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**Marta Kondratyuk,**  
 (PhD in Comparative Literature), associate professor,  
 Department of Translation Studies,  
 Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University,  
 21, 600-richchia Str., Vinnitsia, Ukraine

## INTRODUCING CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF PROJECT-BASED LEARNING INTO UKRANIAN TRANSLATION PROGRAMS

*The article deals with the urgency of introduction of project-based learning in the Translation Programs of Ukrainian universities and discusses some directions for the introduction of project-based learning (PBL) in terms of translator's competences as defined by the European Competence Framework for translation programs. The article offers a review of John Dewey's theory of Project-Based Learning (PBL) and suggests some ways of how to incorporate its elements into the university Translation programs and how the European requirements for MA in Translation can help to determine the directions for the development of the elements of the PBL in Translation Programs. In the framework of the theoretical study, we carried out the review of various sources dealing with the PBL and reviewed the EMT requirements in Ukrainian context.*

**Keywords:** project-based learning (PBL), John Dewey, translator's competences, student-centered teaching methods, soft skills, European Master's in Translation Framework.

### Introduction

The Italian expression “traduttore, traditore” (“translator, traitor”) is known to most translators and is often used in different contexts to point at the difficulties in translation. Italians invented the expression because they felt that many French-language translations of Dante failed to convey the beauty of the original. Despite the fact that the problems of translation adequacy are more interesting to discuss from a theoretical point of view, the article is devoted to the gaps in the translation programs offered by Ukrainian universities and colleges.

Should translation and interpreting be taught within the curricula of language studies or independently? What are translator's competences made up of? Which of its elements can be developed through practice and which require coaching? Employers have definite expectations of new graduates with degree in Translation, and they claim that university training leaves much to be desired. In fact, they complain about a huge discrepancy between students' actual knowledge and the knowledge they should possess. They say that recent graduates have narrow exposure to industry and work ethics, lack of practical training and difficulty in working independently. The universities fall short of meeting job market expectations regarding required skills and preparation for the trained work force.

### Aim and Tasks

The article is stipulated by the urgency of introduction of a project-based learning in the Translation Programs of Ukrainian universities and is aimed at highlighting directions for the introduction of PBL in the programs to reflect the European standard for five translator's competences. The goal of the article is to explore foundations of the project-based learning and discuss the pedagogical or psychological motives supporting it. Objectives include the review

the PBL fundamentals and discussion of how the European requirements for MA in translation can help shaping the Ukrainian programs a determining the directions for the development of the elements of the PBL in Translation Programs. Furthermore, there is another task – to identify the advantages of PBL in general and in Translator's training programs in particular.

Structurally, the article is divided into a theoretical and practical part. In the framework of the theoretical study, we carried out the review of various sources dealing with the PBL and reviewed the EMT requirements in Ukrainian context.

A brief theoretical overview of literature on the project-based approach is followed by the description of some ways to introduce particular elements into the translation programs. The description of the current state of the field is combined with some recommendations and ways to reshape and renovate the outdated approach by introducing elements of PBL. Some of the recommendations are theoretical, and other ones – practical and experience-based.

### Discussion

Even though many Ukrainian universities offer programs in Translation, most industry experts lament over a lack of highly qualified translators and interpreters. The main obstacles encountered when recruiting graduates are their non-proficiency in dealing with specialized translation, terminology management and information technology, narrow exposure to culture, lack of practical training but as well their ability to organize themselves autonomously or work independently or in teams, solve problems or establish and effectively manage social relations at work. Anyway, comparing job profiles with academic programs will make the educational gap clear.



Commission and join the European Masters in Translation (EMT) Network. Currently there are more than 30 universities in the European Master's in Translation network. The next call for applications to join will be 2024, so there is plenty of time to prepare and apply so at least a few Ukrainian universities appear on the list of members.

Ukrainian universities should adjust their programs in Translation to the European standards, i.e. Master's in Translation (EMT) Competence Framework (2017) that defines five main areas and develop the training programs within the European framework and current demands of the language service market.

