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# Translators Training for Joint Venture Employment

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**Abstract.** The paper deals with some issues of professional translator and interpreter training for employment in joint Russian and French enterprises. The key factors determining the need to develop the problem is changing political and economic situation, increased dependence on high quality translation and localisation for purposes of international business and higher requirements to personnel providing translation services in the context of globalization and the active introduction of digital technologies into economic, social, managerial processes in the global market in countries with different levels of economic development. At the same time, profound changes in translator and interpreter training have occurred over the past 20 years which is related both to globalization in the area of professional education, accessibility and relevance of various methods and technologies for teaching translation personnel, as well as to growing demands from business employers determined by the increasing complexity of economic activity. Scientific and technological context requires from mediator and translators new expertise and adaptive skills due to global trends of mass production including localisation of joint ventures operations and websites. The authors of the paper describe the principles of translators and interpreters training based on specific texts use, analyse advantages of “mixed” group format classes and compare them to traditional teaching approaches. The suggested methods are based on the Interpretive Theory of Translation developed by the French Translation School (ESIT); specific exercise series have been compiled for development of native and source language skills accompanied by relevant background knowledge and corresponding methodology. The authors have proved the effectiveness of the mixed group classed format conducted with the use of the developed complex of training exercises for the need of business environment helping to overcome linguistic, cultural and economic differences as well as to enhance comprehension within multinational companies through internationalization, standardization and localization.

## 1. Introduction

Over the last few years, the political and economic situation in the world has changed dramatically. Due to the sanctions imposed by the United States and the European Union against Russia, there has been a trend of withdrawal of international business from Russia, however, a number of large enterprises, including French, still preferred to stay in our country. Fortunately, nothing has changed in the partnership between Russian and European universities.

In this context, it is appropriate to recall the profound changes that have occurred recently in the modern educational space, affecting both the whole concept of higher education and certain areas of development of each Russian university. Russia's participation in the Bologna process and, as a result, trends in curriculum internationalization, prospects for international cooperation and student mobility have not spared most federal and regional universities in particular, Volgograd State University and Volgograd Institute of Management, branch of Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration. Increasingly, international students specifically French, German or English-speaking are nowadays present in translation classes together with Russian students, which mark a new stage in the Russian University's awareness of its place in global educational processes and provide new opportunities for effective training of translators for international business, in particular, for joint



Russian-French enterprises. It should be stipulated that mixed groups format of various types of translation classes requires the use of specific exercise and training complexes different from those used in single national groups aimed at enhancing understanding, native and source language skill as well as at building up relevant background knowledge [1].

Speaking about the traditional training of professional translation and interpretation personnel for the production sphere it is necessary to keep in mind the work with specific technical texts increasing cognitive and procedural awareness, moreover, training should involve all types of translation, both written and oral. Precisely the work with technical texts in the classroom for translation and interpretation is fundamental, as it involves mastering technical or business terminology which the translator will certainly face at the multinational company.

## **2. Materials and methods**

The authors suggest particular methodology considering existing academic goals, strategies of international business integration, programs of digitalization of training technologies, intercultural communication and expertise on the basis of the existing Russian state training standards and curriculum. We have developed the didactic training model aimed at enhancing professional translation and intercultural communication skills, selecting appropriate translation strategies and technologies of the mixed group format experience. We argue that the methods applied to various types of texts in a range of potential professional communicative situations leads to the formation of translation competence.

In order to prepare a student for an oral analysis of such texts, it is necessary to develop the following skills: the isolation of meaning, a rapid information analysis, visualization, and an analysis of fragments of the basic ideas. When working with technical texts, all these skills are necessary, which does not contradict the use of exact terms. Any term has its meaning regardless of the context and situation. These are lexemes that retain the meaning on the speech and text levels like that they have on the language level, and thus impose on the interpreter a mandatory search for the equivalents. That is, on the one hand, the translator uses equivalents regardless of the original language, and on the other hand, recodes the term. In the methodological context of the Paris school, "future translator must learn to recognize concepts that are hidden behind the terms and only then look for the right equivalents in the target language" [2]. In preparation for the interpretation of special texts, students first need to study the texts in their own language. It is obvious that they do not use the method of "fishing" technical terms for further search in the dictionary while working with a technical text. Before you start looking up the correspondent term in another language, you need a full understanding of it in the original language. Here, dictionaries and encyclopedias are our best assistants [3]. As for transcoding, it is the easiest and most accessible component of interpretation, when it would seem sufficient to know a couple of terms of the original/the corresponding term of the target language. At the same time, we should not forget about the role of context in determining the value, given that the context can significantly change it. Work with context should be given a lot of time in the classroom.

