Translation Project Management: Duties, Competences and Training. What is the scenario like in Spain?

Irene Fuentes Pérez

University of Alcalá, FITISPos Research Group

i.fuentes@uah.es

Abstract

With the introduction of new technologies and the rise of globalization, the translation industry has undergone significant transformation since the end of the 20th century. What was originally considered an individual and self-employed activity has evolved to meet the demands of the language services industry over the last two decades, resulting in a virtual working environment. It is within this evolving landscape that the role of the Translation Project Manager (PM) has emerged, offering an interesting alternative to students aspiring to diverge from the more traditional career paths linked to Translation and Interpreting (T&I). Based on an observational study of Spanish university curricula, this study aims to discuss the training that future PMs are receiving in regard to Translation Project Management (TPM), focusing on the training content (or lack thereof). The primary objective is to determine whether university training aligns with the demands of the labor market and whether future PMs are adequately prepared for their professional journey.

Keywords: translation project management, translator training, university programs, competences, digital age

Introduction

Despite the growing popularity of project management in translation-related seminars, conferences, and symposia worldwide – take, for instance, Globalization and Localization Association (GALA) Academy Q3 2023 on Project Management[1], or the European Commission Translating Europe Forum 2023[2] –, the reality is that it is still unfamiliar territory for many people, particularly for newly graduates in Translation and Interpreting (T&I) studies (Quijano Peña 2022). Until the mid-1990s, the translation industry consisted mainly of independent professionals and small agencies (Tirry 2023). However, in the second decade of the 21st century, globalization has

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[1] https://www.gala-global.org/events/events-calendar/gala-academy-q3-2023-project-management
[2] https://2023tef.b2match.io/components/32449

brought about significant changes in the industry's workflow. As a result, researchers in the discipline have started to focus on the new professional profiles that have emerged around translators (Plaza-Lara 2018a, 511). This is precisely how the role of the Translation Project Manager (PM) came into existence – a profession that is here to stay.

While it is true that this profession has been present in the industry since the 1990s when the first translation agencies were established worldwide (such as TransPerfect in the US in 1992, Keywords Studios in Ireland in 1998, or RWS Group in the UK in 1982), "it has been largely overlooked as an object of scholarly inquiry and critical pedagogical reflection in the field of translation studies" (Dunne and Dunne 2011, 6). As Plaza-Lara (2018a, 514) notes, the literature on project management remains limited even today, and it is only in works published from 2010 onwards that this new professional profile has begun to be addressed in detail. Therefore, over the past 13 years, we have witnessed a proliferation of studies and research papers in Spain focusing on translation project management (TPM). These works undeniably paved the way for new research lines and a growing interest in this emerging career path.

In this context, the initial forays into researching this field in Spain were led by Rico Pérez (2002) and Gili (2005). They emphasized the translator's evolution into a PM and the conceptualization of translation as a part of a management process comprising multiple phases. A few years later, Flores Acuña (2012) authored an article based on an experiment conducted in a translation class, aiming to introduce students to the reality of translation project assignments. Nevertheless, it is only since 2015 that an increase in literature related to TPM has been noted. This includes noteworthy PhD dissertations, such as Matcha Abombo's (2015) study on project management and its implementation in T&I studies, Ferrer Simó's (2016) research on audiovisual TPM in Spain, Arevalillo Doval's (2016) focus on quality control and error revision in TPM, and Fuentes-Pérez's (pending publication) study on the impact of the digital age on the role of PMs. Additionally, special mention should be made of the numerous articles published by Plaza-Lara (2018a, 2018b, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2021), which delve into her research on the competences required for PMs and how new technologies influence this professional role, as well as Quijano Peña's (2022) study on TPM training in the curricula of T&I Degrees in Spain, aligning with the content presented in this work.

Given the significance of this emerging career path, this study aims to determine whether T&I university programs in Spain indeed align with market demands and provide students with the necessary training to become competent PMs. This research is divided into two phases. First, it was important to understand the role of PMs in the Spanish labor market. For this reason, a short survey was conducted among 61 Spanish PMs to gain a better understanding of their duties and responsibilities at work. Having collected this data, the second phase of the study focuses on the training that undergraduate students receive in TPM at Spanish universities. The information extracted from the course syllabi includes the course name, the academic year it is

taught in, and whether it is a compulsory or elective course. Lastly, the conclusions derived from this study will be shared, which will address the initial hypothesis of this research: T&I university programs in Spain need to be reviewed and updated in terms of TPM.

1 Theoretical Background: Contextualization of Translation Project Management

Since it was established as a discipline in the 1970s (Hurtado Albir 1996b), translation has been known for being a solitary endeavor undertaken by freelance translators. In most cases, the translator only needed to receive the assignment from the client and perform the translation work using the resources that were available at that time, which were mainly limited and paper-based:

> The traditional view of a translator's work environment has been that of a person who works alone, fenced behind a stack of dictionaries, paper, and all sorts of documentation material. Not that this has ever been completely true, but it is certainly a picture surviving in the minds of some outsiders to the profession. (Rico Pérez 2002, 38)

This reality of work being seen as an individual activity continued until the early 21st century. At this stage in history, the context is significantly shaped by the development of new technologies and globalization. These factors have led to a parallel transformation in the translation industry. In the field of computing, the rapid development of what is known as Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools represented a transitional moment in the translator's workflow:

> The translation sector has undeniably undergone a revolution in recent years, largely fueled by the integration of computing into the daily practices of the translator. Indeed, in a relatively short period of time, the translator has transitioned from working with pen and typewriter to handling the most sophisticated word processing software available on the market. (Arevalillo Doval 2004, 89)

As noted by Rico Pérez, "In the 21st century, translation has ceased to be a craft and has become a full-fledged industry" (2021, 8). This statement reminds us that the role of translators has changed due to international commerce, globalization, and technological advancements. Previously seen as individual practitioners, translators are now part of the "virtual translation factory" (Rico Pérez 2021, 15). Thus, as businesses started expanding internationally and the demand for translation increased, the first translation agencies and companies emerged in the 1990s, both in Spain and beyond our borders. These organizations, also referred to as *language service providers* (LSPs), became instrumental in managing translation projects.

