

MODERN STRATEGIES IN TEACHING PROFESSIONAL TRANSLATION

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Within recent years scholars have been discussing the problem of teaching students of higher educational institutions to professionally oriented translation. The point of discussion concerns the place translation should take in the system of teaching a foreign language. The aim of this article is to present a disputable opinion of Saint Petersburg school of translation on this issue and to make some strategic plans of teaching professional translation. According to I.S. Alexe-yeva, the author of a highly popular book on preparing translators and interpreters [1], translation as a subject should play a special role in the system of teaching foreign languages, actually, it should take the leading position. All other aspects of foreign language teaching are supposed to "serve" translation, i.e. prepare a solid basis for teaching translation skills, or, to put it in other words, secure transfer from linguistic competence to so-called "translational competence".

The new tendencies can go along the following lines: a) the increase of the native language share in the process of teaching translation; b) transference from traditional lecturing of theoretical courses to a new, "combined" one; c) text-centered teaching to translation; d) a new, three-stage approach to teaching written translation.

It is clear that in all aspects of teaching a foreign language certain changes should take place. First of all, the proportion of the native language is to grow considerably because the latest observations prove the urgency of such politics. Thus the working programs are supposed to reconsider the whole process of foreign language teaching with the view to increasing the share of the native tongue at the classes of practical translation. The latter is, perhaps, the leitmotiv of the forthcoming changes. The problem, it should be emphasized, has been raised of late (V.V. Ki-rillova), it was postulated that the students taught to translation should have extensive practice in generating oral and written texts of different genres in the native language as well as be exposed to its phonetics, rhetoric and the art of public speaking [2]. Today, scholars of different universities are trying to fill out the lacuna, but the process is going on slowly.

Positive solution of the "new teaching" is divided into two vistas: theoretical courses and practical studies. The traditional approach contained such aspects as "Linguistics", "Theoretical phonetics", "Theoretical grammar", "Stylistics of the foreign language", "Theory of translation", etc. The new proposal is against this division. All the courses are supposed to include comparative teaching, i.e. "Comparative stylistics", not the style of the native and target languages separately. The latter can be given as special courses for those who wish to enlarge on their linguistic outlook.

The whole process of teaching theory and practice should be "text-centered" (the word was coined by I.S. Alexeyeva) which means that from the very beginning future translators are to study different types of texts in the target language (it is the Russian language in this article). Further on, the students concentrate on learning different types of texts in the source language (English, German, Italian, etc.). This knowledge lays basis for pretranslational analysis the necessity of which was postulated by M.P. Brandes and V.I. Provotorov [3], search of translational variants and the analysis of translation results. According to I.S. Alexeyeva, these basic skills are obtained in the theoretical course "Translational analysis of the text" [1, c. 144].

The well-tested course of "Linguistics" is also recommended to change the bias, at our practical and pragmatic age it is supposed to be text-centered as well. Text linguistics in its pur form should be given as a special course, perhaps, because it is highly theoretical but today's ten

dency is to make the teaching of translation closer to the material carriers of information, i.e. to texts. An entirely new theoretical course is offered by Saint-Petersburg translational school, it is "An Introduction into the Translator's Profession". The course is expected to support the students' motivation and is highly instructive at the same time, it will concentrate on the definition of translation, its role in our life, the notion of cultural and linguistic barriers (ideological principles are going to be discussed, too), material aspects of different kinds of translation, the status of the translator in today's world, the ethics of translation, translator's holidays, etc. [4].

Radical changes in the translation program concern the procedure of text analysis or, to be more correct, work with the text. This concerns practice of translation. How should it be conducted? First of all, the question of the choice of texts arises. What kinds of texts will ensure translational competence? What kinds of texts should the teacher begin with? These and other questions are answered by I.S. Alexeyeva.

It should be mentioned in passing that the textbooks in our country used to be "thematic" and did not teach the students to translational skills though they contained assignments for translation immediately after the text and some vocabulary notes. But the students were not equipped with methods or techniques necessary for performing the required translation. So it is only natural to announce the text-centered method of writing textbooks. For these specific purposes a philological analysis of the text is offered at the classes of analytical reading and practice of translation.

Suppose that a foreign text is in front of the translator. What should he do to perform a "decent" translation? First of all one should know the general rules of generating such texts in the native and foreign languages, as well as traditional characteristics of those texts. I.S. Alexeyeva on the example of a business letter as a type of text demonstrates the techniques of work which, later on, could be applied to other types [1, pp. 141-142]. The first differences between Russian and English variants will show themselves in the realization of the phatic, i.e. contact-making function of the text. This fact necessitates the teacher to give linguo-ethnic explanations to the students and, correspondingly, necessary corrections are to be introduced. What is common between the English and Russian variants, then? It is the fact that in both variants (foreign and native) these documents make use of the written literary norm of the language, moreover, it is official documents norm. The texts are written in the matter-of-fact manner, there is no emotional coloring, emotions may only be implied within the accepted limits of documents like this. One can observe terms belonging to the sphere of activity touched upon in the business letter, the translator may find them in the dictionary.

Equipped with this knowledge the translator chooses the optimum way of translation, consisting of the following operations: contact-making formulas are introduced with the help of transformations, based on tradition and political correctness; the features of business style are reflected in variant equivalents and transformations; terms have strict regular equivalents. Care should be taken of selecting the unit of translation. In this case, it may be an "informative block" or "semantic block", i.e. one of the meaningful parts of the business letter into which it can fall: the letter heading, the reference, the date, the inside address, the salutation, the complimentary close, the signature [5, pp. 15-17].

The last step is editing the translation made. It presupposes, first of all, comparative analysis of the content, adherence to the orderly compositional structure, and then certain stylistic refinement of the translated text consisting in creating so-called stylistic unity of business letter parts, their logical connection and cohesion. These post-translational skills are formed in the process of study, and every translator is supposed to possess them.