In addition, consultations with experts play an important role in the work with special texts. In this regard, interesting is the experience of the Leonardo da Vinci Institute (Brussels, Belgium). The students of this university prepare to translate technical texts in collaboration with experts in a particular industry. Moreover, the mechanism of such interaction is very simple: the future interpreter him-/herself addresses to the organization, arranges a meeting. The experts, as a rule, do not refuse to give advice and they do it for free [4]. By the way, the university has long opened a Terminology center of European significance, which is constantly updated with new terms created by students in the process of translation practice. Being impressed by this kind of "capitalist" relationship, the authors of these lines decided to take a similar experiment in the mid-90s in post-Soviet Russia. Everything turned out well, except the fact that only those people whom the teacher knew personally agreed to give the students advice.

The Taking into account the fact that in addition to linguistic and translation training future professionals need to have competence in intercultural communication, conducting joint classes on

consecutive and simultaneous translation with speakers of different languages and cultures is of greatest interest. The fundamental principle on which all training is based is the use of interpretative translation theory.

The founders of the higher school of interpreters (ESIT) at the Sorbonne – Paris III – and the authors of the interpretative theory of translation M. Lederer and D. Seleskovitch insist on the allocation of three levels of transfer based in his research on the practice of translation and translation conferences. M. Lederer talks about the level of language (translation of words out of context), the level of speech (the meaning of words is updated, that is, clarified by a specific context) and, finally, about the level of the text (the text contains additional extra linguistic information, takes into account the background knowledge of the translator and the information that appears when reading the text) [1].

Thus, the authors of the interpretative theory of translation emphasize the dominant role of extra linguistic factors in recreating the meaning of a statement in another language. It is this provision that causes the greatest controversy when discussing the translations made. The explanation in this case can be the use of different sources of information on the background of the problem [5].

Very painful are the topics related to the past military conflicts, in particular, to the First and Second World Wars. Russian students have a rather vague idea of the reasons why the First world war was unleashed, they do not know who were Russia's allies in that war, they know very little about the conditions of the (in many respects humiliating) peace. For many years, the ideology of “victorious socialism” did not allow to remember that war. As a result, in Russia almost no one remembers the date of November 11 – the day of the armistice. On the contrary, for Belgian and French students this day is well known since it is a holiday in their countries.

It is very difficult to translate texts on the World War II. If it is clear with Belgium– it fought on the side of Germany, it is not so clear with France. It was the only one of the four victorious countries occupied by the Wehrmacht and all years of the occupation it was ruled by the pro-fascist regime of Marshal Petain. On the other hand, the organization of the Resistance movement, the role of Charles de Gaulle... To understand the original text, it is necessary to “isolate” its meaning (consisting of linguistic forms and including non-verbal elements of the situation), and in order to translate, it is not enough to restore in another language the “linguistic forms” that are part of the text. To translate a text at the meaning level, you need to restore its meaning, so the translation at the text level does not coincide with the translation either at the language level or at the speech level. In this context, the difference in the semantic translation of the texts devoted to the two wars among the French, Belgians and Russians is quite understandable.

Unfortunately, the theme of war continues to be relevant (a vivid example is the situation in Ukraine). It is quite difficult for French-speaking students to understand the information they receive from the Western media, from conversations with their relatives living in Europe, from Russian sources. In this situation, students are forced to move to another level of translation – the level of speech, preferring not to use background knowledge, even to the detriment of the quality of the translation. In this regard, training of Russian and international students in mixed groups has many advantages compared to classes in traditional groups. First, the French-speaking student is always ready to help and explain to his Russian-speaking “fellow” unknown lexical units, that is, to act as a “live” explanatory dictionary [6]. The mission is not only very noble, but also mutually beneficial: on the one hand, Russian students have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the French language, learning to perceive unfamiliar vocabulary through an understandable context. On the other hand, French students act in an unfamiliar role of linguists-theorists, analyzing well-known, at first glance, but such difficult with a more detailed consideration of the concept.