However, to contextualize the role of the PM within a translation agency or company, it is first important to clarify the distinction between the two, even though for this work, the terms shall be used interchangeably to refer to the PM's workplace. According to Rico Pérez (2021, 17), the following differentiation can be made worldwide:

- A *translation agency* acts as an intermediary between the end client and the translator to whom they outsource the work.

- A *translation company* has in-house translators who handle translations for their clients. Occasionally, translation companies outsource work to external (freelance) translators, especially when the workload is substantial or when they do not have in-house translators who handle a specific language pair or specialization.

According to a study conducted by Rico Pérez and García Aragón (2016), between the years 2014 and 2015, there were a total of 418 translation companies in Spain, distributed as follows: 153 in the Community of Madrid, 110 in Catalonia, 34 in the Community of Valencia, and 31 in Andalusia. In 2021, the National Association of Companies of Translation and Interpretation (ANETI 2022) estimated a total of 460 companies in Spain, located in the same regions as indicated in the study by Rico Pérez and García Aragón (2016). It is likewise worth mentioning that, according to the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE), there were a total of 1211 translation companies in Spain in 2020. However, it should be noted that out of the total number of companies, over 77% of them (940) had only 1 to 2 employees. In such cases, it is unlikely that one of the two employees would be a PM.

As previously mentioned, it is common in Spain, particularly in small agencies, to not have in-house translators, interpreters, or other T&I professionals such as proofreaders, reviewers, post-editors, or desktop publishers directly employed by the agency. Instead, these language services are outsourced to freelance professionals or even other translation agencies, who may in turn subcontract services to additional freelance professionals. And this is precisely where PMs come into play. To provide a better understanding of the role of the PM within the translation agency, the following figure has been created to depict the general organizational structure. Figure 1 has been modeled after a) a Spanish translation agency located in Madrid, which has 18 employees but does not employ any in-house language professionals; and b) the organizational chart of a translation company presented by Dudi (2018). Although this is not a comprehensive organizational chart, it serves as a visual representation of where the PM stands within the Spanish agency:

Figure 1. *Location of the PM within the organizational chart of a small-sized translation agency. Own creation, adapted from Dudi (2018)*
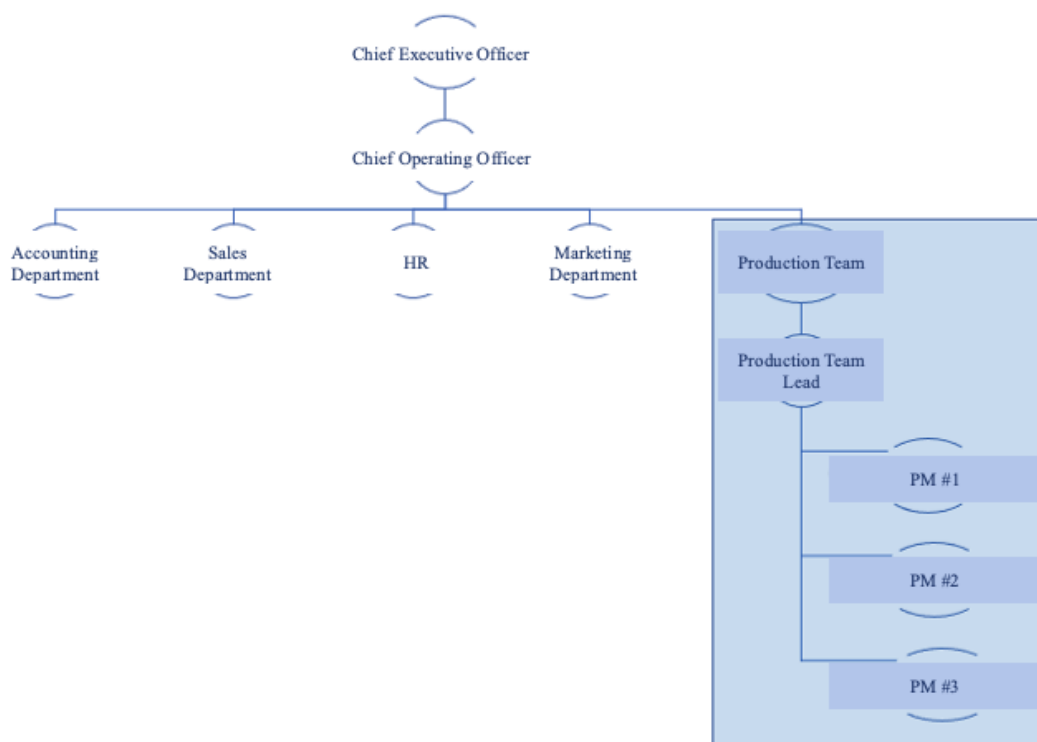
As illustrated in Figure 1, the PM belongs to the Production Department—depending on the company, it is also commonly referred to as the Operations Department or Team—and is usually under the responsibility of the Production Team Lead. Likewise, the number of PMs will depend on the size of the company, the number of clients/accounts, and its turnover. For example, in the case of small-sized companies in Spain (1 to 20 employees), the number of PMs ranges from 2 to 6 in-house PMs. Furthermore, it is essential to highlight that the company's size directly impacts the role of the PM and, specifically, the duties and responsibilities they perform in their daily work.

1.1 Duties and responsibilities

The PM is the person responsible for overseeing and monitoring a project from the moment the client requests a service until it is delivered. They are the ones in charge of the project management process, and among their many responsibilities, their ultimate goal is to ensure client satisfaction upon delivery (Jáñez 2020). When it comes to the duties and responsibilities of PMs, it is essential to refer to the ISO 17100 standard (2015, 9-10) on *Translation Services – Requirements for translation services*, which outlines the tasks that PMs should undertake, which include:
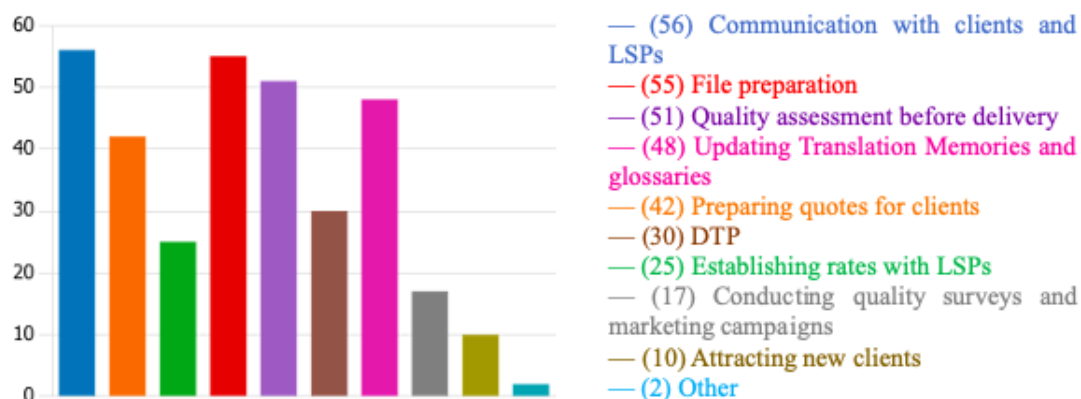
a) identifying the key requirements and translation project specifications during the pre-production process and following the procedures and specifications throughout its production;

