

COMPETENCY APPROACH IN THE PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY OF A TRANSLATOR

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One of the relevant areas of the educational paradigm today is entering a competency-based approach, the formation of the ability of the translator's personal qualities, the formation of the person's ability to use existing knowledge, skills and abilities. In this regard, in modern linguo-didactics and language teaching methods, the assessment of the result of education is reoriented from the concepts of "preparedness, organization, ability" to the concepts of "competence", "competence", which allows us to characterize the modern approach to education as competency-based[1.5]. The competency-based approach refers to the activity direction, the so-called practice-oriented direction. Translation plays a rather important role in various fields of human activity. This explains the multidimensional approach to understanding the essence of translation. A competency-based approach will demonstrate the versatility of the profession of translator in the form of professional competence and competencies that translators should possess. It is no longer disputed that a competency-based approach will open up opportunities for better preparation of future translators for real life, including knowledge of the subject, the implementation of productive intercultural communication as an intermediary and the updating of their personal resources.

A competency-based approach is understood as the quality standards of a specialist translator. Therefore, we will focus on the essence of the professional competence of the translator. Translation competence consists of the following competencies: professional competence, intellectual competence, language competence, speech competence, semantic competence, interpretative competence, textual competence and intercultural competence [2,25]. The professional competence of a translator is a dynamic system of axiological, activity, and personality-creative regulators (formations) that determine the way translators exist in intercultural mediation and ensure the effectiveness of managing mutual understanding between subjects of intercultural communication and bearers of different cultures [3, 14]. Analysis of the work of A.V. Gurvich, I.A. Winter, E.R. Porshneva et al. Show that the competence



of the translator is interpreted by the authors by highlighting a) procedural (translation activity), b) educational and substantive (abilities, knowledge, skills, abilities) and c) professionally personal (personal characteristics, professionally important qualities) components. Therefore, the professional competence of a translator is understood to mean an integrative characteristic of the personality of a specialist, including linguistic, sociocultural, psychological and informational competencies and allowing the translator to carry out professional activities at a high level.

Recently, there has been considerable interest within translation studies in the metalanguage of the discipline (see e.g. the special issue of *Target* [Gambier & Van Doorslaer 2007]) devoted to it. This focus arises against the background of the multiple disciplines that have played greater or lesser parts in the development of Translation Studies over the past thirty years or so. In the course of this development, much terminology has come to be shared across the disciplines, while the continuing, independent or semi-independent development of the various disciplines has meant that many of the concepts underlying the shared terminology have developed in different directions; and the shared terminology often masks discipline specific notions. In this article, it is my intention to explore the concept of translation competence by measuring it against a notion which some scholars explicitly relate it to, namely linguistic competence, in order to see if it is possible to achieve a measure of clarity about the former notion by trying to match it as closely as possible to the latter. I want to do this because the notion of translation competence is central in translation theory as well as in pedagogical approaches to translation; yet the vast literature on the subject has arguably created more confusion than clarity (see Pym 2003). I will begin by describing the notion of linguistic competence as currently understood.

Even those discussions of translation competence in translation studies that strive towards the Chomskyan understanding tend to include aspects of, or be akin to, the Human resources and Social Competence definitions. For example, PACTE (2000, 100) claim to have borrowed the notion of translation competence “from the idea of linguistic competence”, but they define translation competence as including an array of knowledges, skills and abilities which vary between individuals and which would never find their way into the notion of linguistic competence. Accordingly, the



ability to carry out the translation process as a factor in intercultural communication is one of the important components of the professional competence of a translator. The very realization of translation competence, according to V.N. Komissarova, — assumes that the translator has comprehensive cognitive and linguistic knowledge, a broad general cultural erudition, the necessary psychological qualities [4, p. 323]. Moreover, the effectiveness of communication and its effectiveness are the main parameters for evaluating the product of translation activities.

It is obvious that in the formation of the professional competence of the translator, both oral and written, it is necessary to integrate the development of general or basic multilingual, communicative, intercultural, linguo-psychological and information retrieval competencies. Since we are considering the formation of professional competence, the possession of lexical competence should be at a high level of information stock. It should be noted that this type of competence should include knowledge of industry terminology, therefore, the requirements for the volume and level of linguistic competence for a translator cannot be strictly limited. In the process of creating professional translation competence, a peculiar secondary linguistic personality is formed, which has a number of differences from the usual linguistic personality. Therefore, for the successful organization of the process of formation of professional competence, it is necessary to create conditions not so much for mastering individual linguistic means as for understanding their communicative significance by the listeners and speakers in the communication process, in our case, future translators. The success of the language-mediation activity depends on the level of development of professional competence.

Interpreting occupies a leading position in the training system aimed at the future translators of any language nowadays due to the rapid integration of Ukraine into the European Union. Oral communication saves time for writing official letters, information leaflets, notifications, which enables negotiating parties to constructively collaborate in diverse spheres: political, economic, cultural, scientific, educational, etc. Interpreters are meant to be mediators in this significant activity both at the state level and at the level of inter-state cooperation. Interpreters who are specially trained in the field of interpretation are supposed to perform their professional duties qualitatively. The key prerequisites for students' academic success in interpreting are stipulated by the properly organised educational process



according to the specificities of each above-mentioned type of translation/interpretation. Therefore, theoretical research and practical verification of efficient pedagogical means, forms and methods facilitating the formation of the future translators' professional competence within the system of university training confirm the urgent demand for the determination and grounding of a corresponding set of curricular and/or extra-curricular constituents of their professional speech training.