### 3. Results

It should be noted that this analytical activity is quite difficult for both Russian and international students. The main difficulty is not the content of the texts themselves, but a heavy official style with a huge number of subordinate clauses, with “empty” vocabulary and clichés familiar to native speakers,

but having almost no sense and difficult to translate [6]. As an example, we can cite the materials of any forum, conference on economic/social issues in Russian and French.

At the workplace, the translator will necessarily face the problem of translating realities, so the experience of training in mixed groups is indispensable in preparing to work with this kind of vocabulary, as well as with similar at first glance concepts. For example, the concept of “agglomeration” (*agglomération*, f) was widely discussed at the consecutive translation class (topic – international and regional forums). First we had to go to the definitions. The business dictionary of the Russian language defines it as “a concentrated location of settlements, which are interconnected not only on a territorial basis, but also by various economic, social and cultural ties.” [7].

The French dictionary defines agglomeration as “a collection of settlements that make up a village, town or city, regardless of administrative boundaries. Agglomeration consists of the main city and the urbanized area around it, which is its continuation (its suburbs)” (authors' translation). (*Une agglomération est un ensemble d'habitations qui constituent un village, un bourg ou une ville, indépendamment des limites administrative. Les agglomérations sont constituées d'une ville principale et de la zone urbanisée qui l'entoure de manière continue (sa banlieue).*) The discussion revolved around what is considered the agglomeration of Volgograd. At first glance, everything is clear: this is the “millionaire city”, the satellite town of Volzhsky, Krasnoslobodsk (on the opposite bank of the Volga), the worker's settlement of Gorodishche. However, a French student, who knows both the surroundings of Volgograd and Paris suburbs, could not agree to put an equal sign between the agglomerations of Paris and Volgograd.

The thing is that the union between the French capital and suburbs (*banlieue*) is much closer than between large and suburban cities in Russia. So in France, one city from another can only be separated by a crossroads. Nevertheless, after heated debates, a consensus was established, and all parties were satisfied, first of all, with the new knowledge gained not from stories or TV shows, but directly from the residents of this country.

In the course of this dispute was also raised the question of the coincidence of the scope of the concepts “*cité*” and the “*worker's settlement*”. According to the definition, these are full equivalents, but to the surprise of Russian – speaking students in the French version there is a connotative meaning that is absent in Russian. For the French, *Cité* is a small town somewhere near Paris, inhabited by Arabs, where it is not safe to be at any time of the day.

It is worth noting that the presence itself of international students at the University makes it possible to prepare for classes in translation outside the classroom. We are talking about the so-called “work in a group”. This format is quite common in translation universities in Paris and Brussels. The meaning of this work is to independently work out the skills of translation cursive outside the mandatory classroom. The fact that such classes are attended by native speakers of different languages, makes it possible to better control the quality of translation, allows you to clarify the nuances of translation directly from a native speaker.

Of course, there are some difficulties in such mixed groups. For example, French students often complain that they do not have time to write down some interesting translations quickly understanding what they are talking about. Similarly, when translating French-speaking students need more time to understand the content of the text, which inevitably causes a failure of the pace of the lesson.

A certain drawback can be considered psychological stress experienced by Russian students at the beginning of joint training – the mere thought that now will have to say something in French in the presence of French-speaking students, causes severe psychological stress.

However, this disadvantage is easy to turn into an advantage, if you remember that every time the translator has to overcome him-/herself, “stepping over” through fear and uncertainty.

Training in sight interpretation, which is an aspect of interpretation, plays an important role in the training of a professional interpreter. It is important to note that work on this type of translation takes a different place in the training of interpreters in different translation schools.

In the Soviet school and then in the Russian school, the translation is traditionally included in the structure of the course and state exams of the first and second foreign languages.

Exercises for sight interpretation contribute to the development of mental skills: the speed of understanding and extracting ideas from the text; the ability to perceive the text as a whole; synthesis skills, etc.

