-specific novel. Fine! But let those living in ivory towers enjoy their lives there. The world of translation is much more spacious and much richer than that. Translation nowadays has become a necessity of life not a luxury for the intellectuals.

Before we get started, I think it is indispensable to raise a number of basic concepts which I feel will find their way through in any discussion that follows. Each concept definitely deserves a paper in its own right. But suffice it now to raise some of

them so that they keep hovering in the back of our minds, and help us place translation within the feasible framework of a linguistic context.

1. Basic Principles:

1.1. Effective trainer-trainee relationship

The relationship between the trainer and the trainee is a special one, governed by the professionalism on the part of the trainer and the spirit of apprenticeship shown by the trainee. To derive maximum benefit from this externalizable intellectual interaction, and in order to have enhanced effective communications, it is essential that the conceptual frameworks and linguistic predications be clearly and unequivocally defined.

1.2. Bilingualism vs interlingualism:

People often confuse these two competence areas. It is true that in certain limited cases a bilingual speaker may help two parties communicate or even provide a correct translation equivalent for the point under discussion, but he is definitely not a competent translator. A bilingual speaker is conventionally defined as the person who can express himself adequately in two languages. For instance, an economist who is a native speaker of Arabic once said at a certain conference, "I do not need the translator, I am going to say whatever I say in both Arabic and English." This does not mean there was no need for the translator because that economist himself could translate *for himself*. Certainly not. He was just an example of a bilingual speaker who knew how to say what he wanted to say in two languages. On the other hand, a competent translator is the person who knows how to adequately express what other people (want to) say in the other language. Consequently, he is the one trained in the desired inter-lingual transfer. Furthermore, depending on how professional he is, he knows how to keep himself away from the text, be unbiased and say what is said in the source language the way it is said, giving due respect to the style of the author or speaker. Achieving this inter-lingual - and definitely inter-cultural transfer - should constitute the

overriding target of any translation curriculum. A competent translator is not only bilingual, but bi-cultural as well.

1.3. Translation competence

With this concept in mind, translation competence is professionally defined as the ability to reproduce common language texts, technical texts and literary texts **adequately** in the target language. The inter-disciplinary nature in any translation program of study should not, of course, be underestimated nor given undue attention. But the scope of discussion here is focused on the translation process itself and the operational strategy governing the trainer and the trainee.

2. The Text:

2.1. What is it in the text that translators should translate?

This is a question of grave and paramount importance. The attitude of the translator to the text should be clearly defined. In fact, to answer that question it is not useful at all to ask any professional competent translator, when you have a text to translate, what do you translate? Such an extremely complex intellectual activity does not lend itself easily to formal description. To say that we translate the "meaning" is very misleading, because here people may differ and have different interpretations or readings of the same text. Giving people in the target language his own reading or interpretation of the text is not the normal role of the translator. The translator should give the text in the target language as rich as it is in the original. Therefore, the best approach to the text, in my opinion, is to see how the reader – as a native speaker of the language – understands the text.

Every language is governed by a certain code of conduct, on the basis of which the linguistic product is expressed. This code of conduct, so to speak, is its grammar in the broadest sense of the word. Meaning

management, therefore, is a process governed by describable rules of grammar. The basis of understanding any textual material is the grammatical relationships that will lead to meaning relationships. If, for instance, a certain noun is the "doer" of the action in the Arabic source text, it should appear as the "doer" of the action or the "subject" in the English translation. If that noun is the "object" it should remain as "object"; and if there is an "adjective" that qualifies that noun, it should not go in translation to qualify another noun. Of course every language has its own ways and tools of expression, but the meaning relationships established in the source language should be meticulously preserved in the target language.

This, in truth, is what the translator translates; grammatical relationships which will naturally lead to meaning relationships. Still, here lies the basic difference between the message undertaken by the written translator and that of the simultaneous interpreter. Whereas the latter is pre-occupied with giving what the speaker wants to say for the purpose of achieving immediate communication between two parties, the first should translate what the writer says as he says it, not what he is supposed to want to say but perhaps he does not say it; otherwise how can we be sure that the translator's reading of the text is that which the writer has in mind? Professional translators know that well-written texts are usually easier to translate than badly-written texts, where the translator has to grapple with the language to get out what the text says; because how can you make other people understand what you yourself do not understand? It is through grammatical relationships that the translator can safely labor to give us the sought for meaning relationships.