b) supervising and monitoring the translation project preparation process;

c) assigning a competent translator or translators to the translation project;

d) assigning a competent reviser or revisers;

e) disseminating information, issuing instructions related to the assignment, and managing the translation project to all parties involved;

f) monitoring to ensure compliance with agreed upon schedule and deadlines;

g) communicating any changes of the project specifications, if applicable;

h) monitoring constant conformity to the client-TSP [Translation Service Provider] agreement, project specifications, and, where necessary, communicating with all parties involved in the project, including the client;

i) ensuring translation and other queries are answered;

j) managing and handling of feedback;

k) verifying that the translation service specifications have been compiled with before approving the target language content and giving clearance for its delivery to the client;

l) delivering of the service.

Project management may also include the following:

a) if applicable, assigning a competent reviewer or reviewers to the translation project;

b) if necessary, implementing corrections and/or corrective action;

c) monitoring to ensure the project does not exceed the agreed budget;

d) preparing and issuing the invoice;

e) completing other activities or tasks agreed with the client.

As mentioned above, this study focuses on TPM in Spain. For this reason, it was deemed appropriate to target the survey towards PMs in Spain to ensure that the results obtained accurately reflected the reality of the Spanish labor market in this sector. The survey was designed in early 2023 and was validated by three Spanish PMs. Although originally written in Spanish, Appendix I includes the question represented in Chart 1 translated into English as drafted in the survey. Once validated, it was mainly distributed and shared through LinkedIn, as well as via email to associations like GALA. From June to August 2023, a total of 61 PMs in Spain were surveyed about their duties and responsibilities. Their answers can be found in the following chart:

Chart 1. *Duties and responsibilities of PMs according to 61 surveyed PMs in Spain*

— (56) Communication with clients and LSPs
— (55) File preparation
— (51) Quality assessment before delivery
— (48) Updating Translation Memories and glossaries
— (42) Preparing quotes for clients
— (30) DTP
— (25) Establishing rates with LSPs
— (17) Conducting quality surveys and marketing campaigns
— (10) Attracting new clients
— (2) Other

— *Communication with clients and LSPs*. Communication is key for PMs. When it comes to hiring a new PM, communication is the most requested soft skill by translation agencies worldwide (Fuentes-Pérez 2023). PMs should maintain regular communication with linguists, clients, and their teams, either through email or phone calls.

— *File preparation*. In most cases, when a client sends documents for translation, the PM needs to adapt the document to the CAT tool they use. For instance, certain Excel files may require customization before translating the document. This can include actions such as hiding unnecessary columns that do not need to be translated.

— *Quality assessment (QA)*. Before sending the final document to the client, PMs usually carry out a QA to make sure the quality of the translated document is excellent. Although this process may vary from one agency to another, this is the final step that needs to be done before final delivery.

— *Updating Translation Memories (TMs) and glossaries*. Most of the time, the client has specific requirements when it comes to certain terms or ways of translating. Therefore, it is not surprising that clients send their feedback to the PM, and the PM updates the glossary or the TM, ensuring that the term is always translated according to the client's preferences.

— *Preparing quotes for clients*. Some companies, especially small ones, may not have a dedicated Quotes Department or Team. In these cases, it is usually the responsibility of the PM to prepare the quote for the client. The PM takes into account various factors such as language pair, specialization, deadline, and service, among others.

— *Desktop publishing (DTP)*. Sometimes, clients may have specific stylistic or layout preferences for the final document. For example, the translated document must have the same format or length as the original text. In these situations, the PM is responsible for the overall layout of the final document.

— *Establishing rates with LSPs*. This responsibility falls on the Vendor Manager (VM), but it will depend on the company's size and whether the company has a VM. Therefore, in many cases, it is the PM who is responsible for determining the rates with LSPs, whether they are freelance linguists or other translation agencies.

— *Conducting quality surveys and marketing campaigns*. While the responsibility of making calls during marketing campaigns and collecting feedback from clients usually falls on the Sales Department, in many companies, it is also the PM who takes on this task. This includes reaching out to potential clients and gathering feedback on the services provided to existing clients.

— *Other*. 2 out of the 61 surveyed PMs wished to emphasize that there are many more micro duties and responsibilities in their daily work. Some of these micro duties are:

- Monitoring and managing the inbox for the assigned account(s).
- Setting up the project in the translation agency's computerized Translation Management System (TMS).
- Continued use of CAT tools throughout the process.
- Time management.
- Training of new PMS.
- Solving technical and technological issues.

1.2 Competences

Just like translators, PMs also need to acquire a set of competences, either through university education or their professional career, which will enable them to practice their profession effectively. PMs should possess a full range of tools, skills, and aptitudes that are required for the position. While it is true that competence, and specifically Translation Competence (TC), has been the subject of research by numerous scholars since its inception as a discipline (see Wilss 1976; Bell 1991; Pym 1993, 2003; Toury 1995; Kiraly 1995; Hansen 1997; Hurtado Albir 1996a; Kelly 2002, 2005, 2008, to name a few), for the purposes of this article, *competence* is understood as defined below:

> [A] complex *know how to* act resulting from integration, mobilisation and organisation of a combination of capabilities and skills (which can be cognitive, affective, psycho-motor or social) and knowledge (declarative knowledge) used efficiently in situations with common characteristics (Lasnier 2002, as cited in Hurtado Albir 2017, 14).

