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CONTENT-BASED APPROACH IN TEACHING TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC TRANSLATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with content-based approach to translating scientific and technical literature, vital for gaining effective translation competence in specialized translation.

Central to this research is the development of a methodology for selecting appropriate texts for training future translators. The study emphasizes the importance of choosing authentic texts that are modern, diverse, and relevant to various fields of science and technology, sourced from printed publications, electronic resources, and materials commonly encountered in professional practice.

The research underscores the significance of thematic alignment, terminological richness, and the presence of lexical, grammatical, stylistic, and pragmatic challenges in the texts chosen to enhance students' translation skills.

The paper outlines a systematic approach to teaching translation skills, emphasizing a content-based strategy that focuses on communicative necessity and thematic relevance.

This methodological study on scientific and technical texts' selection is the first in a series of similar ones aimed at creating an effective learning structure, which will ultimately enhance the competence of future professionals in this field.

Keywords: *content-based training strategy; methodology of texts' selection; scientific and technical translation; translation skills development.*

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is an era of globalization and large-scale, unceasing development, which affects all spheres of human life. Science and technology, characterized by constant renewal and a desire for unceasing development, occupy one of the key areas in this process. At the same time, the educational sphere, an integral component of which is direct interaction with the previous two, is also developing, focusing on needs and challenges of these key areas with the aim of both self-improvement and acquiring the driving force of science and technology progress. It has been estimated that technical translation accounts for some 90% of the world's total translation output each year (Kingscott, 2002, p. 247).

The key role of translation in the process of these world-shaping industries formation, development and interaction with the educational field is beyond doubt and is highlighted in the theoretical and practical works of many Ukrainian and foreign scholars who have contributed to this field such as the numerous authors of the monograph "Scientific and Technical Translation" (Wright, 1993) disseminate their ideas on the translation of special language texts, namely on the clarity of style, culture-specific and author-reader conventions and expectation, exchange of scientific thought, technical translators' training, text analysis and typology, including SGML in human translation and computer-assisted translation, different aspects of terminology, encompassing the issues of terminology resources and representation of concept systems; Cronin (2013) and Bowker (2019) further advocate for the incorporation of technologies such as SGML in human and CAT translation. Bassnett (2013), who examines the ways translation is currently utilized as a developing interdisciplinary activity and extends her analysis into developing of the latest information technologies and new media forms; Olohan (2015), whose book introduces readers to the typical contexts in which scientific and technical translators work and focuses on practical assignments based on typical scientific and technical texts (technical instructions, data sheets, patents, scientific research articles and abstracts, popular science press releases, and news reports). Besides, other scholars (Karaban, 2018; Nebot, 2008; Chernovatyi & Kovalchuk, 2019) investigate the translator's competence development and are the authors of numerous papers, mostly focusing their practical attention on lexical and grammar challenges of scientific and technical translation, showing different approaches to technical translation skills development (corpus-based, transformational etc.); the issue of translator training has been touched upon in a number of other papers, encompassing a consciousness-raising approach

(Li, 2017), progressive and reflexive methods (Calvo, 2015), and cognitive approach (Maat, 2019).

So, key scholars who have contributed to the field of scientific and technical translation, mostly focused on issues such as clarity of style, cultural nuances, and the use of technologies like SGML in human and computer-assisted translation. The importance of translator training is also underscored, with various approaches discussed, including consciousness-raising, progressive and reflexive methods, and cognitive approaches. However, there is a discernible absence in contemporary methodology that would outline the phases of technical translator training. This should primarily focus on the primary domains of advancement in science and technology, defining subsequent stages, including the selection of educational materials and the adoption of effective teaching methodologies.

Hence, this particular **aspect of our research** is dedicated to the initial and essential part of our forthcoming teaching methodology for training in the translation of scientific and technical literature, specifically focusing on defining the content of the training. The overarching focus of our research lies in the formulation of a content-based approach for instructing technical and scientific translation. This entails the development of a methodology for selecting contemporary, diverse, and relevant texts across various fields of science and technology, drawn from both print and electronic sources. Belonging to the framework of the course "Practice of Scientific and Technical Translation" at higher educational institutions, this methodology serves as the cornerstone, delineating the content, objectives, and evaluation methods inherent in the chosen texts.