2.2. Unworkable transfer strategy:

Therefore, in actual practice the transfer strategy **SL** → **TL** has proved to be quite impracticable. In moving directly from the source language to the target language, more often than not, the translator is likely to slip into either a language error or a translation error. Even when the translation is

an acceptable one, in a trainer-trainee context this translation should be regarded as accidentally correct and hence methodologically unreliable. (See appendix, figure 1).

2.3. Golden transfer strategy

With this concept in mind the working transfer strategy is simply to be keen to understand the source language text in terms of the source language, i.e. on the basis of the grammatical rules governing management of that language. Then you rethink the idea out in terms of the target language, i.e. in accordance with the grammatical rules governing management of that target language. However, it should be taken into account that in understanding the source language text in terms of the source language, this should be done on both the lexical and the syntactic levels of language analysis. (See appendix, figure 2).

By so doing, the purpose is not only to understand the grammatical relationships which will lead to meaning relationships, but also to facilitate the process of translation. This golden transfer strategy represents the natural process which describes the attitude of any reader to the text. The transfer strategy SL → TL is an oversimplification of the translation process and, moreover, is quite detrimental to the trainer-trainee context. Whenever the trainee stumbles, has a difficulty or deviates from the right track, the trainer is there to help. But the point here is not that the trainer and the trainee are after translating a text in hand. The issue is how to help the trainee adopt the same methodology of the trainer, and how the trainer should always make sure that the correct methodology is strictly observed.

3. The Good Translation

3.1. Three primary rules to observe:

Why making things difficult? And what do we mean when we say that a certain word or a given structure is "difficult." That which is difficult is that which you do not know, you do not understand or you do not know how to deal with. When you know it and know how to deal with it, it is no

longer difficult. In the trainer-trainee context and at the very beginning, the concept of difficulty needs to be re-defined. If after proper training we do not know how to do the job, that kind of training is definitely ineffective.

In a trainer-trainee translation context we do not train people so that they can talk about translation. Definitely not. We want them to know how to translate; we want them to be translators. Once again the idea is very simple. In the source language text there are grammatical relationships which establish the meaning relationships. The meaning relationships, in their turn, will give us what we call the "idea". This idea is conveyed in a "vehicle" that has specific linguistic features, which we call "style". And when we read the text we move smoothly, because the constituting elements fit together, reflecting the typical spirit of that language, which we call "original composition". These are three criteria for the translator. They are of paramount importance because they lend themselves easily to linguistic analysis, i.e. to observable rules of language. It follows that a good translation will be the one which will keep the same meaning-relationships of the original; i.e. same idea (s); given the way the idea is said, i.e. same style, and you do not feel this is not how the native speaker would employ the language to externalize the idea, i.e. it reflects the competence of original composition.

3.2. Moving across cultural barriers:

However, the point concerning "original composition" is specifically precarious. An idea given in translation may be completely non-existent in that language, and because language is the vehicle by means of which ideas are conveyed, the translator may then employ acceptable rules of language management to convey new meaning relationships of the source language through the explicit grammatical relationships of the target language . For example in English there is a fixed rule for compound nouns and how the grammatical relationship should be understood; i.e. the second element of the compound noun is the head of the construction and

the first element is a kind of modifier. In that light the compound noun "Marriage Contract" should be understood, though in English there is nothing called "marriage contract" hence, it is clear that this is a translation of something said in another language - Arabic in this case - but from this explicit grammatical relationship an explicit meaning relationship is established.

3.3. The gravest mistake:

Therefore, the gravest mistake that the translator may make, and which is truly unforgivable, is when the native speaker of the TL understands something different from what the SL says because the translator uses non-corresponding grammatical relationships. For example, if the translator says "management growth" when he wants to say "growth management", this is exactly as if he says "race horse" when he wants to say "horse race". When the translator makes language errors, the reader becomes on his guard, and most probably will reject the translation. But when the translator has used good, grammatical language, and even worse, a stylistically distinguished language, the poor reader has no reason to make him doubt the accuracy of the translation. This often happens when the "translator" has a pseudo-subcompetence; mastering the target language, without having the same competence in the source language, or vice versa. Actually, in this case that person does a grave harm and can by no means be called a translator, because he lacks the first rule of thumb that a translator should master both the language from which he translates (SL) and the language into which he translates (TL).

