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TEXTUAL COMPETENCE IN L2 TRANSLATION: THE PROBLEM OF DEFINING

У статті розглядається проблема визначення структури текстотвірної компетентності в перекладі на іноземну мову як складової фахової компетентності перекладача. Запропонована трикомпонентна структура є результатом теоретичного аналізу найбільш поширених моделей фахової компетентності перекладача та робочих навчальних програм з практики перекладу для магістрів кількох вузів України. Розроблена модель пройшла апробацію під час експериментального навчання магістрів-майбутніх перекладачів Інституту філології КНУ імені Тараса Шевченка.

Ключові слова: *текстотвірна компетентність у перекладі на іноземну мову, фахова компетентність перекладача, модель компетентності.*

Introduction

The search for techniques to optimize the process of training translators requires the definition of a quality profile framework that specifies a set of competences necessary to build in

the process of teaching. The training objectives, expressed in terms of competences to be acquired, are currently viewed as priorities in most translation training settings including Ukraine. In the context of building competence in translation

into a foreign language (L2 translation), we prioritize *textual competence* (TC). The students, trained for acquisition of TC in L2 translation are first-year masters majoring in Translation Studies who have a C1 mastery of English and a developed L1 translation competence.

The training methodology applies a textual approach to teaching translation that stems from viewing translation as a process of interlanguage and intercultural communication between the texts involved in the process of translation. It is worth noting that even though several researches have given insight into the construct of L2 translation competence, the structure of the TC has not been specified yet. Thus, the **objective** of this article is to reconsider the definition of the TC in L2 translation and specify its componential structure with a view to testing it empirically.

Theoretical background

Denounced by the theory of translation, developing L2 translation competence has been a controversial issue in the translation pedagogy. The attitudes towards this activity have changed within the last 15 years, since it became evident that translation into L2 was a reality in many settings of the world. A significantly conceptual contribution into this area of pedagogy belongs to S. Campbell (Campbell 4) who suggested that L2 translation was a normal and no less widespread activity than L1 translation, especially in the cultures that use languages of limited diffusion, Ukrainian among them. Thus, the theoretical framework of L2 translation pedagogy as well as this study relies on his fundamental works and the research findings provided by other experts in this area (Kelly; Kiraly; Mackenzie; Pavlović; Stewart).

As we have mentioned before, the priority in our training course is given to the TC, since “the daily practice of translation is *text-centered*. The translator takes knowledge from texts and puts knowledge into texts. That is why no concept should be more natural for the student of translation than the concept of textuality” (Neubertp. viii). The significance of textual skills was also emphasized by B. Hatim, I. Mason, M. Baker and I. G. Izquierdo who claim that texts with their communicative situations make up the process of translation. The latter is viewed as a process of interlanguage and *intertextual* activity that combines two knowledge systems and aims at

creating a target text (TT) of a certain linguo-cultural format (Neubert16).

Empirical researches of the L2 translation-process, conducted by A. Lonsdale, prove that the quality of the translated product depends on the level of L2 communicative competence and textual competence as its component (Lonsdale 65). S. Campbell makes a similar conclusion (Campbell). V. Neunzig, in his turn, stresses that the quality of translation depends on the text type (Neunzig 192). This idea was backed by the researches of the GENT project (Text Genres for Translation) who suggested that the level of genre competence affected the quality of translation as well as the level of communicative-textual competence (Kelly’s model of Translator competence).

Sharing the idea that the skills to be developed in L2 translation are linked to text types and genres on demand for translation, we conducted a survey among 8 leading translation agencies of the city of Kyiv to find out what text types are on demand for L2 translation. As the survey results show, the demand mostly extends to the varieties of institutional discourse, including administrative, legal, academic and technical texts (Kavytska 218-221). Consequently, a genre approach to teaching translation is deemed appropriate, which means that the texts as teaching material are selected based on a genre instead of a thematic principle (Montalt Ressurrecció).

Apart from a bigger genre variety, the necessity of building a TC in translation is also linked to a higher level of textual complexity of the texts meant for translation. Moreover, unlike interpreting, translation requires a higher level of equivalence and adequacy, which involves contrastive knowledge of typological discourse characteristics in L1 and L2 as well as the abilities to transfer them in translation.