Cristina Plaza-Lara discussed and reviewed the benefits and shortcomings of different models of translator competences emphasizing the fact that only two “try to establish a relationship between objectives and competences” (Plaza-Lara, 2016). She regrettably points out that none of the current models is 100% satisfactory and insists on using a comprehensive approach.

All in all, the EMT defines five areas with over 35 competencies: C1 level in language and culture, 14 in translation, 6 in technology, 6 in personal and interpersonal skills, and 9 in service provision. The recommendation states that apart from language and translation skills, students need preparation for dealing with specialized translation, terminology management and information technology. They should know how to organize themselves autonomously or work together in teams, solve problems or establish and effectively manage interpersonal relations on the job.

#### **Language and Culture Competence**

For translators, the language and culture competence is the driving force behind all the other competences. Suppose, all students in Bachelors' Translation Programs scored high in external independent evaluation (ZNO) in foreign language and have higher than B2 level according to the CEFR. It is an expected admission level but what is the expected graduation level?

The language and culture competence encompasses all the general or language-specific linguistic, sociolinguistic, cultural and transcultural knowledge and skills as a foundation for advanced translation competence. At the end of Bachelor's programs, graduates should attain a high level of language competence in at least two working foreign languages (CEFR level C1 and above or an equivalent level in comparable reference systems). Defined as the source and target languages that the translator uses in a professional capacity. Generally, the main target language is referred to as language A, the main source language as language B and other source languages as C, D, and so on. The EMT recommends that the translator's main target language should be mastered at CEFR level C2 or with native or bilingual proficiency. To spend some time abroad in the country of the target language for language immersion is desirable but not required taking into account the accessibility of original content materials via the Internet.

The language competence can be tested by internationally recognized tests like TOEFL or IELTS (rather a costly option), an undergraduate qualification, or by certification, examination, personal portfolio, interview, or any other means.

The PBL components can be introduced in the form of participation in many language competitions and contests offered by international organizations including but not limited to the United Nation Organization, Goethe Institut, British Council, DAAD, the Institut Français d'Ukraine. There are summer courses and student exchange programs offered and supported by Erasmus, Fulbright, IREX and other funds and organization: calls are often advertised at <https://gurt.org.ua/>. Even if the applicants are not selected, they gain valuable experience during application for the programs. Work and Travel Program, Au-Pair and similar opportunities also give students a chance to spend some time in the language environment and to experience culture first hand. There are plenty of MOOC like Coursera, Adx, and many other resources that allow improving language skills without spending time and money in a foreign country.

#### **Translation Competence**

Language competence does not automatically mean translation competence. Translation is more than a transfer phases between two languages, but also all the strategic, methodological and thematic competences that come into play before, during and following the translation (i.e. document analysis, quality control procedures). Hanna Risku argues for new situated and comprehensive methods for translator education: “Translations are, by definition, written for new situations, purposes, recipients and cultures. When you learn to translate, you have to learn how to gain an overview of a new situation with all its different cultural factors and, perhaps, even more importantly, you have to learn how to position yourself in this communication system and define your own situational role, goal and tasks” (Risku, 2002).

In a real world, translators will rarely or never tasked with the translation of newspapers and magazine. Rather, they will be asked what is their specialization so it is recommended that in the last year of study, students should choose their specialization in one of different types of domain-specific, media-specific and situation-specific types of translation, including special areas such as public service translation and interpreting, localization or audiovisual translation. For example, applicants for a position of a UN interpreter should know UN-specific terminology and style that will help to get through the language competitive examination and competency-based interview.

To advance translation competence of students, Hanna Risku urges educators to develop the curricula around specialized areas and include elements of research, situation analysis, and text design. She writes: “...it is paramount that teachers of translation and interpreting integrate authentic or near-authentic translation tasks into their teaching (Risku, 2002).”

There are 14 translation competencies listed in the EMT guidelines including analysis of a source document, identification of textual and cognitive difficulties, choice of translation strategies and resources. The list also includes summary, rephrase, restructure, adapt and shorten rapidly and accurately in at least one target language, using written and/or spoken communication. The full description of translation competencies can be found in EMT and one can see that it is closely related with the following competency Technology. Future translators should choose their specialization and focus on learning the terminology in that particular sphere (finance, marketing, oil industry, construction, legal translation).

