

Introducing modern technologies into Ukrainian translator/interpreter training curricula: problems and perspectives

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the analysis of problems and perspectives in introducing technologies into Ukrainian translator/interpreter training curricula and possible ways of overcoming them. The author emphasizes the urgent need for the development and implementation of translation/interpretation technology courses into the programs of translator/interpreter training, enumerates challenges that are likely to arise during the process of development and implementation of the aforementioned courses that can be subdivided into three main types (practical, fundamental, personal ones) and lists possible steps to overcome them. The author provides the general theoretical grounds which take into account the peculiarities of the Ukrainian system of translator/interpreter training and within the framework of which the following courses are developed: “Modern Translation Technologies. Automated Translation Systems”, “Modern Interpretation Technologies. Simultaneous Interpreting” (for ensuring procedural component), “Factors of Successful Employment”, “Professional Skills Basics” (for ensuring declarative component).

Keywords: translation/interpretation technology courses, translator/interpreter training curricula, future translators/interpreters, CAT-tools, remote interpreting.

Ukraine’s integration into European and world structures produces demand for high-quality translation/interpretation of the ever increasing amounts of data. To meet these needs translators have to speed up their work without any detriment of quality that is possible only with the use of translation automation technologies which constitute a mandatory requirement at the modern translation market. The interpreters, in their turn, have to master technologies of simultaneous and remote interpreting which become more and more popular with state as well as private companies and organizations as they ensure a possibility to reduce costs and eliminate inconveniences associated with travelling [7]. Thus, the future translators/interpreters have to master the corresponding technologies in order to be able to provide services worldwide and to compete successfully on the global translation/interpretation market.

It is natural that such modern translation/interpretation market requirements considerably affect translator/interpreter education as many universities in the world have already incorporated translation/interpretation technology courses into their translator/interpreter training programs [9]. The urgent need for the introduction of translation/interpretation technologies into translator/interpreter training curricula is also stressed by the European Master’s in Translation through the establishment of a quality label which is awarded to those university translation programmes that meet agreed professional standards and market demands, i. e. which have developed and implemented one or more courses on translation technologies [8].

In Ukraine the process of introducing translation/interpretation technology into the translator/interpreter training curriculum is at its initial stage, so theoretical research is to be carried out alongside with practical development of the appropriate methodology of teaching. The aim of the article is to outline problems and perspectives in introducing technologies into Ukrainian translator/interpreter training curricula, to provide the general theoretical framework for the development of the appropriate methodology of teaching and to give a short description of the courses developed on the basis of the mentioned theoretical grounds.

The first step towards implementing translation/interpretation technology into the Ukrainian translator/interpreter training education is evaluating the challenges that we are likely to face. The foreign practice [10] shows that they can be subdivided into three main categories: practical, fundamental and personal ones. The practical challenges in Ukraine may include:

— high costs of CAT tools, simultaneous and remote interpreting software and hardware which makes it difficult for universities to acquire them;

— high hardware requirements which are common for the latest versions of many CAT tools and simultaneous and remote interpreting software that make it difficult for the majority of universities’ computer classrooms to meet them;

— further maintenance of the acquired CAT tools and simultaneous/remote interpreting software and hardware which requires additional expenses.

The fundamental challenges are:

— designing translation/interpretation technology courses;

— integrating the courses into translation/interpretation curricula in a balanced way.

The personal challenges comprise:

— students’ needs and attitudes which are to be determined before teaching CAT tools and simultaneous/remote interpretation;

— trainers’ needs and attitudes – for example, most translator/interpreter trainers have to learn using CAT tools and simultaneous/remote interpreting technologies before starting teaching students.

To overcome the challenges further steps can be taken:

1) analyzing CAT tool and simultaneous/remote interpreting technology market in order to determine the most commonly used programs and conducting negotiations with the leading CAT tool and simultaneous/remote interpreting technology developing companies – most of them are ready to provide free academic versions of their software with the aim of additional advertisement of their products;

2) analyzing the state of hardware and software at the universities’ computer classrooms and choosing those

CAT tools and simultaneous/remote interpreting technologies which match the available resources;

3) if possible, using cloud-based CAT tools in the teaching process as they require little or no maintenance;

4) carrying out theoretical research aimed at the development of the methodology of teaching CAT tools and simultaneous/remote interpreting technologies;

5) administering questionnaires to students and trainers in order to find out their needs and attitudes;

6) developing the methodology of teaching CAT tools and simultaneous/remote interpreting technologies on the basis of the conducted theoretical research taking into account the results of the questionnaires;

7) conducting experimental research to prove the effectiveness of the developed methodology.

The methodology of teaching CAT tools and remote interpreting technologies is to be based on the following theoretical provisions:

- The development of the translation/interpretation competence has to be carried out on the basis of the thorough analysis of the modern translation/interpretation market requirements as they are constantly evolving with the emergence of the newest technologies and trends. It entails the necessity of taking the changes mentioned into account in the process of translator/interpreter training by developing and testing corresponding teaching methodologies in order to prepare highly-qualified translators/interpreters, able to compete on both global and domestic labor market.