Thus, this specific part of our research addresses the foundation of our future methodology in teaching scientific and technical literature translation — determining the content of the training. This involves aligning with contemporary perspectives on the training of technical translators and interpreters, specifically those emphasizing the primacy of achieving an equivalent and suitable translation, even prioritizing non-verbal elements, and grasping the essence of the text over general linguistic competence. The introduction of the concept of relativity (Gerrig, 1994, p. 233) of translation emerges in this context, as the necessity for interpretation and decision-making, influenced by diverse factors, results in many theoretical and practical queries lacking straightforward answers. Thus, the principal objective of university courses in practical translation is to equip students, who are prospective translators, for diverse situations and cultivate their abilities to recognize and consider various influencing factors.

All the mentioned requirements create a demand for specifically tailored educational materials and hence necessitate the modernization of content and exercise systems in textbooks and tutorials for training technical translators. The objective of the upcoming comprehensive research is to develop a specialized set of exercises focused on cultivating competence in translating technical texts.

In the current phase of the research, our attention will be specifically directed towards the initial and fundamental stages of this process, namely defining the content for training in translating technical texts and selecting appropriate texts to achieve the goal of translation competence formation.

RESEARCH METHODS

The methodology of the research encompasses some analytical, data collection and data processing methods. Hence, the needs analysis method (Munby, 1981) was tailored for identifying and selecting the syllabus content relevant to the needs of nowadays scientific and technical translation rather than for those of different types or groups of foreign-language learners. This involved the data collection method aimed at identifying and selecting syllabus content relevant to the current demands of this field, focusing on industrial branches, technical specialities taught at universities, and legislative regulations on science and technology development. Additionally, expert interviews (Gile, 2009) were used to understand the necessary content from the subject side of learning.

Thus, to implement the requirement that presupposes the dominance of the subject side of the learning content over its linguistic side, a content-based approach, developed in the Western methodology, was used. Content-based instruction (CBI) refers to an approach to second language teaching in which teaching is organized around the content or information that students will acquire, rather than around a linguistic or other type of syllabus. It is the subject content of the training that should determine which language material should be included in the training, and in which sequence (Richards, 2001).

RESEARCH RESULTS

In analysing the needs of a specific group of prospective technical interpreters and translators, it was deemed essential to formulate a program, curriculum, and select educational materials that most effectively address the students' needs. This necessitated prior data collection of legislative regulations and contemporary developments within technical and scientific spheres, characterized by extensive translation activities in the globalized world.

Legislature. In January 2023, the Law No. 2859-IX "On Amending Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding Priority Directions of Science and Technology Development and Innovative Activity" of Ukraine was adopted (Law, 2023). The list of priority areas includes, but is not limited to, the following industries and areas: information and communication technologies, energy and energy efficiency, rational nature management, life sciences, new technologies for diseases prevention and treatment, new substances and materials creation, the most important problems of physical, mathematical, and technical sciences, fundamental research on current problems of social sciences and humanities.

Thus, we hypothesized that the corpus of educational texts on scientific and technical translation should encompass the topics of the aforementioned field.

Technical Education. These topics were compared with educational programs of technical higher education institutions of Ukraine and Poland, namely Faculty of Information Technologies and Design, Faculty of Engineering and Transport, Faculty of Integrated Technologies, Faculty of International Economic Relations, Management and Business (Kherson National Technical University); Faculty of Basics of Technology, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Faculty of Management, Faculty of Environmental engineering (ecology), Faculty of Construction and Architecture (Lublin Polytechnic University); Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Technical Physics and Applied Mathematics, Faculty of Architecture, Faculty of Chemistry, Faculty of Management and Economics, Faculty of Land Engineering and Environment (Gdansk Polytechnic University).