For this article, it is important to consider TC from a theoretical perspective, even though the main focus is not on the translator but on the PM. However, given the duties and responsibilities performed by the PM, there is no doubt that they must have a

background in T&I (refer to Q4 of Appendix I). In this sense, we agree with the viewpoints presented by Plaza-Lara (2018a) and Arevalillo Doval (2002) concerning PMs who do not have training in translation:

> In such cases, they will find it challenging to understand the day-to-day issues in our industry, especially considering the common lack of awareness among clients about translation, which can lead to unrealistic and problematic job requests. (Arevalillo Doval 2002, 13)

Regarding TC, there are currently multiple models that cover the different sub-competences needed for professional translators. One of the most relevant models in our field is the model presented by the PACTE group (Process in the Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation) (2003, 2017, 2020), led by Hurtado Albir. They proposed a comprehensive holistic model that is worth considering, as they conducted an empirical and experimental research on TC that validated this model (refer to Hurtado Albir 2017):

Figure 2. *TC Holistic Model (PACTE 2003, 60, 2017, 41, as cited in PACTE 2020, 110).*
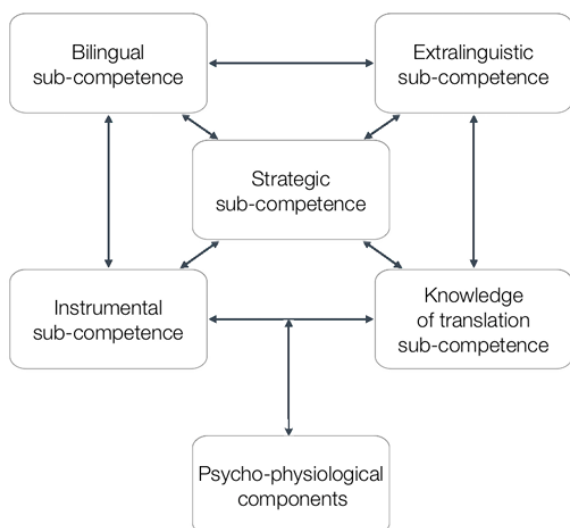
As described in the model presented by PACTE (2003, 2017, 2020), TC comprises different interrelated sub-competences, namely (PACTE 2003, 2017, 39-40):

— *Bilingual sub-competence.* Predominantly procedural knowledge required to communicate in two languages. It comprises pragmatic, sociolinguistic, textual, grammatical and lexical knowledge in the two languages. It includes the specific ability to control interference when switching between two languages.

— *Extralinguistic sub-competence.* Predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit, about the world in general and specific areas. It comprises: (1) bicultural knowledge (about the source and target cultures); (2) general world knowledge; and (3) subject knowledge (field-specific).

— *Knowledge of translation sub-competence*. Predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit, about what translation is and aspects of the profession.

— *Psycho-physiological components*. Different types of cognitive and attitudinal components and psycho-motor mechanisms. They include: (1) cognitive components such as memory, perception, attention and emotion; (2) attitudinal aspects such as intellectual curiosity, perseverance, rigour, critical spirit, motivation, knowledge about, confidence in and the capability to measure one's own abilities; and (3) abilities such as creativity, logical reasoning, analysis and synthesis.

— *Instrumental or professional sub-competence*. Predominantly procedural knowledge related to the use of documentation resources and information and communication technologies applied to translation and translation technologies.

— *Strategic sub-competence*. Procedural knowledge for guaranteeing the efficiency of the translation process and solving problems encountered. This is an essential sub-competence that affects all the others in that it creates links between the different sub-competences as it controls the translation process.

Another model that needs to be considered in the discussion of TC is the one presented by the European Master's in Translation (EMT) network. This model was initially published in 2009, followed by a substantial redrafting in 2017, and most recently updated and published in 2022. Considered complementary to the PACTE group model, the EMT Competence Framework (2022) "focus on new demands, including those stemming from technological changes in the translation industry, artificial intelligence, and social media" (Eraković and Radić Bojanić 2023, 126):

Figure 3. *EMT Competence Framework (2022, 4)*
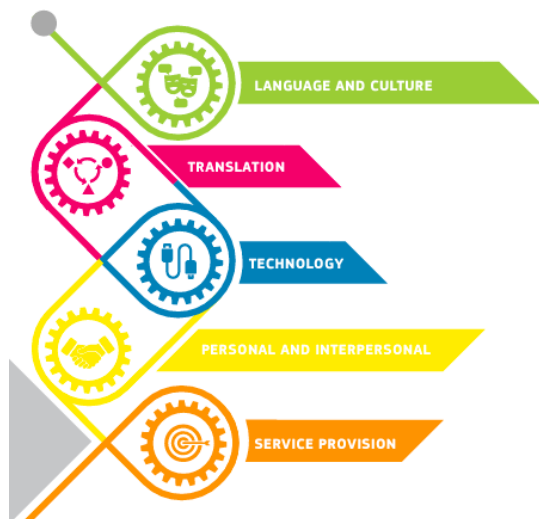
The model presented by the EMT (2022) defines five main areas of competence:

— *Language and culture*. Transcultural and sociolinguistic awareness and communicative skills. This competence encompasses all the general or language-

specific linguistic, sociolinguistic, cultural and transcultural knowledge and skills that constitute the basis for advanced translation competence.

— *Translation*. Strategic, methodological and thematic competence. It should be understood in the broadest sense, encompassing not only the actual meaning transfer phase between two languages (interlingually), including the use of pivot languages, or within the same language (intralingually), but also all the strategic, methodological and thematic competences.

— *Technology*. Tools and applications. This competence includes all the knowledge and skills used to implement and advise on the use of present and future translation technologies within the translation process.

— *Personal and interpersonal*. This competence area includes all the generic skills (soft skills) that enhance graduate adaptability and employability.

— *Service provision*. This competence covers all the skills relating to the implementation of translation and, more generally, to language services in a professional context – from awareness of clients, commissioners and users and negotiation through to project management and quality assurance.