The study of prosody in the field of interpretation seems to be fundamental for further elaboration of assignments for future interpreters. We agree with Ahrens (2005) that prosody, as an integral part of orally produced texts, "is used: 1) to structure the acoustic continuum uttered by a speaker; 2) to give prominence to those parts of the spoken text that the speaker considers to be important" (p. 1). Thus, the integration of phonetic studies and elaboration of the corresponding methodological support are proved to be expedient in the sphere related to the decoding and interpreting of information. It should be also noted that while interpreting, a translator/interpreter is to keep to moral principles of oral communication: an interpreter is to keep to ethics of oral communication, to respect freedom of a client without restricting his/her dignity. An interpreter (while performing consecutive interpretation within international contacts, at the diplomatic level, to be more precise) is to fulfil diplomatic powers: he/she has no right to break the accuracy of the original content in order to maintain a diplomatic relationship as well as to prevent misunderstandings and conflicts. At the same time, an interpreter has no right to interfere with parties' relations or express his/her viewpoints concerning the original text.

Which is more important, an interpreter has no right to react to communicant's emotional attitudes or individual defects, though he/she should neutralise (defects) and transform them into the target text in compliance with the literary norms of the target language, etc.) (Popova, 2017). No doubt, interpreter's behaviour is to meet the noted requirements but one cannot deny the significance of intonation used in the process of interpreting. Linguists acknowledge that the wrong use of intonation, even if combined with the appropriate use of lexical units, might lead to misunderstanding. Furthermore, the "interpretation imbalance", aroused because of the wrong oral perception of intonation models and failure to transfer information



from one language into the other one, causes deviations in the development of students-interpreters' switching skills. As far as the switching skills are concerned, we affirm our full acceptance of Zinukova's (2018) research in which the author proves that the formation and automation of the switching skills of students-interpreters will help optimise and speed up the professional development of future interpreters. Zinukova (2018) also notes that interpreters should "consider the development of switching skills as one of their main tasks" (p. 174). We support the ideas of Trotsko (2018) and Korotkova (2018) regarding students' immersion into native speakers' environment and demonstration of how a foreign language is used in real communicative situations.

Therefore, it seems essential to organise purposeful practice for students in bilateral interpreting, to teach them to identify interlocutor's emotional attitude and to react in an adequate way. Students' academic success, while being trained in English-Ukrainian translation/interpretation, much depends on their language awareness, which is to be fostered. Therefore, we might assume that teaching (future translators) English plays a significant role in their professional training. Teaching tools used skillfully by university instructors facilitate students' development in terms of their proficiency. We share the ideas announced by Tarnopolsky (2018) that the fostering of students' language awareness can be motivated and developed by the way of activating intuitive heuristics and doing creative tasks that are heuristics-oriented; besides we are to take into consideration the fact that learning involves not only mostly intuitive and subconscious target language acquisition but also acquisition of the content of majoring disciplines and target culture (pp. 5–11). The scientist also highlights the importance of experiential-interactive learning activities which always integrate language skills.

In conclusion, we may assume that the initiated experiment proved to be efficient since it enabled the development of most future English-language translators'/interpreters' professional competency in the field of interpretation due to the appropriate methodology support. The conducted experiment was based on the phonetic research which helped to reveal certain mechanisms of prosodic models correlation with various spheres of speech semantics: a) correlation mechanisms between prosody and communicative types of sentences; b) types of interaction of prosodic functions in the framework of their professional activity. These



mechanisms constituted the basis for assignments and determined the choice of linguistic and pedagogical methods alongside with approaches within the realisation of the teaching/learning process.

The use of the competence-oriented and context-centred approaches to the educational process as well as a combination of traditional (lectures, practical classes and seminars) and new interactive methods/forms of teaching/learning: interactive lectures; interactive business/role-playing games; interactive workshops, seminars – panel discussions involving native speakers contributed to the students' academic success. The use of the experimental construct turns out to be practical due to these methods: cooperative learning, inquiry-based instructions, differentiation, professional development, technology and problem-solving. The effectiveness of the experimental training was proved in accordance with phonological, audial, oral and transfer indicators. Due to university instructors' teaching tools, it was possible to develop students' basic professional skills and abilities in the field of bilateral interpretation.

Through the entire experiment, the students were encouraged to participate actively both in curricular activities and in self-guided independent work, which also contributed to the development of their analytical and critical thinking, flexibility, agility and adaptability, initiative and entrepreneurialism while receiving and analysing the information as well as interpreting it. Thus, the prospect of efficient translator training at tertiary schools is seen in elaborating methodological support aimed at teaching simultaneous interpretation and integrating it with the one aimed at teaching bilateral consecutive interpretation taking into account modern social and economic demands and the framework of academic mobility projects.

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