The indicated genre variety of texts on demand as well as textual complexity of the texts meant for translation, requires, according to Kelly (Kelly 2002), that a translator – apart from a language, instrumental, extra-linguistic, strategic competence etc. – should possess “the capacity: to understand and analyze a range of different types of (both oral and written) texts from different fields produced in languages A, B and, later, C; to develop the capacity to produce different types of texts from different fields in languages A and B; and to ensure that the characteristics

and conventions of the major text genres and sub-genres used in professional translation and interpretation are made known in the distinct cultures in which languages A, B and C are spoken” (as cited in Montalt Ressurrecció).

In other words, a translator should have a developed textual competence (communicative and textual sub-competence, according to Kelly) which should be prioritized in L2 translation training. Having considered the necessity to develop a TC in L2 translation, we further intend to specify the componential structure of the TC in L2 translation.

Research framework: In search of a TC in L2 translation model

Given that the objective of our research is to develop a construct for a TC in L2 translation, the *framework* for the study is laid down by the following steps: 1) selecting the available models of Translator competence and educational translator training standards for the analysis; 2) analyzing the selected objects; 3) specifying the model of a TC in L2 translation by identifying its components.

Conceptually, the investigation relies on PACTE’s (PACTE) approach towards modeling a Translator competence. The modeling procedure is carried out with a pedagogical purpose in the context of L2 translation training.

The *methodology* of the study rests on the following research methods: 1) *Analysis and interpretation* of the selected models of Translator competence and educational translator training standards. Major criteria for model selection were: a research type (empirical/theoretical); a TC component as a separate constituent within the model’s structure; translation direction (into L1/L2). 2) *Interviewing*. Two interviews with the administration staff of 8 translation agencies of the city of Kyiv were held. The objective of the interviews was to find out what text types are on

demand for L2 translation with the clients of the agencies. *The participants* in this study involve: 12 employees of the translation agencies and 7 University translation trainers with an extensive teaching experience ranging from 10 to 25 years.

Findings and discussion: Textual Competence in L2 Translation Specified

Paradoxically, even though a TC is viewed as a constituent of most translator competence (TrC) models, there are a few investigations that purposefully focus on this component as well as on the ways of its acquisition or assessment. Moreover, there does not seem to be a clear and generally accepted componential structure of a TC in translation. As the research analysis shows, some TrC models include a TC as an independent element, whereas in others, it is a constituent of a certain sub-competence (e.g. as part of a bilingual competence in the model of PACTE group or part of a communicative and textual sub-competence in Kelly’s model).

Bearing in mind that we need to define the componential structure as clearly as possible in order to focus on the identified components in training, we have deliberately resorted to the analysis of those TrC models that have a TC as an independent component, with PACTE model being the only exception. We select this model for the analysis for two reasons: first, a TC is a constituent of a bilingual sub-competence in this model; and, second, the PACTE model is now overwhelmingly accepted in translation pedagogy. The idea behind this analysis was to specify knowledge and skills which were explicitly or implicitly referred to as TC elements and combine them into a model construct. As it has been already mentioned, the criteria for selecting models for analysis were: a research type, a TC as a separate constituent of the model and a translation direction. The models analyzed are presented in the table below:

Table 1

Translation competence models analyzed

No	Model/author	Sub-competences
1.	Neubert (2000)	Language, textual , cultural, subject, transfer
2.	Kelly (2002)	Communicative and textual , cultural, thematic, professional instrumental, psycho-physiological, interpersonal and strategic
3.	PACTE (2003)	Bilingual , extra-linguistic, knowledge about translation, instrumental, strategic + psycho-physiological components

Table 1

4.	Komissarov (1997)	Language, communicative, textual, instrumental + personal qualities
5.	Schäffner (2000)	Linguistic, cultural, textual , domain/subject specific, (re)search competence, (re)search
6.	Campbell (1991)	Textual , disposition, proficiency

It is worth mentioning that only 2 of 6 models (Campbell; Kelly) present the construct of L2 translation. Moreover, they emphasize on great significance of a TC for inverse translation. The importance of genre competence, as part of a TC, for enhancing translator competence was proved by Montalt Ressurrecció et al. (Montalt Ressurrecció). PACTE group, in its turn, stresses on the leading role of instrumental competence in L2 translation (PACTE). Despite their significance, these skills are common for both L1 and L2 translations. Our objective, however, was to reveal a specific skill or ability which distinguishes L2 from L1 translation competences.