On the other hand, on the topic of project management, Plaza-Lara (2018a) conducted a study that analyzed a corpus of job advertisements posted online. The study compiled both Spanish and international advertisements. Using the holistic model of TC presented by the PACTE group (2003, 2017, 2020) as a starting point, the author proposes a competence model specifically tailored for project management:

Table 1. *PM Competence Model (Plaza-Lara 2018a, 527-528)*

Bilingual sub-competence	Knowledge of translation sub-competence	Instrumental sub-competence
Foreign language proficiency	Execution of administrative tasks	Advanced computer knowledge
English proficiency	Commercial skills	Preparation and management of files
Linguistic QA	Preparation of reference material	Basic computer knowledge
Translation	Comprehension of instructions	Document management skills

Strategic sub-competence	Psycho-physiological components
Teamwork	Communication skills
Client or vendor interaction	Ability to work under pressure
Time management	Organizational skills
Problem-solving	Attention to detail
Project coordination from start to finish	Motivation
Multitasking	Autonomy
Analytical skills	Interpersonal skills
Quality analysis, cost, and deadline management	Proactive attitude
	Positive attitude
	Adaptability
	Leadership
	Responsibility

As mentioned by the author, the preceding table does not represent a definitive competence model but rather a "first attempt to delineate the competences of a translation project manager" (Plaza-Lara 2018a, 528). When comparing the model proposed by PACTE for TC (2003, 2017, 2020) and this initial approach by Plaza-Lara (2018a) in the context of project management, the following characteristics of project management competences can be identified:

— PMs must have a high level of proficiency in either a foreign language or English (Plaza-Lara 2018a, 522).

— PMs should have a combination of commercial, communication, and administrative skills. More specifically, "communicative skills, although nowadays desired by employers in almost all professions and spheres, are crucial for PMs" (Motiejūnienė and Kasperavičienė 2019, 167).

— PMs should possess strong teamwork and coordination skills. "Project management is about coordination, planning, and control techniques" (Rico Pérez 2002, 38).

— PMs should demonstrate a proactive and positive attitude, as well as motivation towards the team, clients, and other professionals they work closely with (Fuentes-Pérez 2023).

— PMs are responsible for the entire process, and as such, they are expected to have time management and problem-solving aptitudes (Fuentes-Pérez 2023; Motiejūnienė and Kasperavičienė 2019).

— PMs should possess computer knowledge, as their work tools are predominantly computer-based (Plaza-Lara 2018a, 523-524).

As stated earlier, we strongly believe that PM training should be incorporated into T&I university programs. While it is true that not all sub-competences of PMs align with those of translators, the bilingual and translation knowledge sub-competences inherent in the PM's role are compelling evidence of the intertwined nature of project management and translation in terms of training.

2 Analysis of T&I Degree Programs

In Spain, university studies in T&I have been offered since the 1970s when the first four institutions dedicated to this discipline were established: the University Institute of Modern Languages and Translators at the Complutense University of Madrid (1974), the University Institute of Translators and Interpreters (EUTI) in Barcelona-Bellaterra (1972), the EUTI in Granada (1979), and the EUTI in Las Palmas (1988) (Benítez Eiroa 1992). Since then, the University Degree in Translation and Interpreting was established in 1991, followed by the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in 1999. These developments, along with the establishment of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in Spain, have led to the introduction of Bachelor's Degrees and Dual Degrees in T&I.

Therefore, at the time of conducting this research (November 2023), there were a total of 28 bachelor's degree programs and 16 dual degree programs related to T&I (Registry of Universities, Sources, and Degrees [RUCT] 2023). These programs are available in 13 autonomous communities in Spain: Andalusia, Aragon, the Canary Islands, Cantabria, Castile and León, Castilla-La Mancha, Catalonia, the Community of Valencia, Galicia, La Rioja, Madrid, Murcia, and the Basque Country.

Initially, the study focused on conducting observational research on 10 out of the 28 T&I Bachelor's Degrees available in Spain. However, because there is increasing interest in this new professional role nationwide and to have a comprehensive understanding of project management training across the entire country, it was considered necessary to revise the scope. Therefore, the analysis was extended to all 28 degree programs instead, which included both public and private universities. The only limitation of this study is that it did not consider dual degrees or degrees that were discontinued or were about to be discontinued.

With these study parameters in place, the following list based on the degree programs provided by RUCT (2023) has been compiled. The table below shows the degree programs ordered by autonomous community:

Table 2. *List of the 28 current T&I degree programs offered by public and private universities in Spain (adapted from RUTC 2023)*

Autonomous community	University	Degree Program
Andalusia	Universidad de Córdoba (UCO)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad de Málaga (UMA)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad de Granada (UGR)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad Pablo de Olavide (UPO)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
Aragon	Universidad San Jorge (USJ)	Bachelor's in Translation and Intercultural Communication
Basque Country	Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (UPV/EHU)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
Canary Islands	Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
Cantabria	Universidad Europea del Atlántico (Uneatlántico)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
Castile and León	Universidad de Salamanca (USAL)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad de Valladolid (UVa)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
Castilla-La Mancha	Universidad de Alcalá (UAH)[3]	Bachelor's in Modern Languages and Translation
Catalonia	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad de Vic-Universidad Central de Cataluña (UVic-UCC) and Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC)	Bachelor's in Translation, Interpreting, and Applied Languages
	Universidad Pompeu Fabra (UPF)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
Community of Valencia	Universidad de Alicante (UA)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universitat de València (UV)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interlinguistic Mediation
	Universidad Europea de Valencia (UEV)	Bachelor's in Translation and Intercultural Communication
	Universitat Internacional Valenciana (VIU)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad Jaume I de Castellón (UJI)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting

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[3] It should be noted that UAH's degree should be considered as a single degree program. It appears twice in the list, located in two different autonomous communities (Madrid and Castilla-La Mancha), since its campus is split between both areas.