Syllabus Content. The content of translation training is a multi-level category that involves the formation of translation and speech competence. At the top level of this concept is the process of mastering the system of knowledge, skills and subskills (procedural and psychophysical aspects), then there is language inventory and texts (linguistic aspect) and at the last level — the meaning, content of linguistic signs, content of texts (communicative aspect). This concept involves strict adherence to the appropriate sequence in the selection of the content of training. It should be carried out starting from the components that make up the communicative aspect, through the components that are included in the linguistic aspect and ending with the components of the psychophysiological and procedural aspects.

That is, selection of text material for teaching translation should be carried out after selection of its content.

Following interviews with faculty members and examination of students' interests and preferences, a content-based collection of relevant text topics for translator training was developed. Mapped graphically, it illustrates the three key topics along with their primary subtopics (*Table 1*).

This map serves as the foundational framework, not an exclusive list of specialized topics, for shaping the training content and choosing texts for the translation training of aspiring translators.

It is important to highlight that we adhere to the statement made by Byrne (2006) that "technical" means precisely that, something to do with technology and technological texts. The mere presence of unique or specialized terminology within a particular field or subject area does not render it technical in nature. When discussing technical translation, it's valuable to differentiate between specialized and technical translation. The inclination of some theorists to include language for specific purposes texts, such as legal, financial, and economic documents, in the realm of technical translation is not very helpful.

Table 1

Topics Relevant for Scientific and Technical Translation Syllabus Content

ELECTRONICS
1) Digital electronics 2) Analogue electronics 3) Microelectronics
COMPUTER SCIENCE
1) Mathematics 2) Programming languages 3) Databases 4) Information networks 5) Cryptography and information security
ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT
1) Chemical Engineering 2) Civil Engineering 3) Electrical Engineering 4) Mechanical Engineering 5) Transport

Table 2.

Genres Relevant for Scientific and Technical Translation Syllabus Content

GENRES OF TECHNICAL WRITING
User manuals User assistance guides Books by technical writers Guides by technical writers Assembly manuals Technical specifications and requirements Technical manuals Technical reports Technical reviews White papers (authoritative reports that propose solutions to problems) Troubleshooting guides Standard operating procedures (SOPs) Operating instructions Patents Certificates Feasibility studies API documentation Engineering drawings Technical passports
GENRES OF SCIENTIFIC WRITING
Research papers/articles Thesis/Dissertation Abstracts Conference papers Scientific book reviews Scientific reports Scientific reviews Scientific essays

This content-based approach aided us in customizing the educational materials to proper genres of technical writing, which encompass, but are not limited to, the ones given below (*Table 2*). We believe that it's important to enlist the documents that vary in structure, style, purpose, from providing

instructions to facilitating communication, documenting research, and supporting dissemination of knowledge and decision-making processes in technical and scientific fields.

Upon reviewing the methodological insights of fellow educators specializing in scientific and technical translation (Chernovatyi, 2019; Maat, 2019; Karaban, 2018, Calvo, 2015; Bassnett, 2013; Cherednychenko, 2007; Kingscott, 2002, Mykolaieva, 2002), we defined several criteria that properly selected texts for practicing technical translation skills among students must adhere to (*Table 3*):

Table 3.

Criteria for the Selection of Scientific and Technical Texts for Translation Purposes

GENERAL TEXT CRITERIA
1) be complete, integral, logic, and coherent 2) be thematically uniform and finalized (the same concerns the extracts) 3) be of definite communicative necessity and sufficiency 4) be authentic and unadopted, reflect real-world examples and situations, providing with a practical and realistic experience 5) concern various fields of science and technology to meet the requirement of multidisciplinary (refer to Fig. 1.1) 6) be chosen from the corpus of original technical and/or scientific texts (refer to Fig. 1.2) 7) be up-to-date to reflect the current state of knowledge and technology in the relevant fields 8) consider the principle of and reliability of educational materials, trustworthiness of the publication or source
SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL TEXT CRITERIA
1) bare peculiarities of scientific and technical discourse texts, their genre and stylistic markers 2) convey lexical, syntactic and morphological peculiarities of source language scientific and technical literature
TEACHING-SPECIFIC TEXT CRITERIA
1) include a variety of text types such as manuals, research articles, reports, and technical documentation to expose learners to different styles and formats 2) align with the specific learning objectives of the translation course, focusing on the skills and competencies that students need to develop 3) be of varying levels of complexity to cater to different proficiency levels of learners 4) encourage collaborative learning and discussions, fostering an interactive and engaging learning environment
TRANSLATION-SPECIFIC TEXT CRITERIA
1) be thematically selected to meet the needs of target readers 2) be culturally relevant to the target audience, helping understand not only the technical language but also the cultural context in which it is used 3) be available for assimilation with the target culture 4) cover a range of linguistic registers (from formal to informal) to prepare learners for the diversity of language styles they may encounter in professional contexts 5) demonstrate variability and differentiation of linguistic means depending on the genre of the text (special terms and terminological phrases) 6) analysis of the difficulties of conveying the pragmatic specificity of the text of the original in the translated text 7) make it possible to learn how to overcome translation difficulties