### *3.1. Written translation*

The course is crucial for formation of both translation and intercultural communication expertise in the international mixed group classes. In the Russian federal state standard it is included to the variable part of the professional cycle. In mixed student groups the instruction is conducted in parallel with the course "Theory of Translation", "Abstracting and Annotation in Interpretation" and "Recording Technique". Students acquire skills in business and technical translation using specific texts of various types and genres for written communication [8]. We should stipulate that the first two years of studies are primarily aimed at source language skills development: translation and interpretation as types of professional mediation are introduced in the first semester of the third year. Being the first practical translation course in the profile "Translation and Translation Studies", written translation in mixed groups is founded on the idea that from the very first steps students become aware that the word-for-word translation does not provide efficient communication but has to be interpretative and imply the creation of the similarly cognitive and pragmatic effects of the source and target texts [9]. Referring to the framework curriculum, the training includes theory of translation and practical skills taught using different specific texts, traditional exercises and digital technologies [10].

### *3.2. Sight interpretation*

Sight interpretation transforms written communication in oral. You must first look through the text in the original language, and then give it orally in the desired language. The format of the text received in the target language depends on its pragmatic orientation and communicative situation. Given that this type of translation is often in demand at the enterprise in order to quickly get acquainted with the incoming documentation or correspondence, the customer often does not need a full translation. In this case, the translator must make an abstract in the target language.

In the classroom for this type of sight interpretation one of the most important skills that a student must gain is the compression of the text. Working out the skills of speech compression is traditionally carried out at several levels: at the level of word-groups, at the level of phrases and at the level of super-phrasal units. In this case, two forms of exercise are used: the sight interpretation and translation at the hearing. In the classroom, it is possible to work with a modified version of this exercise and use only the development of speech compression skills at the level of text or text fragment. And students are previously informed about the conditional situation of communication: the characteristic of the enterprise, the summary of negotiations, the characteristic of participants are given. Sessions of exercises at the preparatory stage are about 7-10 minutes... understanding and extracting ideas from the text; the ability to perceive the text as a whole; synthesis skills, etc.

## **4. Discussions**

Several other exercises are required when developing skills for a full sight interpretation, which is necessary in such communicative situations as, for example, a report or a press release on the results of the economic forum, etc. In this case, training involves several stages.

Select a French text of 200-300 words. As a rule, it is authentic, representing a part of the indictment or press release drawn up at the end of the economic forum. The student has 3-5 minutes to read the text and 5-7 minutes to translate. It is desirable to record the translation on a voice recorder. To achieve greater efficiency in learning to translate from a sheet of paper it is necessary to follow several steps.

The first stage is a preview reading (2-3 minutes). At this stage, the student has the opportunity: to identify the type of text and understand the main content; to highlight key words; to identify possible problems; to fix in writing any possible equivalent for key words; to try to divide the text into

fragments long enough to be able to analyse and understand them and short enough to then translate them orally. These fragments may include a number of sentences or a whole paragraph.

The second stage is to record the transfer to an electronic device. The third stage involves the comparison of the translation with the original text. The next stage – the analysis and search for solutions to the difficulties – involves analyzing the mistakes and trying to understand their cause (lack of knowledge of vocabulary, inability to find an equivalent, loss of the beginning of the phrase, etc.), finding ways to solve them (allowed the use of search engines and dictionaries).

