

Methods to Realize Competence-Building Approach while Teaching Translation

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ABSTRACT

The article considers the possibilities of a competence-building approach while training translation. The translator's competences emphasized by the researchers were analyzed and the grounds for their systemizing were offered. The conducted analysis permitted to distinguish the following key competences of the translator: intercultural, special, social and personal ones. The authors have established that operational and cognitive skills are obtained and formed in the process of training and perfected in the further translation activity while experience and social skills, physiological and emotional resources are manifested and perfected only in the process of a professional activity. The formation of translator's key competences takes place at all the stages of this complicated activity when fulfilling certain actions by the translator as a member of a definite professional team acting in a certain professional environment. Moreover, the pragmatic approach permitted to distinguish the main stages of training corresponding to the translator's stages of activity. The practical value of the research is that the systemizing of the translator's competences will permit to arrange their nomenclature and to elaborate the unique requirements for their formation.

KEYWORDS

Training translation; translator's competences; intercultural, special, social and personal competences; translator's personal characteristics; competence-building approach

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Introduction

A competence-based approach is thought to be one of the important approaches of the modern education (Golubkina, 2008; Komendrovskaya, 2010; Krasilnikova, 2011). The teachers have a task to form a professional competence of the future translator that will reflect his professional personality (Zimnyaya, 2004; Le Boterf, 2002).

However, till present there are no unique criteria to distinguish components of the given competence and it makes considerably difficult to design unique

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educational standards and, as a result, the methods of professional translators' training (Komendrovskaya, 2010; Shweitser, 1988).

It is pertinent to point out that E.P. Porshneva (2004), E.V. Varlamova, A. Naciscione & E.A. Tulusina. (2016) together with a linguistic competency distinguish such competencies as semantic, interpretive, textual and intercultural.

The research analysis of French and Canadian translation scientists showed that as a whole they adhere to the same approach while determining the components of translator's competence and highlight the following:

– Translator's linguistic and culturological competencies that are realized at the stages of the source text perception and its interpreting;

– The proper translation competency, i.e. the ability to understand the meaning of the source text and to render the understood text in the language of translation without distortion and linguistic interference;

– Methodological competency, i.e. ability to find information on the subject being considered in the reference literature and to use related lexical and terminological correspondences;

– Subject competency, i.e. knowledge required to translate highly technical texts (in the field of one or several special disciplines), and an ability to translate general scientific texts related to different fields of knowledge;

– Technical competency, i.e. an ability to use technical means while translation (voice recorder, data base, computer dictionaries, programs etc.) (Delisle, 1992; Competences for professional translators, 2009).

The researchers have more often been noting the translator's ability to have "the editing competency". It is to a large extent related to the necessity to often edit the translated text by the translator himself (Delisle, 1992). The translator's separate competencies have been analyzed in a number of researches: lingua-professional (Krasilnikova, 2011), lingua-country studying (Emelyanova, 2006), information-technological (Alferova, 2010), textological (Korolkova, 2008) etc.

Can add that a cognitive part of translation activity is actively analyzed with the development of psycho-linguistics. T. Pshenkina (2005) while designing the translator's psycho-linguistic model distinguishes a cognitive competency that emphasizes an operational nature of linguistic ability. A projecting component determining the level of the translator's readiness and ability for prognosis and effective fulfilment of his professional activity is analyzed (Komendrovskaya, 2010). A.B. Bushev (2010) adds to the above-mentioned competencies the necessity for a modern translator to have analytical, creative and emotional competencies.

Analyzing the translator's metacognitive abilities F. Plassard (2007), French researcher distinguishes the abilities to plan (ability to work out strategies to solve the problems), to forecast (ability to presuppose the result of the cognitive activity), to verify chosen strategies, to control (to evaluate the result received), to summarize (ability to summarize and "transport" strategies for solving new tasks).

We understand the key competences as generalized basic competences which ensure a normal life of a person in a social medium (Zimnyaya, 2004), in our case - in professional translation environment.