4. Nine Translation Steps:

Once again, in a trainer-trainee context it is definitely infeasible to go to a translation class and start translating a text with the trainees for the purpose of teaching them how to translate without giving them clearly defined and readily understandable procedural steps. Therefore, it is advisable that at this point trainees should be fully aware of how they will deal with the text. Although at all introductory levels professionals unanimously agree that the basic translation unit

is the sentence, translation practice, in general, thereafter appears in a bigger unit, i.e. the paragraph, which is after all made up of sentence units. Consequently, it is only natural that the procedural translation steps be based on the paragraph as a natural life unit; and any bigger unit will then be more and more paragraphs. (See appendix)

4.1. Step one: Reading the text

The text as a whole should be read several times. You should read the text analytically and to the extent of identifying yourself with the author. This will help you know exactly what it is about, be fully aware of the thought(s) therein contained, and understand the grammatical relationships employed.

4.2. Step two: Division into thought units

There are usually main strings in any text. Each string constitutes a major thought unit, and in this step trainees should be able to know where they can have a possible shift from a cluster of relationships giving a major thought unit to another cluster.

4.3. Step three: Minor thought units

It is essential after that to further sub-divide the major thought unit into minor ones. Not only does this step consolidate our understanding and linguistic grasp of the text, but it also guarantees full awareness of the entire fabric of the text. By so doing, we can guarantee that, in translation, no part of the original will be skipped nor inadvertently be given less focus.

4.4. Step four: Context-free words

The worst that you may see in a translation class is that the trainer/teacher after reading the text to the trainees/students or asking one of them to read it aloud, will ask if there is anything “difficult”. Here lies a grave pedagogical problem; the entire translation endeavor is being reduced to vocabulary. Therefore, it is crucial that from the very beginning trainees should understand that though controlled vocabulary acquisition is an important component in building translation competence, in written

translation not knowing a context-free word should not be a barrier. They need to know what reference tools to consult, how to look up words in dictionaries; and before they will use the new word they need to double check the word again for accuracy and norms of usage in the TL language dictionaries. However, it should be noted here that not knowing a context-bound word is definitely a shortcoming in the basic linguistic competence of the would-be translator, and such a shortcoming needs to be promptly addressed.

4.5. Step five: Collocation and collocational clash

In general dictionaries should be consulted for the right collocation. However, in certain texts - usually literary or technical writings - writers deviate from the accepted norms of language, and the result is a collocational clash or a linguistic deviation. In such a case the translator should analytically assess the linguistic deviation to see whether it is unintentional on the part of the writer and therefore should be ignored and corrected in translation, or that such a deviation is intentionally made, so it is meaningful and should be translated. In fact, there is so much to be said on this point as it relates to both the language-specific culture and the intended meaning controlled by a specific language management. However, this point deserves a special treatment in its own right.

4.6. Step six: Inter-sentence connectors

In Arabic/English translation inter-sentence connectors is a major linguistic tool that needs careful attention. Whereas in Arabic sentences tend to be long and inter-connected by a linguistically clear connector, English sentences are usually shorter and the connectedness is reflected through a different linguistic arrangement. Hence, where in translation into English we need to do without certain Arabic inter-sentence connectors, in translation into Arabic we need to provide such connectors.

4.7. Step seven: Translating sentence by sentence

A sentence is the easiest to handle translation unit. Every rule you need to observe in translation is easily observable and controllable on the level of the sentence. Even mistakes can more easily be detected on the sentence level, and hence can immediately be corrected.

4.8. Step eight: Revising your translation

Here you should learn that it is not good to wait for the trainer to tell you your mistakes. Let's better think of translation practice as a critical self-disciplined endeavor. By revising our work we can at least have a sort of self-satisfaction that we have done our best.