Galicia	Universidade de Vigo (UVigo)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
La Rioja	Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
Madrid	Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad Europea de Madrid (UEM)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad Pontificia Comillas (UPCO)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (URJC)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad de Alcalá (UAH)	Bachelor's in Modern Languages and Translation
Murcia	Universidad de Murcia (UMU)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting
	Universidad Católica San Antonio (UCAM)	Bachelor's in Translation and Interpreting

2.1 Translation Project Management in University Programs

Once the degree programs were listed, the next step in our research was to analyze the syllabus for each degree mentioned in the previous list. The results obtained are shown as follows:

Table 3. *TPM courses in Spanish T&I Degree Programs*

Autonomous community	University	Do they offer TPM?
Andalusia	Universidad de Córdoba (UCO)	No
	Universidad de Málaga (UMA)	No
	Universidad de Granada (UGR)	No
	Universidad Pablo de Olavide (UPO)	No
Aragon	Universidad San Jorge (USJ)	No
Basque Country	Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (UPV/EHU)	No
Canary Islands	Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC)	No
Cantabria	Universidad Europea del Atlántico (Uneatlántico)	No
Castile and León	Universidad de Salamanca (USAL)	Yes
	Universidad de Valladolid (UVa)	Yes
Catalonia	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)	No
	Universidad de Vic-Universidad Central de Cataluña (UVic-UCC) and Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC)	No
	Universidad Pompeu Fabra (UPF)	No
Community of Valencia	Universidad de Alicante (UA)	No
	Universitat de València (UV)	No

	Universidad Europea de Valencia (UEV)	No
	Universitat Internacional Valenciana (VIU)	Yes
	Universidad Jaume I de Castellón (UJI)	No
Galicia	Universidade de Vigo (UVigo)	No
La Rioja	Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR)	Yes
Madrid	Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM)	Yes
	Universidad Europea de Madrid (UEM)	No
	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM)	Yes
	Universidad Pontificia Comillas (UPCO)	Yes
	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (URJC)	No
	Universidad de Alcalá (UAH)	Yes
Murcia	Universidad de Murcia (UMU)	Yes
	Universidad Católica San Antonio (UCAM)	No

For the purposes of this article, for a course to be qualified as a comprehensive course in TPM, it was deemed essential for the term *project management* to be included in the name of the course, or, alternatively, *management of translation services* or *companies*. In this regard, the study did not take into consideration the courses offered by some universities, such as UCO, UA, and UV. These universities offer programs that cover topics related to TPM, but these are included as part of the courses of *Professional Tools for Translation*, *General Direct Translation*, and *The Translator's Professions*, respectively.

The observational study of the university degree programs listed above revealed the following results:

Table 4. ***T&I Degree Programs in Spain that include TPM courses***

Spanish universities that offer T&I degrees	Spanish universities that include TPM courses	Percentage
28	9	32.1%

The next stage of the research aimed to examine these courses in order to determine if they were offered as elective or required courses. The academic year in which the courses were taught was also included in the analysis:

Table 5. ***Academic year and nature of course***

Autonomous community	University	Course	Academic year
Castile and León	Universidad de Salamanca (USAL)	Required	Year 4
	Universidad de Valladolid (UVa)	Elective	Year 4
Community of Valencia	Universitat Internacional Valenciana (VIU)	Required	Year 4
La Rioja	Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR)	Required	Year 4
Madrid	Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM)	Required	Year 4
	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM)	Elective	Year 4
	Universidad Pontificia Comillas (UPCO)	Elective	Year 4
	Universidad de Alcalá (UAH)	Required	Year 3
Murcia	Universidad de Murcia (UMU)	Elective	Year 3

These results are expressed as percentage as follows:

Table 6. *Academic year and nature of course expressed as percentage*

Spanish universities that include TPM courses	Required course	Elective course	Year 3	Year 4
9	5 (55.6%)	4 (44.4%)	2 (22.2%)	7 (77.8%)

On the other hand, this study also aimed to determine the specific course names used for these courses. In this sense, it became evident that there was no uniform naming convention across all nine universities:

Table 7. *Name of TPM courses*

Autonomous community	University	Name of course
Castile and León	Universidad de Salamanca (USAL)	Terminology and Project Management
	Universidad de Valladolid (UVa)	Translation Project Management
Community of Valencia	Universitat Internacional Valenciana (VIU)	Creation and Management of Translation Companies
La Rioja	Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR)	Translation Project Management
Madrid	Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM)	Translation, Interpreting, and Profession. Project Management
	Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM)	Translation Project Management and New Technologies: Professional Market of T&I
	Universidad Pontificia Comillas (UPCO)	Translation Project Management
	Universidad de Alcalá (UAH)	Translation Project Management
Murcia	Universidad de Murcia (UMU)	Professional Management of Translation and Interpreting Services

Having collected this data, the study was then directed to the training of students in TPM. To accomplish this, the syllabi of the courses mentioned in Table 7 were assessed to determine if the training in TPM corresponds with the essential competences required for this profession.

In this respect, both the content and competences that students are expected to acquire upon completing each of the nine courses mentioned above were compiled. Except for UNIR and UPCO, which we did not have access to, the syllabi for TPM courses of the other seven universities were successfully examined. These have been categorized based on the project management competence framework proposed by Plaza-Lara (2018a, 527-528).

Table 8. *Content categorization of the analyzed syllabi based on the PM competence model suggested by Plaza-Lara (2018a)*

Bilingual sub-competence

— Phraseology in specialized languages (USAL).

— Ability to understand and express oneself accurately and clearly at the C1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, as well as the ability to translate from English to Spanish (UAH).

— Analyzing and commenting on translation projects with a focus on QA and compliance with relevant regulations and standards (UAH).

— Appropriate use of language norms and idiomatic expressions in all working languages, both oral and written, and the use of relevant computer tools if necessary (UCM).

— Proficiency in the Spanish language (UCM).

— Terminology for Translators and Interpreters (UCM/UVa).

— Understanding and working with basic concepts of terminology theory (UCM).

— Conducting QAs (UVa).

— Ability to successfully translate texts to a foreign language (VIU).

— Mastering the mother tongue in all its spoken and written forms (UAM).

Knowledge of translation sub-competence

— Competence in handling terminology and translation memory exchange formats (USAL).

— Identifying and applying concepts and tools to TPM (UAH).

— Comprehensive understanding of the translation process from start to finish (UCM).

— Adequate comprehension of the GILT concept: globalization, internationalization, localization, and translation (UCM).

— Understanding project management and design (UVa).

— Consistent adherence to deadlines and comprehension of project instructions (UVa).

— Application of the ISO standard on translation (VIU).

— Application of knowledge to practical scenarios (UAM).

— Comprehensive understanding of the professional aspects of the T&I market, including awareness of the social role of the translator and interpreter (UAM).