The following statements formed in a domestic psychology and translation science served as the basis for their distinguishing:

- Professional competence includes a number of components related to different sides of labor (Markova, 1996);
- The translator provides intercultural communication (Khaleeva, 1989);
- All competences are social as they are worked out and formed in a social medium. They have a social content, they manifest themselves in a social medium (Zimnyaya, 2004);
- Formation of a professional is linked with formation of his professionally important personal qualities (Markova, 1996).

The given statements permitted to systemize the composition of the translator's professional competence having correlated it with the main sides of the activity being considered:

- *Intercultural communication*, in which the translator plays the role of a mediator;
- *Proper translator's professional actions*, i.e. knowledge and skills in the field of translation and the translation science;
- *Professional translation environment*, which requires knowledge of certain methods of professional communication accepted in the given profession;
- *Personality of a professional translator*, i.e. those personal qualities that he must have to fulfil the translation on a professional level.

So, the researchers in the field of translation didactics came across a rather difficult task of highlighting translation competences and criteria for their classification. Moreover, the absence of the unique approach to consider the component content of the translator's professional competence stipulated the necessity of a theoretical ground to highlight the key competences for the translation activity.

Method

In order to systemize the content of a translator's professional competence we used the comparative analysis of different scientific approaches to classification of the translation competences. Pragmatic approach was used in order to determine the main stages of training corresponding to the translator's stages of activity.

Data, Analysis, and Results

Translator's intercultural, communicative competence

Let's gradually consider these components of the translation activity. Determining the translation process the researchers call it "inter-linguistic and inter-cultural communication" (Shweitser, 1988), "inter-linguistic communication" (Komissarov, 1998), "inter-linguacultural communication" (Khaleeva, 1989), "mediation" ("Common European Framework", 2003) as in the process of his activity the translator is a mediator, a bridging link in the process of communication between the source text sender and the recipient of the translation text who use different languages, have different socio-cultural, background, subject knowledge etc. In such a case, the basic regularities of the language application as a means of communication are preserved. Such

approach is based on the idea of communication and activity unity accepted in a domestic psychology.

The researchers note that intercultural communicative competence is intrinsic solely to the mediator of cultures, it “permits a linguistic personality to go beyond his own culture and to acquire the qualities of the mediator of cultures without losing his own cultural identity” (Golubkina, 2008).

As the translator is “a bridging link” in the process of intercultural communication, it is logically to suppose that it is intercultural communicative competence that will be the basis for the translator’s professional competence which presents itself a readiness and ability (in compliance with social and cultural norms of communication in a professional environment) to understand utterances in a foreign language and to create oral or written utterances in Russian based on the understood sense.

At the same time the translator scientists note that this competence in the translator’s activity will acquire a number of essential distinctions.

Analyzing *intercultural communicative competence*, the researchers do not consider it to be only a communicative competence of a language bearer or intercultural competence. The given competence permits a language personality go beyond the limits of the own culture and to acquire the qualities of cultures mediator not losing the own cultural identity. The translator mediator’s function “always starts at the turn of two consciences, two subjects, two languages, two cultures, however, being realized only in one conscience of the translator aimed at a successful communication” (Pshenkina, 2005).

Thus, the translator’s intercultural communicative competence will be considerably changed in the professional activity and it is caused by the following factors:

- Translator’s activity has a bi-language and comparative character;
- The translation is “the secondary speech activity” where the translator plays the role of a mediator not a source text addressee.
- The translator creates the translation text for a new recipient having a cognitive content different to source text sender and a supposed recipient.
- The translator understands the source text independently from the own interest in the text information. It is possible to consider different components within the framework of the given translator’s key competence.

Analyzing the translator’s professional competence the researchers determine it as a complex multi-component phenomenon which includes a set of sub-competences- linguistic, discursive, semantic, textual, intercultural, socio-cultural, interpretive, pragmatic and others.

