



Alejandro Bolaños García-Escribano (University College London, UK)

Plenary session 3: “Rethinking Automation and Competence in Audiovisual Translation Education”

13:00-14:00h. – Auditorium (Salón de actos) Facultad de Psicología

Abstract

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is transforming the translation industry (Moorkens et al. 2025). Together machine translation and speech technologies, automation is increasingly being incorporated into audiovisual translation (AVT) and media accessibility. Technological innovation has been pervasive (Baños 2023; Bolaños García-Escribano 2023; Díaz-Cintas & Massidda 2019; Granell & Chaume 2023) in AVT, but language automation still raises important questions about the knowledge, skills and competences that need to be developed in a rapidly changing professional landscape (Orrego-Carmona 2026; Slator 2025).

The opportunities and challenges of GenAI in language and translation education place emphasis on curriculum design, assessment practices and the development of transferable skills (Cui et al. 2025; Penet et al. (2026). Recent developments compel us to revisit a longstanding question: what does it mean to be a competent (audiovisual) translator in the age of automation? Translation competence has traditionally been conceptualised as a dynamic and interconnected system of sub-competences (see PACTE 2020). Alongside linguistic and translation-specific skills, the EMT Competence Framework sought to align training with changing professional realities by emphasising technological, personal and interpersonal dimensions of competence (EMT Board 2022). These are echoed in the (scarce) literature on AVT education (Bolaños García-Escribano 2025; Cerezo-Merchán 2018; Díaz-Cintas 2008), but recently scholars have set out to identify and redefine the competences required of subtitling professionals (Díaz-Cintas & Massidda 2025).

In this keynote, I will argue that current competence models, albeit valuable, require re-evaluation in light of the increasing integration of automation technologies into professional workflows and the classroom. Ultimately, my aim is to promote a space for dialogue on the future of (audiovisual) translator education and its place within wider debates on language education.

Keywords: Audiovisual translation education, language automation, industry workflows, competence and skills

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Bionote

Dr Alejandro Bolaños García-Escribano is Associate Professor in Audiovisual Translation at University College London (UCL), UK, where he teaches (audiovisual) translation at the Centre for Translation Studies (CenTraS). He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA) as well as a Member (MCIL) and Chartered Linguist (CL) of the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CioL). He currently serves as Editor-in-Chief for *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* (Taylor & Francis), has co-edited special issues for translation journals such as *The Translator and Interpreter Trainer* (2021), *Transletters* (2023) and *Parallèles* (2024), and is co-editor of *Inclusion, Diversity and Innovation in Translation Education* (UCL Press 2024). His first research monograph, entitled *Practices, Education and Technology in Audiovisual Translation* (Routledge 2024), forms part of the Routledge Research in Audiovisual Translation series.