Economic and financial terminology in non-specialized genres. Can unskilled people make sense of it?

The growth of economic transactions at a global level has called for a number of new genres which have attracted the interest of scholars from various disciplines, including linguistic and translation studies. Notwithstanding the undisputed role that English plays as the lingua franca in trade, many activities, involving actors from different countries, demand translation between languages. The specificity of the economic domain entails a number of problems relevant to terminology, syntax, text typology and generic structure. To cope with such problems, prospective translators of economic and financial texts must be trained in order to acquire not only linguistic, but also thematic competence. This paper suggests a syllabus designed to train students attending a University MA course in economic translation. The syllabus encompasses methods and tools from various areas of linguistics and translation studies. The initial assumption is that the inclusion in the syllabus of non-professional genres, such as comic books and docu-movies, may boost students’ thematic competence. Although previous research argues that training of translators of economy-based texts benefits from multimodality, in particular from the combination of verbal and visual semiotic modes, surprisingly, practice shows that comic books may be hard to interpret and translate for non-expert students, whereas films, namely video-tutorials and docu-movies, can enhance their understanding of economic terms and concepts.