4.9. Step nine: Editing your translation

This is the last step you need to do before presenting your translation; to read it not as a translator but as the reader will do and will understand it. Therefore, it is advisable that you should not edit your work immediately after finishing it, but give yourself some time to get rid of the pressure the source language had on you when you translated the text. This is not strictly editing as the word usually suggests. Editing one's own work, as here understood, is an essential step for readability and for natural composition. Actually, better reconstruction and renderings are usually attainable in this step.

5. Translation Measurability:

5.1. Sameness or equivalence?

Based on the above, it should not be difficult to define the criterion according to which a translation of a given text should be measured. The criterion is a simple one. It is predicated on the fact that since the one who needs the translation cannot read or understand the text in the source language, so if what is understood from the source language text in terms of the source language is the "same" as or is "equivalent" to what is understood from the target language text in terms of the target language, then the translation is a good one as defined in 3 above. In other words if we have an Arabic text and the English translation of that text, then if what a native-speaker of Arabic will understand from the Arabic text is the

"same" as or is "equivalent" to what the native-speaker of English will understand from the English translation, that means the translator has succeeded in his job. But if the native-speaker of English understands something different or even not exactly the "same", then definitely the translator has failed in his job, and his rendering is categorically unreliable. (See appendix, figure 3).

It is perhaps useful here to re-emphasize that what is here meant by "sameness" or "equivalence" can only be represented in that which is conveyed by the TL grammatical relationships which will naturally lead to TL meaning relationships that are "same" as or "equivalent" to the SL meaning relationships established by the SL grammatical relationships. Hence, in here we do not talk about "meaning". As translators we should not put on the hat of the interpreter or the commentator. Competent professional translators should always be after giving a TL text rich enough with meanings in the TL as it is in the SL. The only reliable thing on which two people may not differ in understanding a given text is the grammar or the linguistic rules governing expression in that text. Even when there is in the language an example of ambiguity where two levels of meaning are extricable, these two levels are usually grammatically analyzable and linguistically governed so as to exclude any other linguistically inexplicable meaning.

To Conclude:

It will always remain true that doing something is definitely one thing and teaching others how to do it is another skill. Professional translators may not be able to tell us how they can achieve a job professionally well-done. But within a linguistic framework that analyzes the source language text and the target language rendering, it is definitely possible to see how this highly complicated human activity is managed. Of course it is impossible to think of having exception-free rules, but definitely the process can, to a large extent, be formalized and systematized at least to help us assess the long established

translation heritage and, in the light of the findings of linguistic science, produce better reliable translations and prepare competent translators.

Appendix

(Figure 1)

THE TRANSFER STRATEGY:



WILL LEAD TO EITHER:

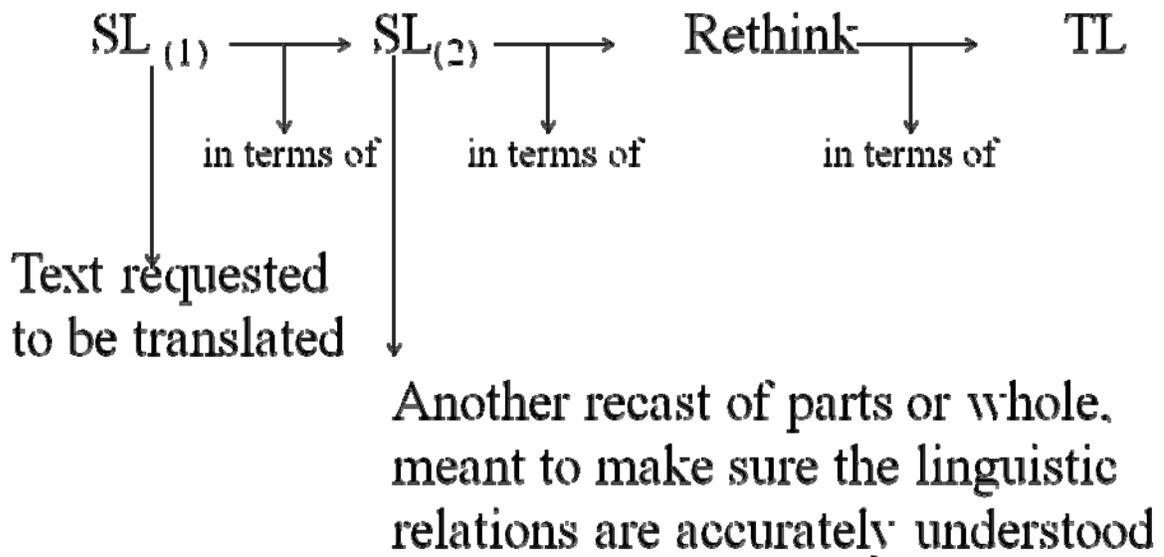
(1) A LANGUAGE ERROR

OR

(2) A TRANSLATION ERROR

(Figure 2)