— Gaining an understanding of concepts related to translation management (UAH).

Instrumental sub-competence

— Acquiring knowledge and applying a terminology work methodology: building a textual corpus, extracting terms with associated information, and coding information for creating terminological entries in translation projects (USAL).

— Information retrieval for terminology work: consulting the main sources for term acquisition and terminological documentation (USAL).

— Searching for bilingual documentation and managing translation memories (USAL).

— Proficiency in file format conversion and layout (USAL).

— Ensuring consistency and accuracy in handling complex lexical subsets and presenting them within terminological databases (USAL).

— Development of skills for searching and using specialized and bibliographic tools and resources (UAH).

— Effective use of well-known TPM tools (UAH).

— Evaluating and using general and specialized dictionaries, glossaries, and terminological databases in any format (UCM).

— Excellent handling of bitext processing and alignment (UCM).

— Acquiring knowledge, managing, and assessing sources and resources of information and documentation (UVa).

— Ability to use documentary resources and develop appropriate strategies for the use of available sources of information (UAM).

— Mastering the use of computer technologies applied to translation through practical experience with software programs (UAM).

— Applying documentary techniques (lexicography, terminology, parallel texts) and being able to self-assess the various documentary resources applicable to translation and interpretation (UAM).

— Proficiency in terminology management programs and translation memory tools commonly used in terminology and computer-assisted translation (USAL).

— Familiarity with CAT technologies (UCM).

— Technologies Applied to Translation and Interpreting (UCM).

— Understanding and managing translation memories: workflow, processes, and formats (UCM).

— Utilization of the latest technologies applied to T&I: management systems, terminology management systems, CAT tools, machine translation (MT), or post-editing (PE), among others (UVa).

— Effective use of virtual environments and technologies (UVa).

— Ability to apply new technologies to the T&I industry (UAM).

Strategic sub-competence

— Engagement in group work (USAL).

— Project organization, task division, and establishment of schedules (USAL).

— Promoting teamwork (UAH/UCM/UVa).

— Awareness of the structure of complex tasks and assignments and development of such skills (UAH).

— Recognizing the importance of a coordinated approach to managing projects involving extensive texts (UAH).

— Understanding the influence of aspects such as resources, costs, and QA in project management (UAH).

— Understanding the different agents and professional profiles involved in a translation project (UAH).

— Describing and explaining basic concepts, methods, procedures, and techniques for TPM from the initial stage (budget preparation) to completion (issuing invoices) (UAH/VIU/UAM).

— Effective time management and organization to optimize professional practice (UMU).

— Developing leadership and teamwork skills (UMU).

— Effective time, stress, and workload management (UVa).

— Interacting in a professional and work environment (UAM).

Psycho-physiological components

— Critical assessment and project organization skills (USAL).

— Developing independent, critical, and self-critical thinking based on evidence (UAH).

— Promoting autonomous learning and awareness of knowledge use and recycling (UAH).

— Developing self-assessment and self-improvement skills (UAH).

— Encouraging awareness and respect for cultural diversity and different opinions, as well as appreciation of academic integrity (UAH).

— Acquisition of knowledge through self-directed learning (UCM).

— Communicating ideas, information, problems, and solutions (UMU/VIU).

— Critical reasoning (UVa/UAM).
— Gradually acquiring autonomy in the learning process (UAM).
— Developing awareness of the need for a proactive and responsible attitude in cooperative team working environments (UAM).
— Making rational decisions and adapting quickly to new situations (UAM).

Regarding the bilingual sub-competence, there seems to be a general agreement on the importance of being proficient in both the Spanish language and the foreign language used in the workplace. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that only UAH and UVa explicitly address the necessity of linguistic QA skills, which is a crucial aspect of a PM's role, as discussed earlier. Moreover, though certain universities mention terminology for translators and interpreters (UCM and UVa), it does not seem to be a primary focus for the Spanish university in terms of TPM. It can be determined that the four components of this sub-competence, as laid out in the framework proposed by Plaza-Lara (2018a), are mirrored in the observed Spanish universities.

In terms of knowledge of translation sub-competence, there is an emphasis on the importance of understanding instructions: "Consistent adherence to deadlines and comprehension of project instructions" (UVa); "Comprehensive understanding of the translation process from start to finish" (UCM); "Understanding project management and design" (UVa). However, it is worth noting that none of the courses address the importance of acquiring commercial skills or administrative tasks, as suggested by Plaza-Lara (2018a) in her project management competence framework. Given that TPM includes both administrative and commercial aspects, the absence of these elements in university training may be a cause for concern.

As Table 8 shows, the instrumental sub-competence is undoubtedly the most complete in terms of components. Regarding this sub-competence, Spanish universities agree that PMs should have a wide range of basic and advanced computer skills. This includes abilities such as file format conversion and layout (USAL), as well as expertise in handling bitext processing and alignment (UCM). PMs should also be proficient in using and applying documentary resources and techniques (UAH/UAM/UCM), as well as in using and managing virtual environments and translation memories and technologies, like CAT tools. However, it should be noted that only one university (UVa) states that PMs should be familiar with using and applying the latest services in the industry, such as MT and PE.

In terms of strategic sub-competence, it is remarkable that most of the courses emphasize and promote teamwork, which is essential for TPM. Attention is particularly given to time management—"Project organization, task division, and establishment of schedules" (USAL), "Effective time, stress and workload management" (UVa)—as well as to the ability to analyze and coordinate projects from start to finish— "Understanding the importance of a coordinated approach to managing projects involving extensive texts" (UAH); "Describing and explaining basic concepts, methods,

procedures, and techniques for TPM from the initial stage (budget preparation) to completion (issuing invoices)" (UAH/VIU/UAM)—. However, it should also be noted that none of the courses address skills related to dealing with clients or vendors, except for UAM's competence of "Interacting in a professional and work environment". There is also no explicit mention of PMs' multitasking ability.

Lastly, certain universities, particularly UAH and UAM, cover key aspects of TPM related to psycho-physiological components such as autonomy, proactivity, and critical thinking and reasoning. Even though communication is the most requested soft skill by translation companies all around the globe (Fuentes-Pérez 2023), only two universities explicitly state that PMs must be able to communicate ideas, information, problems, and solutions (UMU/VIU). Similarly, skills such as the ability to work under pressure or attention to detail are also missing from the list, especially considering that the latter is ranked as the third most demanded soft skill in TPM (Fuentes-Pérez 2023).