Considering the theoretical advancements articulated by both domestic and foreign specialists in the field of scientific and technical translation (Chernovatyi,

2019, 2013; Karaban, 2018; Li, 2017; Olohan, 2015) and drawing upon our own pedagogical experiences in instructing translation disciplines related to specialized languages and diverse branches of science and technology (Mazur, 2015; Radetska, 2009), it can be argued that the primary skill to cultivate in prospective translators is proficiency in working with text. This is particularly applicable to scientific and technical texts, which embody distinctive traits such as informativeness, logical coherence, precision, objectivity, as well as clarity, comprehensibility, generalization, unambiguity, brevity, evidentiality, and persuasiveness. These attributes should constitute the predominant content of educational materials. Although scientific and technical texts manifest various genres, a consistent characteristic across all is a constant set of elements and features intrinsic to the broader concept of a text.

It is essential to acknowledge that in teaching translation, the text serves a dual role as both the object of translation activity and the unit of translation learning. It is necessary to consider the fact that while any text can actually be the object of translation, not every text is suitable as a unit of study. Furthermore, the text is the primary type of educational material, therefore it should meet the requirements consistent with the educational objectives to the greatest extent possible.

We also argue that important for teaching translation among other criteria is the criterion of translation value, and if in the case of the selection of scientific and technical texts, we cannot always say that the educational materials should be interesting from the point of view of the topic, they should contain significant value from the point of view of translation, contain typical translation problems and provide the basis for the development of translation skills; the key is to provide a well-rounded selection that not only addresses language and translation challenges but also enhances the overall understanding of the subject matter within a cultural and professional context.

The text is a unique means of learning, developing, and consolidating linguistic and professional skills (Snell-Hornby, 1994, p.210). The essence of content-based approach in teaching scientific and technical translation is that the text, correctly selected for processing in classes, should represent a set of opportunities for acquiring and automating skills in translation: the text can be used for the formation of different types of translation, from literal one to adaptation, analysis of translation difficulties etc. A successfully hacked text can be considered "a source for expanding the professional terminological dictionary" (Cherednychenko, 2007, p. 139). Therefore, it should present as many traits of scientific and technical texts as possible, including branch-specific as well as cross-branched terms, for example, which will contribute to fuller consideration, analysis of lexical and semantic defining features, as well as the selection of various translation methods.

CONCLUSIONS

The correct choice of scientific and technical texts for the implementation of educational activities is an integral part of the formation of professional

competence of students. The scientific and technical original text educates the culture of professional communication in future translators, expands their professionally oriented erudition, and forms the communicative ability necessary for further translation activities.

This research underscores the significance of a content-based approach in shaping the teaching methodology for scientific and technical translation. The content-based approach, as outlined in this study, is a step forward towards addressing the existing gaps in contemporary methodologies, particularly the absence of a defined training pathway for technical translators.

The formulation of a content-based approach involves the comprehensive selection of educational materials that align with the evolving demands of the scientific and technical translation landscape. By prioritizing legislative regulations and contemporary developments, the approach ensures that the training content remains relevant and reflective of the dynamic nature of science and technology.

The identified topics, mapped graphically in the framework, serve as the background for shaping the content of training programs. These topics, drawn from priority areas outlined in the Law of Ukraine, not only reflect the current state of knowledge and technology but also contribute to cultivating a contextual understanding of the subject matter.