**THE GOLDEN TRANSFER
STRATEGY CAN BE
SCHEMATICALLY REPRESENTED
AS FOLLOWS:**



Translation Steps:

Unit: A paragraph-length text

Step One: Read the whole text analytically several times in order to:
a) Know what it is about and,
b) understand the grammatical relationships employed

Step Two: Divide the text into major thought units.

Step Three: Subdivide the major thought units into smaller ones, and so on, until you reach the inseparable collocations.

Step Four: Get out the context-free words and look them up in the right dictionary.

NB. Whenever you look a word up in a bilingual dictionary you have to check the word again for accuracy and usage in the TL language dictionary. Never rely on bilingual dictionaries.

Step Five: Check the dictionary for the right collocations. Do not forget to consult a thesaurus.

Step Six: Read the text again to see which inter-sentence connectors you need to provide in translating into Arabic and, which sentence divisions you need to make in translating into English.

Step Seven: Start translating sentence by sentence to make sure you will use the right syntactic equivalent.

Step Eight: Having finished your translation read again for revision to make sure you have not left anything untranslated.

Step Nine: Put the SL text aside and read the TL rendering alone to edit it yourself to guarantee smoothness and natural composition.

NB. It is advisable that you allow an appropriate time space between step 8 and step 9.

Tips to the Translator

1. Do not translate word for word. Translate an utterance for an utterance.
2. The boundary of an utterance is where you can take a natural breath.
3. Strive to maintain conscious respect for the style of the author.
4. Avoid unconsciously working under the pressures of your own stylistic preferences.
5. From the careful analysis of the syntactic relationships try to establish the meaning relationships.
6. Remember that the relationship between the meaning intended and the language used is inseparable.
7. Do not hasten to establish a contextual meaning from certain words, which you have picked out, and related in a way that fits your pre-conceptions. Try to understand what the writer wants you to understand, not what you are ready to understand.
8. Some people will say something which is different from what they intended to say or what they have in mind. Saying exactly what you want to say is not impossible. It is a skill that can be acquired through disciplined practice.
9. Never try to translate when you do not understand.
10. In the classroom, we are not after translating a text. Our main goal is to have training in how to translate a given text and other texts containing the same and/or similar linguistic and cultural problems.

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ANNEX XVI

Presentation on Adapting curricula to market needs and new technologies, by Professor H. Safar (University of Mons, Belgium)

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Adapting curricula to market needs and new technologies

As a global strategy, we need to define the UN Translator and Interpreter profile. This could be our MoUs commun framework.

We all agree now that the job of a translator is changing constantly. « it is no longer defined as solely by criteria, such as source and target languages..». I would add that this situation is nearly the same for an interpreter. This means that we should continually adapte our training, its content and its methodology to this evolution. United Nations organisation, New technologies and Market needs should have a huge impact on this process of evolution and on the selected ways and means to communicate the translated message to consumer.

If translation online is considered now as a classical discipline, as for example Computer Aided Translation CAT or Machine Translation MT, so what about interpreting ? Can we for exemple speak about interpreting online?

As a trainer in simultaneous interpretation and audiovisual translation, I work with my team at the Center of Multimedia Studies(CERM)on an audiovisual translation typology which can help us to clarify our action:

AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION FRAMEWORK

A Typology (1)

O R A L	W R I T T E N
Speech to Speech (Machine interpretation)	Machine translation (MT)
Tele interpretation , Visiointerpreting, Tele/video Call CAT	Computer Aided Translation
Voice over, videoconference interpretation	Subtitling for hard of hearing (Teletexte)
Audio-description DVD...	Translation online/localization Web content.
Dubbing (adaptation)	Subtitling Respeaking
Simultaneous Interpretation (with laptop, Internet connection..)	

