

УДК 371.315: 811.133.1

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SELF-TRAINING POTENTIAL IN TRAINING INTERPRETERS

Стаття присвячена питанню про значення та роль самотренінгу в процесі підготовки майбутніх перекладачів. Виділені основні складові самостійної роботи.

Ключові слова: *самостійна робота, перекладацька компетенція, етика перекладача, перекладацький скоропис, послідовний переклад, самооцінка.*

Статья посвящена вопросу самостоятельной работы в процессе подготовки будущих переводчиков. Рассматриваются основные составляющие самостоятельной работы.

Ключевые слова: *переводческая компетенция, поведение переводчика, переводческая скоропись, последовательный перевод, самооценка.*

This paper is devoted to the issue of independent, self-directed learning of would-be interpreters. The constituent parts of the interpreter's self-training have been identified and discussed.

Key words: *self-training, interpreter's competence, ethical behavior, interpreter's notetaking, consecutive interpreting, self-assessment.*

Today the educational concepts are influenced by the ideas of global evolutionism. According to some authors [2, 10] the need arises for the development of a new educational paradigm – a synergy one, which includes the following:

- Openness of education
- Creative character of training/learning
- Wide use of information –communication technologies
- Enhancement of personality role in the learning process
- Changing the teacher's role from an authoritarian one to the role of an adviser, facilitator, colleague, consultant, motivator, researcher, decision-maker, guide.
- Applying humanistic and psychosuggestive technologies in which self-cognition and self-realization of personality are in the focus.

Transformation processes taking place in the system of education in Ukraine and the country's entry to the information-education space of Europe and the world compel us to revise the contents and approaches to teaching in general and teaching foreign languages in particular, including translation/interpreting teaching.

The given paper addresses the significance and content of individual work of students

majoring in translation/interpreting. It is known that much learning depends on learners. They can be provided with perfect materials, stimulating assignments, teacher's knowledge and expertise, but the learner's progress is connected with their own efforts, self-motivation and self-training.

Self-training/individual work issue is of vital importance for any student and it is especially relevant in the professional training of interpreters. Due to temporal constraints, no interpreting course can incorporate a complete range of areas, aspects to cover and assignments to fulfill. That is why there should be a rational correlation between practical classes of interpreting and extracurricular/independent learning [6]. A shift of focus in teaching/learning towards self-directed learning offers a considerable degree of flexibility of students, possibility to set their own objective to achieve, to use the available resources and preferable learning techniques, to evaluate their own progress (self-assessment).

The content and organization of individual, independent work of would-be interpreters deserve a thorough study. However, little attention is paid to the issue in methodology sources on interpreting and their number is insufficient.

That is why an attempt to identify the constituent parts of would-be interpreter's self-training seems justifiable.

We maintain the opinion that the components of the interpreter's self-training are as follows:

- Individual work at interpreter's behavior
- Work at elements of interpreter's speech and culture of target language
- Work at erudition/enriching background knowledge
- Learning thematic group lexis and compiling subject glossaries and thesauruses
- Selecting materials to practice 'at sight' translation
- Independent vocabulary acquisition
- Individual work in the language/multimedia laboratory
- Interpretation recording, high-speed delivery training and performance self-evaluation
- Creating one's own note-taking technique

Students should be given clear psychological instructions at the very first practical classes in interpreting.

According to I.S. Alekseyeva [1] along with the instruction of intensive work at practical classes and the creation of adequate/sound atmosphere of competition among students, the emphasis should also be put on individual/independent work. Learner independence should be encouraged. Students should take more responsibility for independent work, selecting and creating their own banks of materials, setting goals and keeping records, assessing their own performance.

The competition instruction means due respect towards a competitor (group-mate) as every student should strive to demonstrate his/her abilities and skills. They can only rely on themselves realizing that such approach will allow other students to learn the things they are being taught. Any mutual help or assistance is excluded as any prompt can destroy the atmosphere of interpreter's professional solitude, which mobilizes every student (No one will interpret but I!). If would-be interpreters are not accustomed to such real-life situation they will undergo stress when starting their professional activity. And as it is known interpreting, especially simultaneous, is placed in the category of high-stress professions with high burnout levels.

Students should also work individually at their interpreter's behavior, which means self-control while maintaining neutral, impartial status of communication intermediary who enables people's minds to achieve intellectual communion. She/he can reveal neither his/her opinion nor attitude to the speaker, must never change or add to the speaker's message, must not react to the emotional content of the speaker's words, and he/she should be able to cope with the stage fright.

Constant work at the elements of the interpreter's speech is also of great importance as no irritating speech mannerisms, poor diction, halting, choppy delivery are expected of an interpreter. Interpreter being a communication professional she/he also needs to be a good public speaker to make their interpreting fluent, expressive and communicative. Public speaking is one of the key components in interpreter's training.

