

Methods and Techniques Developing Translation Competences

Oxana Golubovschi, lector superior

Rezumat

Prezentul articol este dedicat echivalenței în traducere și dezvoltării competențelor de traducere prin utilizarea unor metode și tehnici. Metodele și tehnicile menționate sunt ținute spre dezvoltarea competențelor de traducere ale studenților și, bineînțeles, pentru pregătirea unor traducători competenți.

Human beings, throughout history, have made an effort to take advantage of various methods of communication with the intention of utilizing the knowledge of other nations and endeavouring to preserve this knowledge for the coming generations. As the most effective methods of communication, language has been employed to satisfy the very need of communication. The predicament that may emerge as an obstacle in the way of communication seems to be the fact of dissimilarity of languages throughout the world. In today's world, communication between different nations with different languages is feasible through translation.

What is translation? Translation is a transfer process, which aims at the transformation of a SL (Source Language) text into an optimally equivalent TL (Target Language) text, and which requires the syntactic, the semantic and the pragmatic understanding and analytical processing of the SL. Various scholars have recommended an assortment of factors that a fine translation should take into consideration. Being utilized as a bridge between two cultures, translation seems to be a complicated and multi-faceted activity or phenomenon. According to W. Benjamin, the twentieth century has been called “the age of reproduction and translation” [1, p. 38]. Some scholars may argue that translation is a process of creative thinking; consequently, it is subjective and cannot be systematized by laws. The disciplines of language translation and interpreting serve the purpose of making communication possible between speakers of different languages. As supported by many researchers, translation can be perceived as the process that allows the transfer of sense from one language to another, rather than the transfer of the linguistic meaning of each word. According to the definition given by D. Bolinger and D. Sears, “the word is the smallest unit of language that can be used by itself” [2, p.43]. Each unit has a lexical meaning, which determines the value and the identity of each word in a specific language. Each word corresponds to a phoneme, and a phoneme can carry several linguistic meanings, depending on the way it relates to the rest of the speech. For example, the Romanian translation of the English phoneme /nait/, isolated from its context, can be either “cavaler” (knight) or “noapte” (night). However if the speaker talked about a “chivalrous and courageous knight”, there would be no hesitation in choosing the Romanian translation “cavaler”, rather than “noapte”. Therefore drawing a difference between linguistic meaning and sense it is important to remember that in speech words lose some of the potential meanings attached to their phonemic structure and retain only their contextual relevant meaning. There can be several ways to express the same idea but all the utterances produced with that purpose would reflect a particular shape, which results from the semantics of a specific language. Different languages do not express the same idea with the same semantic components and that is why a simple conversion of one language into another cannot be satisfactory in translation or interpreting. Quite naturally, no two words in any two languages are absolutely identical in meaning. As far as the whole text is concerned, it is simply impossible to transfer all the messages of the original text into the target text. Therefore, equivalence in translation can only be understood as a kind of similarity or approximation, but even a more complicated task is to develop students’ translation competences. The difficulty of