This Typology should be able to include all other new accepted activities related to AVT : Scanlation, Transpretation, etc..

(1) different from a *Taxonomy* which means that a hierarchy criteria exists.

The Classical Simultaneous interpreting is not yet integrated as it is in the typology of audiovisual translation because: no lap top, no internet connection, no specific training..., but on the other hand both Tele-interpretation and moreover visiointerpreting, which corresponds to distanced simultaneous interpretation, are integrated within this framework.

The difference between visio and videoconference interpreting is that the last one could be convenient for a distanced interpretation prepared before and sent on demand like for example: a voice over or a dubbing with or without audiodescription, etc... but especially not for any simultaneous interpreted program.

The two new disciplines (visiointerpreting and tele-interpretation) are obviously as a result of simultaneous and consecutive traditional interpretation and are based on the market needs and on an important audiovisual and technological dimension. Without this dimension, those two fields could not exist as disciplines. This fact allows us to place them in the typology of Audiovisual Translation (AVT).

To be able to offer this service to our society by including one of those disciplines of Tele-interpreting or of visiointerpreting, it is of course crucial to know the techniques of traditional interpretation (the simultaneous and the consecutive ones, plus sight translation) and to be interested in new technologies related to both fields. So it is a prerequisite to visiointerpreting training.

Tele-interpretation exists already on certain Asian and European markets, but on the other hand the visiointerpreting as we're conceiving it in our Center is not yet widespread. Thus we're still awaiting the development of more powerful and more operational tools. Unfortunately, some of the available tools on the Market are still not very efficient, some others are very expensive.

The *theory* of visioconference interpreting and tele-interpretation is still now in a phase of construction and is thus not accessible to all, but in the meanwhile, we can say that its *methodology* is in an advanced phase of its development. In our University, we propose this training within the post-graduate studies in audiovisual translation beside the other disciplines, such as dubbing, audiodescription, respeaking, and other fields of the A.V.T. typology.

The Research in this area requires Tools and Means. In fact, In addition to necessary connections it is essential to have the most powerful technological tools, so that the « passing wires » are guaranteed in quality and durability. Several standards have been established : H323 for PCs using Internet and Intranet communication, H.324 for over dial-up phone lines and what we use is one of the earliest standards developed for transmission of video and audio over digital network, primarily ISDN (Integrated Service Digital Network : voice, video and data).

Because of the development of new technologies, we clearly perceive the need of the market growing for this type of know how related to interpreting.

This evolution is reducing distance and cost of interpreting, developing interpretation online and new technologies related to this discipline, developing a specialized methodology of training, and is promoting interpretation, etc..

We surly encourage for example our students to create their own companies of audio-visual translation, including visiointerpreting, from which they will be able to propose those services at the same time. The equipment of visioconference might be used for both translation and interpretation

How can we define that profile ? By a liste of skills.

How can we find this liste of skills ? We propose a multidimensional diagram to answer step by step this question. This process will help us in selecting the training content and competencies to achieve this profile.

For the meanwhile, the strategy we can choose in order to define urgently the UN-interpreter profile should be based on 4 stages:

1°) Adapting curricula and Training content in tanslation and interpreting. The question here is : how to select this content ?

2°) Training objectives and means, and how to select them.