The European requirements for training translators in Master course (*European Master's in Translation - EMT*) presuppose to form the future translator’s following competences in the field of intercultural communication: Linguistic, intercultural and abilities to take out the information from the text (Competences for professional translators, 2009).

Over the last years, researchers analyzed a lot of separate translator’s competences: lingua-professional, intercultural, lingua-country studying, textual, pragmatic, etymological, grammatical etc.

As a result of the conducted analysis and comparing translator's competences highlighted by the researchers the translator's intercultural communicative competence was determined as a readiness and ability to understand foreign language utterances and create oral or written utterances in Russian on the basis of the understood sense for a new recipient in a new communicative situation.

Extra disintegration of intercultural communicative competence components seems to be groundless while training translators, that's why it is supposed to form the following components in its content:

– *Linguistic competence*- translator's readiness and ability to use language means to understand a foreign text and to create correctly formed and bearing a definite sense of utterances in the native language. Grammatical, etymological, sub-competences highlighted by researchers can be considered within the framework of the given competence.

A linguistic competence acquires a number of specific characteristics in the translator's activity. The given component is demonstrated in two languages: foreign and native. The linguistic means being used are always set by the author of the utterance and do not depend on the translator's wish. That's why the translator's linguistic competence is not only the ability to understand and create unlimited number of communicative units on the basis of knowledge of two languages units and rules how to operate them but also an ability to compare foreign and native languages means and to choose those from them which will be necessary to use according to the author's communicative intention accounting the translation text recipient specific features.

– *Pragmatic competence*- translator's readiness and ability to understand the utterance in compliance with the situational conditions and the sender's communicative intention and to use language means in the translation text accounting the recipient's characteristics and communicative situation in which the given text will be used.

Social interaction and cultural environment have a special influence on the pragmatic competence formation. The pragmatic aspect has more complicated content than in one language communication in translator's professional activity: The translator deals with a parallel application of two languages, two texts in different languages, two different cultures etc.

There is one more complexity added to the above: the source text author does not intend his message for a translation text recipient, i.e. pragmatic relations while translating are determined by different scope of knowledge of a sender, recipient and also a translator and first of all reflect cognitive moments in the translator's communicative activity.

– *Discursive competence* – translator's readiness and ability to understand different genres of a foreign special discourse and to create the text of translation in compliance with the author's intent, communicative situation and socio-cultural norms of communication accepted in Russia. Distinguishing the given competence seems to be desirable as the translator goes beyond the limits of a source text in the process of his activity analyzing social, culturological, subjective contexts, communicative situation in which the source text was created and in which the text of translation will be used. Such an approach

stipulates the inclusion discourse genres typical for the translator's activity into the training content.

– *Socio-cultural competence* – readiness and ability to use knowledge of rules and norms of interaction between individuals while translating within the framework of social institute of science and technology, in professional field of communication in the country of the language being studied and in Russia and the ability to compare this knowledge using corresponding translation methods for their adequate transfer in the text of translation. It is possible to consider the translator's socio-linguistic sub-competence highlighted by the researchers within the framework of the given competence.

The conducted comparison of the existing points of view showed that researchers distinguish proper professional translation knowledge and skills in the translator's professional competence besides an intercultural communicative component. It is possible to group these proper professional translation knowledge and skills and to consider them within the limits of special (in I. Zimnyaya's terms "professional competence in a narrow sense" (2004), i.e. mastery of proper professional activity on a high level and the ability to project your own further development (Markova, 1996).

Translator's special competence

Special competence of a translator is his readiness and ability to fulfil the translator's work on a high level, mastery of corresponding knowledge and skills and ability to project his further development.

The analysis of competencies highlighted by the researchers permitted to define the content of the given competence:

– *basic* – readiness and ability to use a complex of procedural and theoretical knowledge in the field of the translation science in the process of the translation activity;

– *subject* — readiness and ability to use subject knowledge (in the field of one or several special disciplines) required for translation of the source text;

– *strategic* — readiness and ability to analyze factors that influenced the creation of a foreign language text, and factors significant for the translation text recipient, to select factors important in a certain professional situation and to choose sequence of translation actions based on them;

– *technological* — readiness and ability to use a complex of procedures and methods ensuring an adequate reproduction of the utterance in the language of translation;

– *information* — readiness and ability of the translator to use information resources while solving translation problems.