This L2 skill was specified by us as a result of personal experience in L2 translation and interviews with the translators who are engaged in Ukrainian-English translation on a regular and frequent basis. The skill is *editing the source text* (ST) in case of necessity, a taboo in translation practice until recently. The data provided by the interviewees coincided with our personal observations as a L2 freelance translator: 40% of Ukrainian source texts (scientific, in particular) undergo editing by translators. This is mostly done with the aim of making the texts fit into L2 genre/ style conventions or publisher's requirements.

So, all the views mentioned above were carefully studied and taken into consideration in the process of modeling a TC in L2 translation. Additionally, the syllabi for Master trainees in translation (5 Ukrainian universities) as well as European Master's in Translation (EMT) Strategy, 2009 were scrutinized. Again, the purpose of this analysis was to clearly define the TC components to address them in the process of training as well as align them with the assessment criteria when measuring the level of TC acquisition.

The analysis of translation competence suggested by (EMT) Strategy, 2009 shows that the text creation ability / textual competence is part of intercultural competence which involves: translation service provision competence; lan-

guage competence; intercultural competence involving socio-cultural and textual competences; info-mining competence; thematic competence and technological competence. As for a TC in particular, it is viewed as the combination of the following aptitudes and skills: Knowing how to understand and analyze the macrostructure of a document and its overall coherence (including where it consists of visual and sound elements); Knowing how to grasp the presuppositions, the implicit, allusions, stereotypes and intertextual nature of a document; Knowing how to describe and evaluate one's problems with comprehension and define strategies for resolving those problems; Knowing how to extract and summarize the essential information in a document (ability to summarize); Knowing how to recognize and identify elements, values and references proper to the cultures represented; Knowing how to bring together and compare cultural elements and methods of composition; Knowing how to compose a document in accordance with the conventions of the genre and rhetorical standards; Knowing how to draft, rephrase, restructure, condense, and post-edit rapidly and well (in languages A and B) (EMT 2009).

Noteworthy is the fact that a TC of a translator is functionally different from a TC of a monolingual / bilingual speaker who is involved in the communication act. While most language users possess the ability to create texts in native or foreign language, the ability to translate texts is the result of special training and expertise. Apart from the fact that creating translated text relies on the special – contrastive – textual knowledge simultaneously activated by a translator in the translation process, it is realized through conscious and analytical approach to text comprehension and production. As it was mentioned above, contrastive textual knowledge is the result of special training.

Thus, the conducted theoretical analysis has enabled us to define a TC in L2 translation as a *set of contrastive textual knowledge and abilities*

to create various TT types that fit into a cultural pattern of a SL. Having defined the construct of the competence, we further intend to specify its componential structure. The presented definition implies that basic components of the TC in L2 translation involve knowledge and skills/abilities. However, taking into consideration the fact that the quality of translation depends on the capacity to choose and make use of an appropriate external resource, we view this ability as an additional component of the TC structure. By external resources we understand objects (dictionaries,

internet resources, reference literature) and subjects (field experts) as sources of information.

It is worth noting that an additional component may vary depending on the competence subjected to modeling and the character of translation activity. Conventionally, this component involves behavioral aspects, capacity to choose external resources, psycho-physiological qualities etc. Thus, the TC in L2 translation is a three-dimensional construct that involves knowledge, skills / abilities and the capacity. We further describe the structure of the TC in L2 translation in detail and present it in the table below.

Table 2

The structure of TC in L2 translation

Textual competence in L2 translation		
Components		
1.	Contrastive Textual Knowledge	Declarative – knowledge of discourse and text types in L1 and L2; knowledge of genres and their conventions in L1 and L2; Procedural – knowledge of strategies and techniques appropriate for translation of a certain text type.
2.	Skills and Abilities	To paraphrase (lexically, grammatically, stylistically, pragmatically) in L1 and L2; to summarize in L1 and L2; to define the ST particularities which are relevant for L2 translation; to indicate genre-related functional markers in SL and TL; to predict possible translation problems; to understand and analyze the macrostructure of the ST; to transfer the ST composition and coherence in L2 translation; to analyze the microstructure of the ST; to transfer the microstructure of the ST in L2 translation; to analyze comparable texts and build up a glossary; to use comparable texts for language authenticity (extensive reading in L2 for linguistic authenticity); to assess the quality and edit the TT; to assess the quality and edit the ST (in case of necessity).
3.	Capacity	To choose and make use of proper external resources in the process of translation.