3°) UN Assesment criteria of this profile,

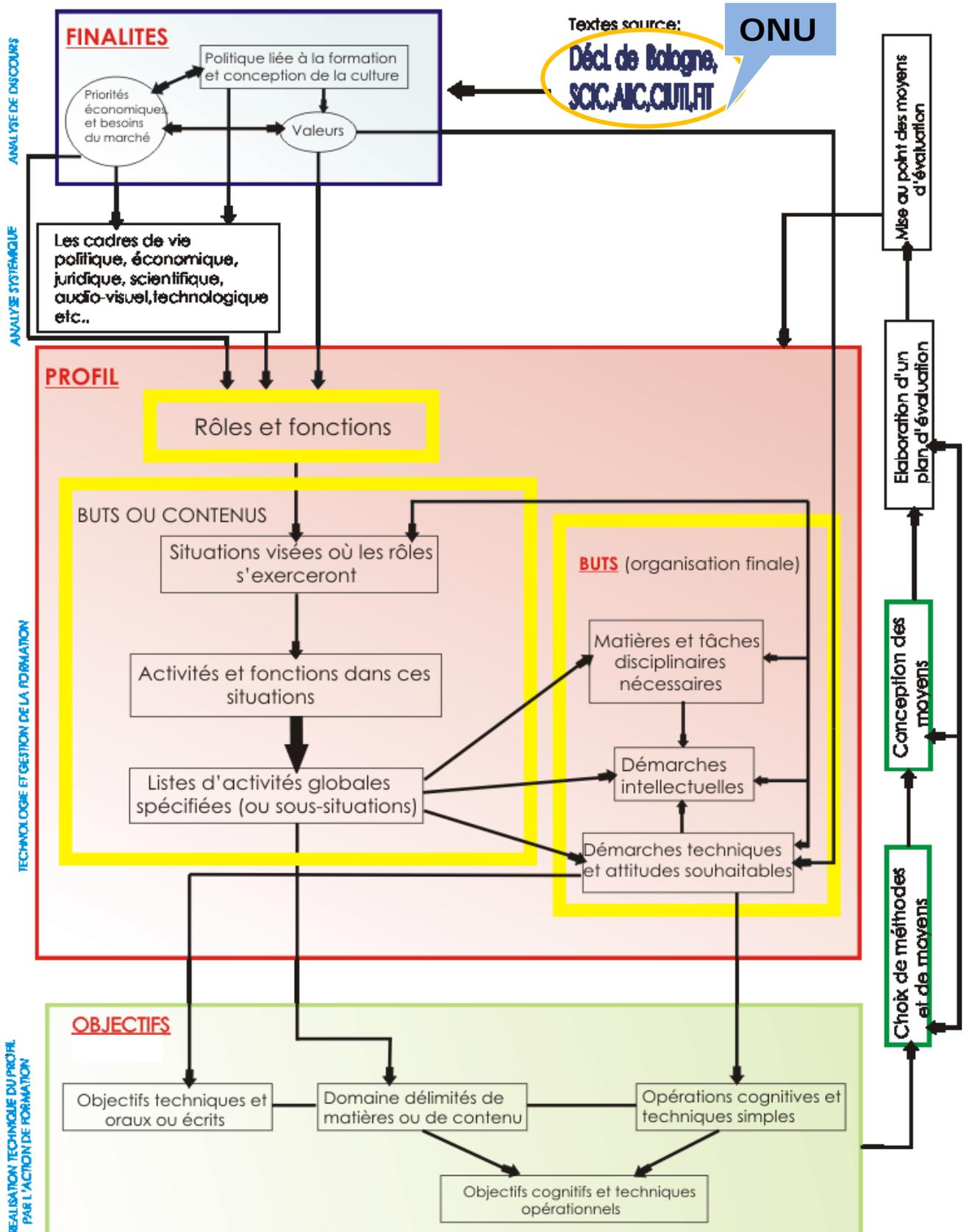
4°) Methodology, feedback, etc..

This global strategy that I propose is presented in the following Curriculum diagram with its three hierarchical levels :

1°) Training Policy,

2°) Training Management,

3°) Operational training, Tools, Means and assesment criterias.



This framework will help us to precise and **harmonize our training objectives** and our assessment criteria and will stimulate scientific research. This means that **interpreter profile** can take into consideration *mainly* the UN criteria then other specialised institutions, such as AIIC, CIUTI, SCIC, Market needs and NT interaction with TI.

The difference will appear in the area of the profile diagram related to **tasks** and **activities/functions**. Like for example the *appreciation of quality criteria*.

We are already in the “tomorrow” of Translation and interpreting and to answer to the present and future market needs, next step will integrate the virtual image of a Translator or Visiointerpreter, materialized out of the screen in the same room, in front of a consumer assembly..

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ANNEX XVII

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 - Luis González
 - **European Parliament:**
 - Alison Graves
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 - **International Telecommunication Union**
 - Anthony Pitt
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