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Learning ESP with a little help from translation: the benefits of a multimodal, situated approach

Starting from recent work on the possible contributions of neural machine translation to language teaching (Rossi et al., in press), I will present several types of activities resulting from the European project MultiTraiNMT (www.multitrainmt.eu) and discuss how they could be used with students of the Applied Languages BA (LEA). I will then focus on translation tasks combining verbal and pictorial modes of presentation, to analyse uses of translation that are not based on equivalence, but rather similar to Laviosa's (2014) holistic approach, fostering the development of symbolic competence. Finally, I will stress the advantages of using a combination of mediation and situated translation tasks, including machine translation, to train "the language professional of the future, who needs to grow into a self-reflective, interculturally competent and responsible meaning maker in our increasingly multilingual world" (Laviosa 2015 : 105).