PETRA-E

Pathways through the Framework
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At the Utrecht meeting I suggested that one way of clarifying how our framework document can be used would be to give in our introduction some illustrative pathways or trajectories through it. For this meeting, then, I have been asked to speak for five minutes on the subject. I notice that my talk has been given the subtitle "England" in the programme: I suppose what I have to say is inevitably coloured by my particular experiences from an English perspective, although my remarks are not intended to apply to the English case in particular.

As I was saying yesterday, the document that we're preparing – whichever form it finally takes – is going to be pretty daunting, and we owe it to our readers to provide them with a kind of user's manual. We've been talking about explanations and clarifications we should include in the introduction (and they are by now already quite a few!); yesterday I also suggested that we include a "Frequently Asked Questions" section. One further way in which we can provide contextual or meta-information is, precisely, by including some sample pathways. There seem to me to be several advantages to this approach:

- first, it emphasises the fact that, as Henri was helpfully explaining yesterday, the framework document is not only a competence model but also a learning line, in other words it is not (or not just) a static but a dynamic model, a flow chart illustrating stages in the development of the literary translator;

- second, it makes clear to our readers that we recognise the framework is not intended as some kind of monolithic, one-size-fits-all model, but that it is intended to map (or at least attempt to map) as much diversity as currently exists in the field of literary translation. In other words it allows us to give an indication of who we think our readership is;

- third, it allows us to give some concrete illustrative examples and dispel any misapprehension that the framework is somehow just a theoretical construct or that it is intended to be used only by academics. In other words, illustrative pathways will allow our various readers to discern how the framework can speak to them in particular. It seems to me that one thing we must aim to do is to allow as many (and as many different kinds of) people as possible to recognise themselves in the document, to "own" it and feel it addresses their particular case. What's more, only if they can read themselves into the framework and see it as a "roadmap" of their career development to date will they be able to appreciate that it is not just a summary of where they have got to in their personal development, but it gives indications as to where they might be heading next. Trajectories indicate what it is possible to aspire to.

In general, then, I think pathways or trajectories represent an important way in which we can pre-empt and disarm criticisms (for as we were saying yesterday, the document is bound to attract criticisms).

In order to construct our putative "case studies" (which is what these pathways would be), we will evidently need to have a clear idea ourselves of who we think our target readership is. A further advantage of this approach is that discussing which scenarios to represent will allow us to visualise better who our readership might be, and in turn the more we think about our diverse constituencies, the more these different perspectives will help us to tighten up aspects of the framework itself.

One of the potential hazards of indicating who we think our readership or target audience might be, though, is that we could easily alienate readers and leave them with the impression that the framework is not for them if we don't choose our examples very carefully. It seems to me, then, that we need to try to represent as broad as possible a variety of scenarios, even while acknowledging that there are always going to be many more kinds of reader than can be catered for by a handful of sample pathways. This raises the question of whether we use real examples of translators' careers mapped against the framework (perhaps in anonymised form), or whether instead we come up with "ideal types" extrapolated from real cases (à la Max Weber, or the designers of the Euro banknotes). The latter would probably be more efficient.

In order to set the ball rolling, I've envisaged some possible scenarios, differentiated by level:

- **LT2**: early career translator just emerging from a university formation. Has taken a first degree in modern languages, has just completed an MA in literary translation and is now looking to plan their next steps and get started on a professional career.
- **LT3**: has not taken the academic route (perhaps a bilingual who got into literary translation "by accident"?), but has begun publishing and is looking for continuing professional development. Typically a participant in a summer school or translation workshop at a RECIT/CEATL institution, or mentee benefitting from a mentorship scheme. Possibly also engaged in distance learning?
- **LT4**: experienced translator who has become a translator trainer and is planning a course, but is also considering how they might extend their own range of competence and achieve LT5.

What other scenarios might we want to cater for? Possible alternatives include:

- **LT3**: graduate of a general translation programme looking to convert to work on literary translation projects.
- **LT3**: non-career/non-professional (part-time) literary translator engaged in "lifelong learning".
- **LT1-5**: an ideal translator training.
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In each of these instances we would need to map the case against some of the most salient framework descriptors. Other variables to work in might include:

- gender/age
- ST genre (prose, poetry, drama, literary non-fiction)
- language pairs?
- translating or retranslating?
- ST author: dead or alive?

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