- As graduates of the Master's program of most translation departments of Ukrainian higher educational establishments are qualified to work as both translators and interpreters, they have to provide both high-quality translation and interpretation. This situation entails the necessity of introducing courses on translation as well as interpretation technologies as the lack of the appropriate training in interpretation technologies can cause poor performance in interpreting or even complete disability to perform interpreting due to the absence of the technological skills.

- Translation/interpretation competence constitutes a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes [11], which means that in order to develop an effective methodology of teaching we should determine what students need to know about translation/interpretation technologies (declarative knowledge), what translation/interpretation technology skills they have to master (procedural knowledge) and how they have to behave while performing translation/interpretation with the help of modern technologies. Thus, practical courses in translation/interpretation technologies have to be complemented with the appropriate theoretical courses designed to cover the gap between theory and practice. The well-balanced combination of theory and practice will contribute to the favorable conditions for the development of the attitudinal component, in particular a raise in motivation, consciousness and responsibility for the professional activities.

- All components of the translation/interpretation competence are interconnected and interdependent, i. e. translation/interpretation technologies constitute an integral part of a larger system aimed at the high-quality vocational training of specialists in translation/inter-

pretation. Thus, the technology courses have to be developed on the basis of authentic topical texts and in such a way that the formation of translation/interpretation skills is ensured alongside with technological skills.

Taking into account the challenges and general theoretical grounds mentioned above, we have developed courses aimed at the comprehensive and balanced introduction of modern translation/interpretation technologies to students. In order to ensure the procedural aspect of the technological component of translation/interpretation competence we suggest implementing the courses "Modern Translation Technologies. Automated Translation Systems" and "Modern Interpretation Technologies. Simultaneous Interpreting". The declarative aspect of the technological component of translation/interpretation competence can be ensured through the implementation of the theoretical courses: "Factors of Successful Employment" and "Professional Skills Basics". A brief description of each course is given below.

The main objective of the course "Modern Translation Technologies. Automated Translation Systems" is to develop practical skills of using computer-aided translation tools according to the requirements of domestic and international standards and modern translation market demands alongside with further improvement of skills in translating social and political texts. In teaching translation technologies emphasis should be placed on the development of the general and basic skills which will enable students to adjust easily to newly appeared technologies and software updates [6]. In order to ensure the possibility of transferring the acquired skills to the new and updated software the course in translation technologies is to be based on several CAT-tools [5]. The possible solution can be the use of SDL Trados Studio, MemoQ (desktop programs) and Memsourc (cloud-based solution) as they readily provide free academic versions.

In the process of teaching the students have to acquire the main functions of the aforementioned programs, translating documents of the most popular file types (Word, Excel, Power Point, PDF) with their help, creating various tools necessary for translating effectively such as translation memories and term bases, working with project packages.

The course "Modern Interpretation Technologies. Simultaneous Interpreting" [3] is designed to cover the gap between technological skills in translation and interpretation. Its goal is to teach students majoring in translation/interpretation to interpret simultaneously and in the remote mode English and Ukrainian texts in the political and social sphere alongside with developing technological skills peculiar to interpretation. The system of exercises consists of three sub-systems: preparatory exercises, exercises for forming skills, exercises for forming abilities. The students are also acquainted with the work in the interpretation booth in the specialized interpretation laboratory and the manner of behavior while performing interpretation in the booth. The course proved its effectiveness in a pilot study administered to students majoring in translation/interpretation at V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University [1].

The course "Factors of Successful Employment" [4] is aimed to introduce to students the main aspects of the

modern translation industry, world and Ukrainian translation markets trends, professional competence requirements of translators/interpreters as well as translator/interpreter trainers and the possible ways of employment. The course consists of nine topics: 1) the world's translation/interpretation market; 2) the Ukrainian translation/interpretation market; 3) the profile of a modern translator/interpreter; 4) organizational structure of a modern translation company; 5) translator's modern computer tools; 6) the process of translation quality assessment; 7) translation quality standards; 8) the employment process of the translator/interpreter; 9) training translators/interpreters as an occupation.

The main aim of the course "Professional Skills Basics" [2] is to acquaint students with the main aspects of the personal and technological component of the translation/interpretation competence. The course consists of nine topics: 1) translation/interpretation competence and the role of the personal component in its structure; 2) personal component in the context of domestic and foreign research; 3) psychophysiological component; 4) moral and ethical component; 5) research and technological component; 6) CAT-tools as one of the most

important constituents of the technological component; 7) vocational, social and self-improvement components; 8) legal and civil status of the translator/interpreter; 9) translator/interpreter occupational health and safety.

The developed courses constitute a comprehensive system aimed at the formation of the technological component for both future translators and interpreters in line with further development of translation/interpretation skills and, being administered jointly, provide a well-balanced combination of theory and practice in translation/interpretation technology.

Thus, technology, by no means, deserves a prominent place in translator/interpreter training curricula and modern life provides opportunities to introduce it in most Ukrainian universities. Our work outlines only some possible ways of overcoming the challenges and problems that translator/interpreter trainers may face in introducing CAT tools into translator/interpreter education. Needless to say, further theoretical and practical steps are to be taken in order to improve translation/interpretation technology courses and implement them into modern Ukrainian translator/interpreter training process.

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