As the table shows, the first component – “*Knowledge*” – is the initial stage of acquisition of any competence within the Translator competency. In our particular case, we start building a TC in L2 translation by enhancing contrastive textual knowledge which includes: a) *Declarative* knowledge, e.i. knowledge of discourse theory, textual genres and their functional characteristics in the two languages involved in translation; knowledge of text creation in source and target languages; knowledge of translation theory; b) *Procedural* knowledge, e.i. knowledge of strategies and techniques appropriate for translation of a certain text type.

The second component – « *Skills / abilities-softtext creation* » – was defined based on the analysis a TC as a separate component of basic TrC models, theoretical and empirical researches in translation pedagogy as well as own observations of the teaching process. Bearing in mind the goal of building a TC in L2 translation, we think it necessary to focus on the following *skills*: textcompression; paraphrasing (lexical, grammatical, stylisticandpragmatic) and textual anticipation (anticipation of stylistically appropriate elements deleted from the text of a certain genre or discourse (Chernovatyi 208).

It is worth emphasizing that differentiating between skills and abilities, we accept their rather relative character, since the capacity to paraphrase stylistically can be viewed both as a skill and an ability. By *skills* in this study we understand the capacity to perform cognitively elementary, non-complex and non-creative operations on the level of a sentence, paragraph or text fragment. By *abilities* we mean the capacity to perform cognitively complex and creative operations on the level of the text. Even though in the Ukrainian context they traditionally differentiate between the above-mentioned terms, we purposefully ignore our possible theoretical misinterpreting the terms. This can be explained by several factors.

First, since the terminology in the translation pedagogy is still undergoing the process of development, a precise definition of skills and abilities is beyond the scope of this article and thus requires a serious theoretical research. Second, theoretical misinterpretation of the terms can hardly affect the process of a TC acquisition. The implication here is that acquiring a certain capacity (e.g. to paraphrase) does not depend on the theoretical precision of the terminology. Third, the national translation pedagogy lacks necessary resources to suggest a theoretically well-grounded terminology. As a result, our analysis of the researches available in translation pedagogy has witnessed automatic adoption of the FL teaching terminology, teaching techniques and assessment procedures by the translation educationalists.

It is worth mentioning that being not numerous, the skills are a minor constituent of the second TC component, whereas the abilities make up a major part of it. Thus, the *abilities* involve: defining the ST particularities which are relevant for L2 translation; indicating genre-related functional markers in SL and TL; predicting possible translation problems; understanding and analyzing the macrostructure of the ST; transferring the ST composition and coherence in L2 translation; analyzing the microstructure of the ST; transferring the microstructure of the ST in L2 translation; analyzing comparable texts and building up a glossary; using comparable texts as the samples of authentic language (extensive reading in L2 for linguistic authenticity); assessing the quality and editing the TT; assess the quality and

editing the ST (in case of necessity) (Chernovatyi 209).

A special ability which we would like to emphasize on is the ability of extensive and critical reading of the comparable texts. Sharing the definition offered by W. Teubert we view *comparable* texts as authentic texts in L1 and L2 which are similar in type, discourse, functional style, genre etc. but are not translated samples. The latter ones are referred to as *parallel* texts (Teubert).

The third component – «*Capacity*» – involves the capacity to choose and make use of proper external resources in the process of translation. It should be emphasized that usage of a monolingual dictionary and comparable texts is prioritized in the training process. The advantages of these resources were proved by the researches within the cognitive theory of translation.

Since lexical units of 2 languages out of context are practically never equivalents, the researchers have proved empirically that a preferential usage of a bilingual dictionary tends to lead to unsuccessful translation (Stein404). Our own teaching experience shows that most students exercise difficulties choosing a correct equivalent among those offered by a Ukrainian-English dictionary.