Most CAT tools are rather expensive but companies like SDL and MemoQ are willing to partner with the universities and provide tutorials free of charge in exchange for acknowledgement. Companies like SDL Trados Studio (<https://www.sdltrados.com/education/>), Memsource, MemoQ offer cooperation and certification programs to the universities free of charge or in exchange for acknowledgement on the universities' websites. University instructors in charge of Translation Programs can contact CAT providers and ask about educational opportunities for instructors and students (read more <https://www.sdltrados.com/education/>). Sometimes, translation companies (e.g. <http://ap-school.ru/>) and experienced translators offer online and offline intensive courses in some aspects of translation, e.g. technical translation or post-editing.

#### **Technology, Software and Internet Resources**

New expert profiles are needed for translators under the influence of the technologies. Perhaps, language service industry can be included in the top ten list of industries transformed by modern technology. As Stephen Doherty insightfully writes in his recent article “The Impact of Translation Technologies on the Process and Product of Translation”: “technologies have increased productivity and quality in translation, supported international communication, and demonstrated the growing need for innovative technological solutions to the age-old problem of the language barrier. However, these tools also represent significant challenges and uncertainties for the translation profession and the industry” (Doherty, 2016). Many researchers investigate and discuss the positive and negative effects of technology on translation. For example, Anthony Pym sees the cause of frustration in the fact that “Technology ... disrupts linearity by imposing what Saussure called the paradigmatic axis of language – the metaphorically vertical dimension from which items are selected” (Pym, 2011). Despite the heated debate over the value of machine translation and its applications, it has already become an integral part of the industry thus should become a part of the training.

Students should know how to use relevant applications, including a full range of office software, and adapt rapidly to new tools and IT resources. Besides CAT tools, translators should be able to use the search engines, file

sharing, corpus-based tools, text analysis tools, and know basic HTML, CSS, SMM and SEO.

A successful translator needs to know how to handle various computer applications going way beyond such trivial issues as general use of computers, handling e-mail applications or communicating via the Internet messengers. The future translator should have knowledge of word-processing software, computer-aided translation (CAT) tools, optical character recognition (OCR) and other relevant software. Unfortunately, students are better with smartphones with their touch screens than with MS Word software. Students should know about translation quality assurance tools such as Verifika (<https://e-verifika.com/>), XBench (<https://www.xbench.net/>) and Grammarly (<https://www.grammarly.com/>).

Students should know how to use compressing and decompressing software (WinZip, WinRAR) as well as PDF and multimedia files readers (images, audio), different word processors, audio and video recording software, OCR (Abby Fine Reader). Even though some might argue with the statement, advanced typing skills should also be required for the students majoring in Translation.

It is desirable to at least understand the basics of coding and website design, know basics of SEO, keywords, AdWords and others. Fortunately, one does not need specific programming skills to start a website (WordPress website can be created in 5 minutes). Nowadays everyone can create a personal website and start selling translation services online.

There are so many specialized websites devoted to translation i.e. ProZ ([www.proz.com](http://www.proz.com)), Translators Café, oDesk, UpWork, and other freelancer websites. Many successful translators have blogs with posts on translators' everyday work with its problems and solutions.

#### **Soft Skills (personal and interpersonal skills)**

This competence area includes all the generic skills, often referred to as “soft skills,” that enhance graduates' adaptability and employability. Soft skills include 21st century 4K skills: communication, creativity, critical thinking and coordination with others. Soft skills are often first evaluated during the job interview. Graduates should know how to manage time, stress and workload, meet deadlines, follow instructions and specifications. They should know how to work in teams, how to self-evaluate, update and develop competences and skills. With this aspect in mind, the elements of PBL can be incorporated in the form of internships, team projects, workshops and volunteering. Participation in students' and professional conferences, collaborative projects, webinars can help students to network and develop their soft skills. Besides, participation in the conferences professionals (e.g. <https://utic.eu/en>) cannot only help to develop this particular competence but also establish valuable contacts within the industry.

#### **Service Provision**

Last but not least, translators' competencies include service provision skills. This competence covers all the skills relating to the implementation of language services in