The interpreter's linguistic competence includes perfect mastery of the norm of the target language, thus emphasis is put on the 'culture' of Russian/Ukrainian speech, which means observing the norm. As language is constantly changing and usage varies over time and distance, an interpreter can never relax his/her linguistic vigilance. A would-be interpreter should work constantly at enriching his/her lexical, terminological and stylistic resources and acquiring etymological knowledge of the source and target languages. It is advisable to extract new unfamiliar lexis, terminology and phraseology from fiction, scientific and technical, socio-political and other sources. Students should be encouraged to make every effort to keep abreast of linguistic, cultural and social development, through the media and the Internet. The use of telecommunications and multimedia technologies provide students with more autonomous as well as more learner-centered opportunities for language learning and interpreting practice. An interpreter should be able to demonstrate the ability to cope with norms of style and register.

Interpreting teaching can foresee the perfection of foreign language knowledge only as an incidental objective, though such perfection is inevitable. And if we mean enrichment of the vocabulary, in any case it is relevant for a would-be interpreter to include new lexical units in his/her active vocabulary.

Effective interpreting requires effective listening skills. Individual work in the language laboratory with audio and video materials, acquaintance with mass media materials, watching TV programmes, listening to BBC World service, Voice of America, Euronews should take place on a daily basis for the students to be in the know of current events and to practise listening and interpreting skills.

Students should also record themselves, focusing intensively on grammar, syntax, intonation, style and register, and delivery. Then they should listen to the recording, taking notes of the pluses and minuses of their interpretation. After having done at least several recordings, they can compare the difference between the first and final recordings and evaluate the performance and further eliminate errors.

Proceeding from the understanding of interpreting as mediated communication, information transfer from the addresser to the recipient where the speaker's message is intended for the interpreter to decipher (decode) and convey by the target language means, we can assume that achieving the purpose of bilingual/crosscultural communication depends to a great extent on the interpreter's competence.

Researchers use different approaches regarding the notion of translator/interpreter's competence. Some of them differentiate between 'competence' and 'competency'. Others view

these terms as synonymous. The terms “translation/interpretation competence”, ‘macrocompetence’ and sub-competencies’ are also used.

According to R. Minyar-Beloruhev interpreter should be well aware of linguistic and communicative competence and also should possess translation/interpreting skills. Interpreter is a good orator and in addition he/she should express his/her thoughts in written form properly.

L. Latyshev states that interpreter’s competence can be divided into the conceptual and technological components.

Conceptual constituent is the interpreter’s knowledge of interpreting “status”, specific character, general purpose, textual and genre modifications, aims, peculiar difficulties and means to overcome them.

Technological component of the interpreter’s competence comprises the interpreter’s know-how, which assists the language intermediary surmount typical technical interpreting obstacles and handle multiple issues, the interpreter faces on his way to perfection.

A. Shveitser asserts that the interpreter’s competence is a complex and multidimensional category that consists of such special features, which make interlanguage and intercultural communication possible. These specific features include interpreter’s knowledge of two languages (SL and TL), source language interpretation skills, interpreting technologies awareness, knowledge of target language norms, norms of interpreting, interpreter’s aspiration to acquire and fully utilize background knowledge.

A. Shveitser admits that the problem of interpreter’s competence if viewed in terms of psycholinguistics is still on the early stages of its investigation. It is worth taking into account that interpreting should be the genuine subject of analysis, which can reveal its psycholinguistic mechanism, its psychological motivation and certainty denoted by the psychological factors.

The notion of ‘interpreter’s competence’ consists of several components, namely ‘basic’ (knowledge, abilities and skills which are necessary for a translator in any kind of translation irrespective of the translated text), specific (types of translation: consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting etc.) and special components (stipulated by the system of knowledge about the world – socio-cultural component and background knowledge). The formation of these components takes place on the basis of the communicative competence acquisition.

It is also generally agreed that any person dealing with a foreign language must possess philological competence. This competence can be considered completely formed if it comprises several constituents recognized by most linguists. Among these constituent parts we can find linguistic, aesthetic, social, informational, strategic, general humanitarian, personal (individual) components and the component of self-education.

An interpreter as a professional working with a foreign language must also possess philological competence alongside with interpreter’s competence, though some of their constituents may coincide.

For the interpreter to render long speeches (in consecutive interpreting) with great accuracy he/she should possess good memory. Special assignments and exercises should be designed to develop perceptive and mnemonical abilities both for class activities and extracurricular individual work. It would be thus useful to learn and memorize poems, proverbs and sayings, phraseological units for self-training. Quotations of famous people can also be recommended.

Proverbs and sayings, phraseological units which provide originality and expressiveness to the speech may often cause a predicament for interpreters. Proverbs, being special metaphorical

expressions, can not be interpreted literally. They often have no figurative equivalents in the target language. That is why a would-be interpreter is well advised to learn the most frequently used proverbs, sayings and phraseological units in the source and the target languages, preparing a list of them and revising them regularly. Wisdom and spirit of nation are vividly displayed in proverbs and sayings, and the knowledge of proverbs and sayings of a particular nation leads not only to better knowledge of a language, but also to a better understanding of the way of thinking and national character reflected in these proverbs and sayings. Learning proverbs and sayings assists in removing culturological barrier.