The Capacity component of the TC in L2 translation involves a significant psychological constituent, since it represents a cognitive and behavioral strategy of a student in the process of solving a translation task – the choice of a proper and effective external resource. It is this strategy that can lead to a student's failure to perform the translation task. To illustrate the thought, we turn to our own observations of students' behavior when dealing with translation tasks.

The author of this article was fixating behavioral strategies of the first-year masters majoring in Translation during the module tests. One of the translation briefs of the test was: "You have received a document for a rush translation from Ukrainian into English. Translate the document by suggesting the most effective and least time-consuming translation strategy". Since the main task was to solve the translation problem, the students were allowed to use any external resource. According to our observations, 6 students of 11 resorted to a computer assisted translation with further editing; 4 students relied

on dictionaries in the process of translation and only 1 student turned to a comparable text but did not make use of it, to our surprise.

The reason for this behavior, as the interview with students has revealed, was ethical. Further discussions with the students showed that most of them viewed turning to a comparable text during the module test as cheating. Moreover, private discussions with teachers confirmed their ban to use external resources in the tests. Additionally, the survey conducted among translation teachers of five Ukrainian Universities has proved this tendency: only 4 respondents of 35 admit that they allow involving external resources to optimize the process of translation during the test.

The banning practice does not seem productive in teaching translation for two reasons. First, a lexical equivalent borrowed from the dictionary or any other resource will in no way contribute to the success of solving a translation problem if a student's translation skills and abilities are underdeveloped. Second, a taboo of using resources does not bring an educational translation activity closer to a professional activity, since a professional translator is not restricted in using resources.

Having specified the structure of the TC in L2 translation, we intend to make use of its components in the process of training the first-year masters majoring in Translation Studies. We assume that designing special exercises that address every component of the developed model will contribute to the enhancement of TC in L2 translation acquired by the trainees.

Conclusion

The study, presented in this article, resolves the research question initially set:

Relying on a thorough examination of the Translator Competence models and educational translation training syllabi, we define the TC as a system of underlying knowledge about text and text creation norms in 2 languages as well as skills and abilities to create various types of target texts that culturally fit into the target language norms. The componential structure of a TC in L2 translation has been specified. The TC model is viewed as a three-dimensional construct that involves contrastive textual knowledge, skills and abilities of text creation

and the capacity to choose and make use of proper external resources in the process of translation

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TEXTUAL COMPETENCE IN L2 TRANSLATION: THE PROBLEM OF DEFINING

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Abstract

Background: Developing competence in translation into a foreign language (L2) has been a controversial issue in the translation pedagogy until recently. Even though several researchers have given insight into the construct of L2 translation competence, there are no investigations that purposefully focus on the structure of textual competence (TC) in L2 translation. Thus, the research idea behind this study lies in the necessity to specify the componential structure of TC in L2 translation that stems from the text-centered nature of translation and a practical imperative to prioritize it in translation training.

Purpose: The objective of the article is to reconsider the definition of Textual competence in L2 translation and specify its componential structure with a view to testing it empirically. The article also aims at revealing a specific skill or ability which distinguishes TC in L2 from TC in L1 translation.

Discussion: Conceptually, the investigation relies on PACTE's approach towards modeling a Translator competence. The modeling procedure is carried out with a pedagogical purpose in the context of L2 translation training. The research framework of the study utilizes the following steps: 1) selecting the available models of Translator competence and educational translator training standards for the analysis; 2) analyzing the selected objects; 3) specifying the model of TC in L2 translation by identifying its components.

In the process of modeling TC, a specific L2 translation skill – *editing the source text* (ST) in case of necessity – was revealed. The skill which distinguishes TC in L2 from TC in L1 translation was identified based on the author's personal experience in L2 translation and interviews with the translators who are engaged in Ukrainian-English translation on a regular basis.

Results: The study presented in the article has enabled defining TC as a system of underlying knowledge about text and text creation norms in two languages as well as skills and abilities to create various types of target texts that culturally fit into the target language norms. The componential structure of TC in L2 translation has been specified. The TC model is viewed as a three-dimensional construct that involves contrastive textual knowledge, skills and abilities of text creation and the capacity to choose and make use of proper external resources in the process of translation

Key words: Textual competence, translation into a foreign language, Translator competency, competence model.

Vitae

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