

ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATION OF CHEMICAL TERMS

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Efficient teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) requires substantial effort which includes fostering the skills of scientific texts translation. The study deals with the methodology of teaching translation to MA and post-graduate students specialising in Chemistry and possessing little or no knowledge of translation techniques, reviews discussions on translation theory and practice to illustrate their evolution and attempts to make a contribution to this discussion by offering some new perspectives of interest in the field. The study lists translation strategies to be applied with nonlanguage majors and tests them out with MA and post-graduate students in the Chemistry Department of Moscow Technical University with experiment and control groups further evaluating students' progress via quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis.

Keywords: *translation, translation technique, non-linguistic faculties, competence in translation.*

INTRODUCTION: Over the last decades, many researchers have spoken in support of the idea that teaching translation to university students should incorporate both theoretical and practical components, taking this idea forward in numerous studies and textbooks intended for students majoring in linguistic disciplines (see, for example, Komissarov, 1997; Latishev & Semenov, 2003; Cook, 2010; Gambier, 2012). For one thing, lack of theoretical background was proved to somewhat devalue the practical skill, while beyond that, adequate translation proficiency at some point ceased to be perceived as an off-thewall competency or even art (Chukovsky, 1984), but came to be referred to as an altogether affordable skill to be mastered (Calvo, 2011).

While studies in translation have in many ways taken a quantum leap, translation as a discipline is still considered a priority of language majors, with non-majors enrolled in non-linguistic faculties and universities still lacking adequate translation training, for with them it only comes down to checking basic reading skills at best. This poses an issue that needs to be addressed for a number of reasons. Most crucially, the overwhelming expansion of international relations inevitably generates voluminous written communication, with research publications as one of its major constituents,

and ongoing global networking more than ever before involves ensuring expedient translation services. As the 21st century has been dubbed 'the era of translation and translators', fostering the corresponding skills has become one of the priorities in higher professional education.

Both undergraduate and postgraduate university students are required to read and translate a fair amount of scientific papers in order to pursue their own research objectives, meaning that they also need to develop a range of skills underlying their ultimate translation competency, the latter including a number of sub-competences representing a range of skills to be developed in both their mother tongue and the foreign language. Notably, ESP students invariably face a number of problems having to do with translating procedures. To address these, the teacher will have to be on the lookout for potential difficulties and be able to apply appropriate coping techniques. First and foremost, it is crucial to consider and analyse specific translation practices, define the skills that are of primary importance for ESP students, and make a practical distinction between bilingual and essential skills (Larson, 1984).

Importantly, major roadblocks can be associated with a crosslanguage mismatch giving rise to issues such as lexical interference, which remains relatively unexplored in terms of the methodological aspects involved (Malyuga et al., 2017). This study explores how scientific post-graduates, Chemistry students in particular, can successfully manage foreign language texts and reviews the most recent perspectives in the field of translation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: This paper assesses the ability of Chemistry students on MA and other post-graduate courses at Moscow Technical University who are nonlanguage majors and evaluates their progress in using quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis in translation. Quantitative evaluation was premised on a questionnaire completed by the students while delivering on their term task, and the qualitative method relied on scientific article analyses and students' short reports, which were due one week before the final test. The resulting data were summarised and analysed per group, revealing the key problems encountered in translation as well as the percentage ratio of common mistakes made in translation.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: Intensive research on translation got underway in the late 20th century with the studies by scholars such as Holmes (1988), Catford (1978), and Nida (1998), the latter being one of the first scholars to define the concept of translation in a more systematic manner, claiming that translating involves reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message in

terms of both meaning and style (Nida & Taber, 1982). The author referred to translation as a 'science', the statement being rather revolutionary for that time as it contradicted the so-called 'grammar translation' method which was widely used in the first half of the 20th century and focused on learning the grammatical rules of the target language as a cornerstone for successful literal translation (Munday, 2009). Translation exercises were considered critical for learning a foreign language and reading foreign texts. The method later lost its popularity as the communicative approach emerged in the late 1960s – early 1970s.

The communicative approach focused on the natural ability of students to learn a foreign language and attempted to represent the daily classroom routine keying in on the spoken language instead of using sentences that were out of context. As a consequence, the new approach rejected the method of grammatical translation in its classic form. In the second half of the 20th century, with a number of new linguistic achievements, a new generation of scholars managed to establish a more systematic analysis of translation (Jakobson, 2000; Fedorov, 2002; Mounin, 1963). Following the new theories, a new discipline of translation studies emerged. By the end of the 20th century, communicative and sociocultural approaches were at the centre of attention, and so translation came to be viewed as nothing short of a cultural phenomenon. Thus, the concept of the 'cultural turn' was another crucial advance in translation studies that warranted further investigation. It was proved that translation could not develop without culture studies, since translations enrich nations with the cultural values of other peoples.

The theories on translation tried to give insight into the translation process and analyse the relations between thought and language, culture and speech. While many theories are widely discussed in scientific literature, the argument is mostly concerned with the distinctions between texts types or genres and speech types within written or oral translation/interpreting. The Russian school of translation studies appears somewhat distinctive as the Russian word *перевод* has a broader meaning referring to both translation and interpretation, whereby the process of translation is inextricably connected with its result.

Thus, developing a translation strategy implies defining the exact meaning behind the term *перевод*. Scholars dealing with the study of translation tend to consistently underline the dichotomy of this two-facet phenomenon, which represents both the process of transferring information and the result of this process – the translated text. However, some scholars

invest translation with extra characteristics indicating some special traits that make it a unique phenomenon. For example, Barkhudarov (1975) considers translation an interlingual transformation, a replacement of the source text (ST) by the target text (TT), with the meaning of the source text remaining unchanged.

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