The interpreter's competence includes the knowledge of cultural elements of languages. As it is known sociocultural aspect is one of the constituent parts of communicative competence and it foresees the understanding of native and foreign cultures. According to A. Shveitser "translation is not only the interaction of languages, but also the interaction of cultures". The process of translation "crosses" not only the borders of languages but the boundaries of cultures as well." Being a well-educated person an interpreter should have perfect knowledge of history, culture, religion of native and foreign countries. Interpreters should be aware of cultural differences and be able to bridge the cultural gaps separating the interlocutors.

National specific lexicon, culture-specific vocabulary, realia also present a great challenge for interpreting as they are unique, complex and ambiguous category.

L. Nelyubin thinks that background knowledge, knowledge of realia, knowledge of meta-language are interconnected and mutually dependent to some extent as they enrich the interpreter's long-term memory and bring his/her speech-and-language activity closer to the native speaker's skills, the skills of a bilingual person, though 'artificial' bilingual person, but an erudite who is linguistically competent. It helps the interpreter to feel comfortable in any communicative situation [6].

We fully agree with A. Chuzhakin and L. Chernovatyi who maintain that an interpreter must know Greek mythology, Roman history, works of famous writers, the Bible, proverbs and sayings, quotations of political figures, statesmen and other famous people, namely the things which are most frequently cited and to which allusions are made. Therefore, individual work is necessary for the students to widen their outlook, enrich erudition, background knowledge, as because of the lack of academic hours it is impossible to cover everything.

The interpreting experts recognize the need of knowledge of proper technical terminology in relevant fields. For the translated message to be understood properly by the target language audience, it is crucial that the author (speaker), interpreter and interpretation users (audience) have similar knowledge basis (thesaurus). A would-be interpreter should strive to have perfect knowledge of the subject area, to know the metalanguage of the hypothetical area of his/her future professional activity. Subject knowledge is needed for accurate interpreting. Compiling thesauruses and consulting experts, if possible, preparing bilingual and multilingual glossaries can be rather helpful. We would also advise making a separate list of abbreviations, acronyms, the names of leading companies, international organizations, etc.

It is generally agreed that different interpreting situations require the use of speed reading technique and interpreter's notations. Speed reading is an indispensable component of sight translation and it takes place alongside with the utterance of the text in the target language. Students should practise fast reading of the source texts on their own varying the pace of reading.

As it is known the basic skills of an interpreter are the ability to compress the source text (text compression) and develop the target text from the core structure (text development). Text compression and text development are the basic translation devices which are used both in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. Text development is reflected in note-taking process.

As to the interpreter's notes, they are widely used in consecutive interpreting. An important condition of the faithful, qualitative consecutive interpreting is the interpreter's ability to memorize and remember a considerable amount of information. And due to the fact that the capacity of memory is limited, the formation of skills to make interpreter's notations is a must in teaching interpreting. Students should be taught note-taking to provide the basis for the acquisition of interpreting skills and for avoiding literal translation.

Today different opinions exist regarding the place and role of interpreter's notations in the formation of professional competence of would-be interpreters. The system of note-taking first introduced by the Swiss linguist Rozanne was further developed by others, including R.Minyar-Beloruchev.

There are certain recommendations as to the best way to take notes, in particular given by A.Chuzhakin. The coursebook by O.Rebriy is a welcome contribution to the development of note-taking skills as it contains not only the theoretical basics of note-taking, but also useful exercises and assignments. Due to the shortage of academic hours students are supposed to learn all the specific features of note-taking on their own, acquire the required knowledge and skills of interpreter's note-taking and develop their own note-taking technique.

To conclude it should be noted that self-training of a would-be interpreter is an important component of interpreter's training. Its content, format and parameters, and also the way to control, should be determined, and the results evaluated, by teachers. O.Cherednichenko maintains that when there is a rational correlation between practical classes and extracurricular/independent learning, modern multi-media language laboratory is available and individual abilities are taken into account when streaming students into groups it is within the realm of possibility for students to acquire various components of interpreter's professional competence.

The acquisition of interpreter's competence is a gradual time-consuming and sometimes tedious process and it can yield positive results on condition of constant interpreting practice, self-training and self-perfection of a would-be interpreter.

Self-training will be fruitful if appropriate learning materials are designed and created, students are motivated and responsible for their progress, goals are set and records are kept. Encouraging learner independence should be seen as a valuable educational objective.

As Lynn Visson puts it "there is a desperate need for a new generation of well-educated, competent and enthusiastic interpreters". And we believe that in filling this need the significance of self-training cannot be overemphasized.

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