The given content of the translator's special competency is not final. It presents itself an open structure, can be changed, added in the process of further development of aspects important for the given profession.

Translator's social competence

The translator, providing intercultural communication, communicates with the employer, the translation customer, different translation organizations regulating the given activity, receives consultations from specialists and

translators after receipt of order for translation during its fulfilling and delivering.

Such communication is stipulated by the social translation environment. Training, education of professional translators should always be in the environment oriented to the *profession*. It means that all the training process should be aimed at the labour market, at the profession of a translator, at the knowledge of all nuances of the translation activity – from receipt of the order for translation to its delivering by the time specified by the customer.

Translator's familiarizing with a legal part of his activity, his ability to correctly evaluate the agreement with the customer, to ask specialists or translators to provide with required information and help for translation is thought to be important.

The researchers consider the necessity for future translators to form responsibility for the completed translation, they also point to the need for the translators to form their intercultural tolerance (Bushev, 2010). It was stated in the process of an experimental research that the most important features among indices of the translator's personality culture are as follows: professional competence, knowledge and mastery of moral-ethical norms, presence of certain moral principles based on mutual respect and tolerance in relation to representatives of other cultures (Koroleva, 2008).

Thus, a social competence of the translator is mastery of mutual professional translator's activity, the methods of professional communication accepted in the given profession, social responsibility for the results of own work etc.

Translator's personal competence

Analyzing the translator's activity, the researchers note that the translator should have a broad scientific and cultural outlook; practical, reproductive, productive, lexical-logic, analytical, intuitive thinking; inquisitiveness, concentration, watchfulness, self-criticism, delicacy, modesty, physical stamina etc. The leading professionally important qualities of the translator characterized by the most direct correlation with the activity parameters, as well as basic professionally important qualities having the biggest number of intersystem links with other qualities are distinguished in the translator's personal competence (Durieux, 2011). Thus, the translator's last key competence is a personal competence, i.e. having corresponding professionally-important personal qualities to fulfil the translator's activity.

Identification of the translator's personal characteristics requires a thorough research by sociologists and psychologists. Unfortunately, such researches have not been conducted yet, that's why while training translation it's possible to rest on the translator's personal characteristics which are distinguished in a number of researches (Komissarov, 1997; Tsvilling, 1994; Delisle, 1992; Durieux, 2011), as well as on the analysis of the professional environment in which the translator's activity takes place.

The significance of the given key competences of the translator is explained by the fact that knowledge, operational and cognitive skills (i.e. a special component) are acquired and formed in the training process and perfected in the further professional activity, whereas the experience and social skills, abilities, physiological and emotional resources (i.e. social and personal components) are

manifested and perfected only in the process of professional activity (Le Boterf, 2002). Nevertheless, accounting the translator's social and personal competences, professional orientation to his personality, motives and interests is required while training a translator-professional. M.Ya. Tsvilling (1994) fairly notes that the success while training translators can be reached only thanks to a simultaneous application of three interrelated factors which conditionally can be specified by the terms "social practice", "professional training", "self-perfection".

Discussion

We agree with the A.D. Shweitzer (1988) in his definition of translation competencies. He distinguishes the following:

- Ability to understand and interpret a source text from the position of another language speaker and other culture;
- Mastery of translation technologies (i.e. the set of procedures ensuring an adequate translation of the source text);
- Knowledge of the translation language norms;
- Knowledge of translation norms determining the choice of translation strategy;
- Knowledge of the given text style and genre norms;
- A certain minimum of "background knowledge" required for an adequate interpretation of the source text, in particular that what is called "the subject knowledge" required for a successful translation within the framework of the translation specialization (Shweitzer, 1988).