As can be seen from this presentation offered by I.S. Alexeyeva, a complex method of teaching students to generating foreign and native business letter text is employed here. On the one hand, it is traditional way of teaching, on the other, new elements are introduced. This combination has prompted the author to work out an approach to teaching written translation consisting of three stages: preparatory, basic and "training" stages [1, pp. 144-145].

Here different advances to the choice of texts are possible but the most appropriate is the offer to begin with scientific texts. From the point of view of translation teaching, such a text is homogeneous, and for the translator it is the simplest. So the teacher may start from a scientific text taken from a textbook, its detailed structural and linguostylistic analysis forms the students' linguistic competence. The preparatory stage is connected with the general linguistic knowledge of the peculiarities of scientific style and their linguistic embodiment. This information was given to students at the theoretical courses and now it is revised. The basic stage is connected with the detailed analysis and collective translation of the text, and the "training" stage takes place when the students work independently with a new text of the same type and present the results of their work in class.

Since the text is scientific and its function is cognitive the first thing to discuss is the role of terms in realizing the author's communicative intention and their translation. The origin of terms, their Greek or Latin roots are found, a warning is made not to "russify" them in translation. Terms are studied in two parallel terminological systems (Russian and English, for example): the students look through the text and describe the terms found according to their functional properties - introduction of new notions, designating something in a particular field. Notes about lack of emotional coloring are made, though the presence of evaluative semantics can be observed, etc. The students find out that apart from terms, a great layer of lexical units in a scientific text abounds in variants but its translation does not depend on the context. According to O.S. Akhmanova, this is the most important and interesting stratum of words which are neither words of the general language nor special terms. They may be described as "general scientific vocabulary" - words most naturally used to impart intellectual information, to present findings, observations and generalizations [6, pp. 76-77], as well as words reflecting different stages of research activity and its results: *survey, examine, report, conference*, etc.; various introductory phrases of the kind: *as has been estimated, it should be noted, there is every reason to suppose*, etc. [7, pp. 38-39].

The work with this material is conducted on two parallel texts. The comparative presentation allows to observe the typical ways of translating terms and general scientific words and analyze them, tendencies are to be examined in the process of comparison. The next phase of analysis is on the structural level, it is here that the students observe categories of the text and make their judgement about the brighter expression of them in Russian and English texts. Their observations prove that such a category as, for example, *cohesion* thanks to a wide variety of logical connectives and other forms of linking is better "seen" in the foreign text. So the utmost attention of the teacher in this case should be paid to the ways of expressing this category in the target, Russian, text because it is less observable here, for example, the ways adversary conjunctions are translated into Russian are discussed. The character of cohesion in the two languages - progressive and regressive is also important, the location of means of cohesion within the sentence - to the right or to the left - depending on the functional sentence perspective, etc. - these and other peculiarities are discussed (the course "Text Linguistics" was lectured to the students before).

Pretranslational analysis is performed with the view to future translation, so it is not so much theoretically linguistic but mainly interpretation biased, i.e. the major points of analysis are of semantic and structural character. The latter are necessary for defining translation techniques appropriate for performing transference from the source language into the target one. According to Saint-Petersburg's school of translation, preference should be given to translation into the native tongue, this is ethically justified. As for translation into the foreign language it is taught by bilingual foreign specialists. Not less than two semesters are spent on linguo-translational analysis of texts belonging to different stylistic registers and genres.

At the following stage, the students are given a text for an independent study and offered to write the translation of it at home. A question may arise about the validity of this home-made translation. The fact is that the students need this work in order to penetrate deeply into the semantic, logical, structural and linguistic essence of the text. Much of what the students learn about the background information or the author's communicative intention as well as some structural and linguistic peculiarities of the text will later on be discussed at the class with the teacher and group-mates and either accepted or rejected. The preliminary work being done, the students come to the lesson.

In class, a new collective translation is made with all the commentaries on the dominant type of

information in the text: cognitive, referential, emotional, pragmatic, aesthetic, etc. [8, p. 207], the linguistic means expressing that information, text categories and their realization in the text [9], translational approaches and techniques. Even the material side of this work is unusual. The students' sheets are divided into three columns: the first contains the text in the foreign language, the second places the students' translation performed at home and the third one is being filled out in the classroom in the process of a detailed discussion of the text sentence by sentence with its simultaneous translation. It should be noted that the whole analysis is written by the students, as a result they receive a very good scheme for cultural and linguistic description of the text. Here is the scheme of the text analysis: (1) text type; (2) the communicative intention; (3) the text's addressee; (4) types of information (cognitive, emotional, aesthetic); (5) the genre of the text; (6) compositional speech forms; (7) extralinguistic information [1, pp. 149-157].

An analogous text on a new theme, judiciary, ecological or musical (the possibilities are innumerable) is offered. Now the students realize that texts of this type are built on one model, the difference is only in the choice of terms and general scientific vocabulary. This work is time consuming, but there is no room for haste here. The second type of texts taken for a deep linguo-cultural and compositional analysis in class is "instructions". They are also homogeneously structured and work with them is planned accordingly. The students afterwards are allowed to choose their own text and prepare its analysis and translation for the final test.

In conclusion it can be remarked that the new trend in teaching students to translation forwarded by Saint-Petersburg university is highly pragmatic and fully answers the social demand of our time. Its deep research will undoubtedly help modernize the process of preparing professionals in the field of translation. The work in this direction has begun, the teachers of Cross-cultural communications department of the Institute of foreign languages (VSUE) arrange sittings and seminars on these problems, reconsider the content of their lecture courses and practical classes with the view to the latest tendencies in methods of teaching translation.

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