The content-based instruction approach, as employed in this study, recognizes the crucial role of subject content in determining the language material included in training. This approach ensures that the translation training is not only linguistically sound but is deeply rooted in the substantive knowledge of science and technology. It emphasizes the need to equip students with skills beyond linguistic competence, focusing on achieving an equivalent and suitable translation that captures the essence of the text.

The delineation of genres relevant for scientific and technical translation provides a nuanced understanding of the diverse forms of communication in these fields. The proposed genres, ranging from user manuals to scientific papers, offer a comprehensive range of text types that contribute to the holistic development of translation skills.

Thus, content-based approach is a crucial tool in choosing update and relevant authentic texts proper in their complexity, multidisciplinary essence, cultural relevance, genre diversity,

which would align with learning objectives, help to focus on the skills and competencies that students need to develop, covering a range of linguistic registers to prepare learners for the diversity of language styles they may encounter in professional contexts, finally encourage collaborative learning and discussions, fostering an interactive and engaging learning environment.

In essence, this research advocates for a paradigm shift towards a content-based approach in teaching scientific and technical translation. By integrating substantive subject matter with linguistic training, this approach equips future translators with the multifaceted skills required for successful scientific and

technical translation. The proposed framework, with its clear objectives and criteria, lays the groundwork for a pedagogical approach that meets the demands of the present and is meant to anticipate the future needs of the technologically advancing world.

PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study on the content-based approach in teaching scientific and technical translation makes it possible to provide further research in several key directions. The evident ongoing practical implementation of this study is development of a system of exercises for learning at each specified stage of text translation, aiming to form permanent translation skills. Compilation of the textbook, encompassing a section dedicated to teaching translation of scientific and technical texts, is the ultimate goal of our scientific and methodological research.

The ongoing theoretical direction of the research could focus on enhancing the curriculum based on feedback from educators, industry professionals, and learners. This iterative approach ensures that teaching methodologies remain relevant and adaptive. So, assessing the efficacy of content-based approach in enhancing translation competence would hopefully provide valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers.

Comparative studies might be undertaken to analyse the effectiveness of the content-based approach against other existing methodologies, namely assessing student outcomes, translation quality, and overall preparedness for professional practice. Addressing these research perspectives may contribute to the ongoing evolution of teaching methodologies in scientific and technical translation, ensuring their continued relevance and effectiveness in preparing the next generation of language professionals for the challenges of the 21st century.

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ЗМІСТОВИЙ ПІДХІД У НАВЧАННІ ТЕХНІЧНОГО ТА НАУКОВОГО ПЕРЕКЛАДУ

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В цій статті розглядається змістоорієнтований підхід до перекладу науково-технічної літератури, що є вкрай важливим для надбання ефективної перекладацької компетентності в галузевому перекладі.

Центральною в цьому дослідженні є розробка методики відбору відповідних текстів для навчання майбутніх перекладачів. Дослідження підкреслює важливість вибору автентичних текстів, що є сучасними, різноманітними та відповідають різним галузям науки та техніки з друкованих видань, електронних ресурсів та матеріалів, що зазвичай зустрічаються в професійній практиці.

У дослідженні наголошується на важливості тематичної відповідності, термінологічної насиченості та наявності лексичних, граматичних,

стилістичних та прагматичних викликів в обраних текстах для покращення перекладацьких навичок студентів.

У статті окреслюється системний підхід до навчання навичкам перекладу, наголошується на змістоорієнтованості стратегії, яка фокусується на комунікативній необхідності та тематичній актуальності.

Дослідження також надає уявлення про динамічну галузь технічного письма та надає комплексний огляд тем текстів, які важливі для навчання майбутніх перекладачів. Ця методична розробка з відбору текстів для науково-технічного перекладу є першою з циклу подібних, що спрямовані створення ефективної структури навчання, що в кінцевому підсумку підвищить компетентність майбутніх фахівців у цій галузі.

Ключові слова: *змістоорієнтована стратегія навчання; методика відбору текстів; науково-технічний переклад; розвиток перекладацьких навичок.*

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