Conclusions

While TPM is a profession that is increasingly in demand in the labor market (Quijano Peña 2022), Spanish universities do not seem to be able to meet this demand, at least at the undergraduate level. As is evident from the results obtained, out of the 28 Bachelor's Degrees related to T&I in Spain, only 9 universities include TPM courses in their curricula. This indicates that only 32.1% of Spanish universities provide training on TPM. As a result, in autonomous communities such as Andalusia, Aragon, the Basque Country, the Canary Islands, Cantabria, and Catalonia, there appears to be a lack of comprehensive TPM training at the undergraduate level. Nevertheless, it should also be pointed out that TPM training is available at the postgraduate level in some Spanish universities. In this regard, we would like to highlight the Master's Degree in International Translation Project Management (UEM) and the Online Expert Diploma in Computer-Assisted Translation and Project Management (UOC).

Of the 9 universities mentioned above, 55.6% require undergraduate students to take TPM as a compulsory course, while 44.4% offer it as an elective course. Although this distribution seems to be balanced, these figures indicate that there is still much work to be done when it comes to TPM training. The fact that almost half of the universities believe that it should not be compulsory results in many students not taking TPM as part of their training. On the other hand, there seems to be a consensus in the academic year in which TPM is taught. Specifically, 77.8% of universities offer the course in Year 4, while only 22.2% offer TPM in Year 3. In this sense, it is remarkable that no Spanish university teaches TPM in Year 1 or Year 2.

Regarding the content of TPM courses, it can be observed that the bilingual, knowledge of translation, and instrumental sub-competences are, generally speaking, adequately addressed by universities, providing a solid foundation for future PMs. However, there

are minor areas of improvement required in these areas. Regarding the strategic and psycho-physiological sub-competences, it can be observed that there is a tendency to prioritize acquiring management and coordination skills over certain interpersonal skills, such as communication, multitasking, or attention to detail, which are highly demanded by translation companies.

In line with this data, there does not appear to be a consistent approach when it comes to how TPM training is delivered to undergraduate students. Competences and course content differ among universities, and there is a need for improvement in addressing critical aspects of TPM, including client and vendor interaction, administrative skills, and soft skills. Therefore, there seems to be a strong need for enhanced uniformity and comprehensive education in TPM across Spanish universities.

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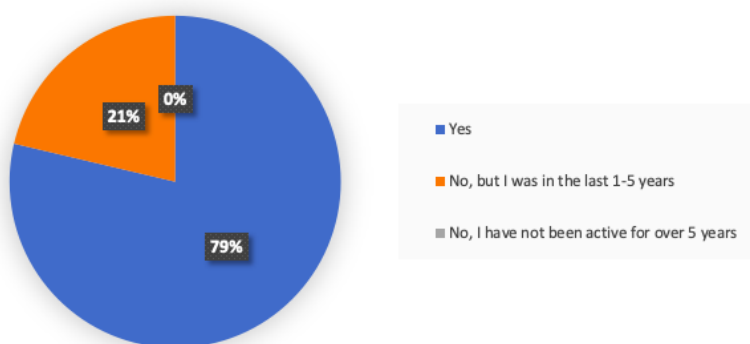
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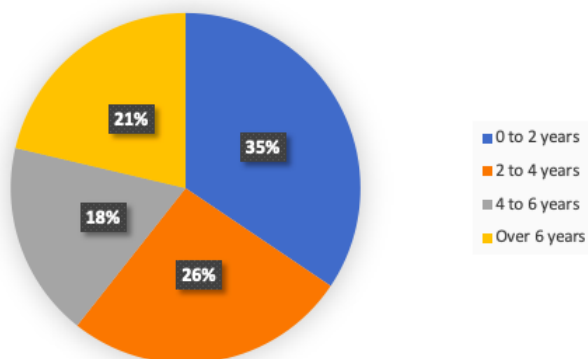
Appendix 1 Survey

This survey was preceded by an informed consent that has not been included in this appendix. All 61 participants agreed to take the survey after reading the information specified in the informed consent. The following is an English translation of the original survey written in Spanish. Please note that only questions relevant to this study have been translated and included in this document.
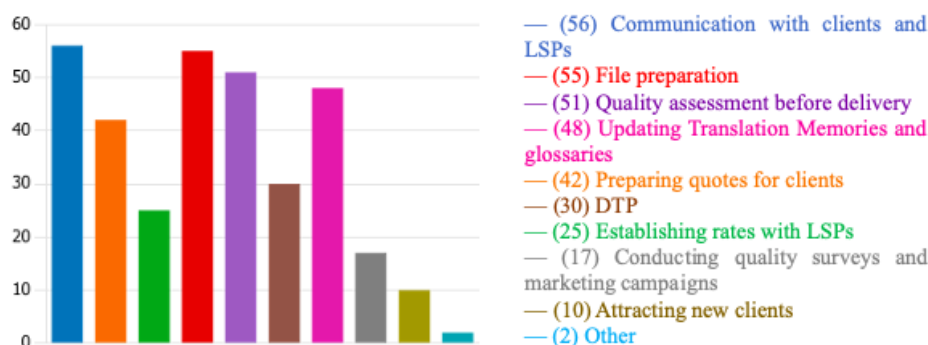
Q1. Are you currently active in the TPM industry?

- Yes
- No, but I was in the last 1-5 years
- No, I have not been active for over 5 years

Q2. How many years of experience do you have in TPM?

- 0 to 2 years
- 2 to 4 years
- 4 to 6 years
- Over 6 years

Q3. In addition to TPM, which of the following duties do you perform as a PM? (Please select all that apply)

— (56) Communication with clients and LSPs
— (55) File preparation
— (51) Quality assessment before delivery
— (48) Updating Translation Memories and glossaries
— (42) Preparing quotes for clients
— (30) DTP
— (25) Establishing rates with LSPs
— (17) Conducting quality surveys and marketing campaigns
— (10) Attracting new clients
— (2) Other

Q4. Do you think training in T&I is necessary to become a PM in the language industry?