teaching approaches regarding methods, techniques and procedures of teaching translation, educating a translator and developing his/her translation competences is quite a different task from the one of teaching somebody a foreign language, and how to do it - is the main concern of this article. As we know, translators must be able to read, understand and retain somebody else's ideas, then render them accurately, completely and without exclusion, in a way that conveys the original meaning effectively and without distortion in another language. In other words, translators must be excellent readers in a source language, for example, in English as their second language, and excellent writers in a target language, for example, in Romanian as their native language. Moreover, a fully competent translator is not only [bilingual](#) but also [bicultural](#). Millions more study foreign languages, but this fact does not qualify them to work as professional translators. That is why a certain set of techniques, procedure and methods are to be followed in order to teach translation and develop translation competences. A variety of [translation procedures, strategies and methods are used to coach future translators](#). The main translating procedures, as depicted by E. Nida [5, p. 67] are as follow: 1. *Technical procedures*: a) analysis of the source and target languages; b) a thorough study of the source language text before attempting to translate it; c) making judgments of the semantic and syntactic approximations. 2. *Organizational procedures*: constant re-evaluation of the attempt made; contrasting it with the existing available translations of the same text done by other translators, and checking the text's communicative effectiveness by asking the target language readers to evaluate its accuracy and effectiveness and studying their reactions. As well, are known at least three global translation strategies employed by the translators: 1) translating without interruption for as long as possible; 2) correcting surface errors immediately; 3) leaving the monitoring for qualitative or stylistic errors in the text to the revision stage. P. Newmark mentions the difference between translation methods and translation procedures. He writes that, "While translation methods relate to whole texts, translation procedures are used for sentences and the smaller units of language" [4, p.81]. He goes on to refer to the following methods of translation: *Word-for-word translation*: in which the SL word order is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings, out of context. *Literal translation*: in which the SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents, but the lexical words are translated out of context. *Faithful translation*: it attempts to produce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the TL grammatical structures. *Semantic translation*: which differs from 'faithful translation' only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value of the SL text. *Adaptation*: which is the freest form of translation, and is used mainly for plays (comedies) and poetry; the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the SL culture is converted to the TL culture and the text is rewritten. *Free translation*: it produces the TL text without the style, form, or content of the original. *Idiomatic translation*: it reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original. *Communicative translation*: it attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership [4, pp.89-135]. Trying to pin down strategies that you use almost intuitively every day of your life becomes a rather difficult task. In our article are mentioned commonly accepted translation methods and techniques used in accordance for the development of translation competences. **Direct Translation Techniques** - when structural and conceptual elements of the SL can be transposed into the TL, they include *Borrowing*, *Calque*, *Literal Translation*. **Borrowing** is the taking of words directly from one language into another without translation. Many English words are "borrowed" into other

languages; for example *software* in the field of technology and *funk* in culture. A **calque** or **loan** translation is a phrase borrowed from another language and translated literally word-for-word. **Literal Translation** - A word-for-word translation used in some languages and not others, dependent on the sentence structure. **Oblique Translation Techniques** used when the structural or conceptual elements of the SL cannot be directly translated without altering meaning or upsetting the grammatical and stylistics elements of the TL, they include *Transposition, Modulation, Reformulation or Equivalence, Adaptation, Compensation*. **Transposition** - is the process where parts of speech change their sequence (*blue ball* becomes *minge albastră* in Romanian). This requires that the translator knows that it is possible to replace a word category in the TL without altering the meaning of the SL. **Modulation** consists of using a phrase that is different in the source and target languages to convey the same idea: *ți-o dau* means literally *I leave it to you* but translates better as *You can have it*. Translator generates a change in the point of view of the message without altering meaning and without generating a sense of awkwardness in the reader of the TT. **Reformulation or Equivalence** - expressing something in a completely different way, for example when translating idioms or advertising slogans. **Adaptation** occurs when something specific to one language culture is expressed in a totally different way that is familiar or appropriate to another language culture. **Compensation** can be used when something cannot be translated, and the meaning that is lost is expressed somewhere else in the translated text. All the methods and techniques mentioned are used in order to develop learners' translation competences and of course to educate a competent translator. The one who will later translate skillfully and with ease, so that the foreign language readership (TL/T) could benefit from the text as much as the ST/L readers do.

Bibliography

1. Benjamin, W., *The Task of the Translator*. New York, Longman, 1999.
2. [Bolinger](#) Dwight, [Sears Donald A.](#), *Aspects of Language*. New York, Prentice Hall Longman, 1981.
3. [Bolinger](#) Dwight, *Language - The Loaded Weapon: The Use and Abuse of Language Today*, London and New York, Longman, 1980.
4. Newmark, Peter, *A textbook of translation*. New York, Prentice Hall Longman, 1988.
5. [Nida](#) Eugene Albert, *Toward a Science of Translating*. Netherlands: Leiden, 1964. 331 p.