We have found the similar point of view on translation competence components in V. Komissarov's work (1998). The scholar noted that an original linguistic personality was formed in the process of professional translation competence creation that was different to a normal, "non-translation" personality.

An attempt to present more summarized components of the translator's professional competence has been made in a number of researches. Thus, I.I. Khaleeva (1989) puts forward a grounded hypothesis that the translator forms a secondary language personality in the process of training, i.e. he becomes a bilingual professional and he is likely to have a communicative bi-competence.

Broadening the given idea about the translator's personality, V.A. Iovenko (1992) proposes a thesis about the translator's three-competence, which includes: 1) communicative competence of the source language team members; 2) communicative competence of the translation language team members; 3) the proper translation competence being determined by specific features of the translator's communicative activity.

The researchers L.K. Latyshev & V.I. Provotorov (1999) offer a bit different approach to components structure of the translator's competence who think that the latter includes the following components:

- Basic, which mainly consist of imparting the theoretical-applied knowledge on translation to the students and forming general skills based on it to fulfil any type of translation;

– Specific, i.e. knowledge, abilities and skills required to fulfil one type of translation (written, consecutive, simultaneous etc);

– Special, i.e. “those components of competence required to translate texts of a certain genre and style: scientific-technical, business, literary etc.

The attempt to systemize a component content of the translation competence was undertaken by the team of researchers under Yves Gambier guidance. In 2009 European requirements for training European Masters in Translation (EMT) were designed. They include the formation of the following future translators’ competencies: linguistic, thematic, intercultural, technological, ability to present the translator’s services for the labour market and ability to select (Competences for professional translators, 2009). The offered component content of the translation competence does not very much differ from competencies highlighted by the researchers in the end of the last century.

The most systemized and complete are thought to be the researches of the Spanish team PATCE (Process in the Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation). The authors distinguish the following main components in the translation competence: bilingual, extra-linguistic, instrumental, strategic and psycho-physiological (PACTE, 2003). Highlighting such different level concepts as mechanisms of speech activity, motivation, skills and emotional side of the translator’s personality in the structure of psycho-physiological competency seems to be a bit questionable in the given model. The absence of competence in its content related to the social context that to a large extent predetermines the whole process of translation may also be referred to as the disadvantage of the given model.

Conclusion

The conducted quadruple analysis of the translator’s activity permitted to highlight the following key competences of the translator’s professionalism:

- intercultural communication,
- special,
- social,
- personal.

The competency building approach presupposes interrelation and interaction of personal and pragmatic components while training translation. According to a pragmatic approach the translation competence should advisably be formed in the process of fulfilling professional tasks.

As we see, the formation of translation competence takes place at all the stages of this complex activity while translator’s performing certain actions as a member of a definite professional team performing his activity in a certain professional environment. The pragmatic approach permitted to highlight the main stages of education which correspond to the translator’s stages of activity:

– *professionally-oriented stage* (receipt of the translation text from the employer, preparation to professional activity);

– *analytical stage* (understanding, interpreting of a foreign text and working out the strategy for translation);

– *synthesizing stage* (terminological search of adequacies and creation of the translation text based on the understood foreign text);

– *correcting stage* (correction, editing and delivery of the translated text to the customer).

Certain professional problems are solved at each stage of training. The student needs corresponding skills, knowledge and professionally important personal qualities to fulfil them. Thus, *the translator's professional competence* is readiness and ability to translate on a professional level, using inner (key competences –intercultural, special, social and personal) and outer resources. The given competence will be evident while fulfilling professional tasks in a certain professional environment. In this case it should be noted that a competency building approach aimed at the development of a translator-professional personality presupposes not only receipt of knowledge, formation of skills, personal qualities but a self-organization of a future specialist.

The analysis of the translator's activity showed the need of the constant translator's self-education, self-development during all his working life. Consequently, the training of translators requires a special attention to organization of the student' independent work.

In conclusion, it should be once more noted that the offered structure of translation competence is only a canvas, a basis for further specifying the content, requires a further thorough analysis and experimental verification.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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