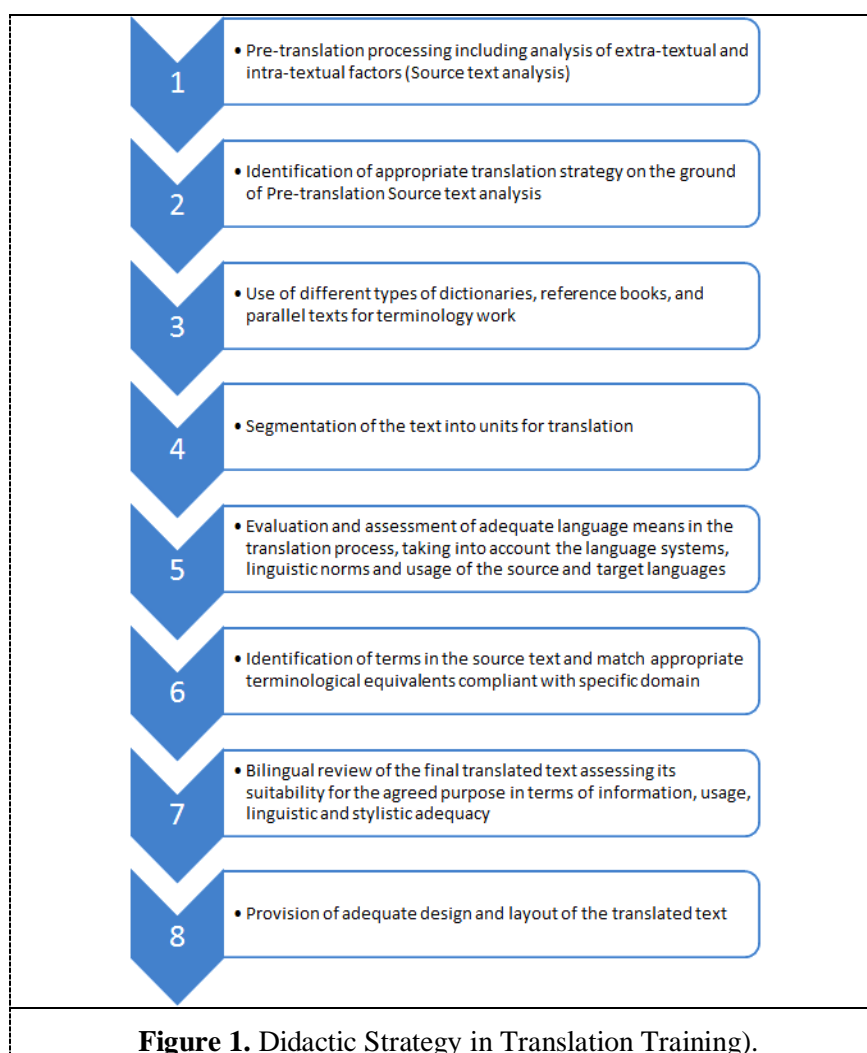
The next step is to discuss possible variants of translation cursive with further fixation of the recorded translation using the recording technique.

And at last, students submit the final translation taking into account all the corrected mistakes, starting from the second stage. In conclusion, the post-translation analysis of the finished translation text is carried out.

The work in simultaneous translation classes is built in a slightly different way. At the preliminary stage of teaching simultaneous translation, the Russian school offers special exercises aimed at overcoming the difficulties associated with this type of translation, for example, listening with counting. For listening there is a text in a foreign language, one student rhythmically counts aloud, then any of the listeners transmits the main content of the heard text in the target language [2]. The French translation school uses similar exercises. The only difference is that students pronounce three-digit numbers in descending order (for example, 234, 233, 232, etc.) therefore, there are probably no differences between French-speaking and Russian-speaking students.

The training of translators and interpreters at each stage is conducted on the basis of specific types of texts used selected from simple to more difficult. All the exercises are of three main types corresponding to the three steps of translation which include pre-translation text analysis, translation itself and checking/correcting of the translation.

Initially, students form research competence learning to retrieve information and to acquire additional background, cultural and factual data to fully understand the source text and to render it fully into the target language [11]. Digital technologies ensure effective information retrieval results. The skill is also accompanied by selection of suitable translation strategy. In the course of preliminary research glossaries of specific terms and cultural background data are compiled by students [12]. They focus on ensuring adequate impact of the target text similar to that of the source text itself due to understanding of cultural background in the mixed groups.



However, the basic principle of the interpretive theory of translation: “one should translate not words but thoughts, not the letter but the meaning” [3]. In this regard, among the preparatory exercises of undoubted interest are exercises “report-comment” and “fairy tale”. The first involves working with simple texts in the language “B” (first foreign language) and “C” (second foreign language). The student is required to tell, describe, what was heard in the language “A” (native language). And the theme (plot) in both languages should be similar. Thus, attention is drawn to different ways of expressing the same events in different languages. As for the second type of exercise, in this case, you can take a fairy tale or a story well-known in both cultures, for example, “Cinderella” or “Red riding hood”. Russian-speaking students closely monitor the action of the French fairy tale, but instinctively use in the translation purely Russian phrases, familiar to them from childhood. In addition, the translation is often carried out “ahead of schedule” – translated what has not been said. This is due to the fact that the story is familiar from childhood – the student does not even translate, but rather retells what he/she has long known. As practice shows, such carelessness is fraught with some danger. Thus, during the simultaneous translation of the fairy tale “Red riding hood” Russian-speaking students did not notice some changes in the plot, such as the fact that Red riding hood was not carrying cakes with jam, as traditionally described in the fairy tale in Russian, but croissants and a bottle of wine. The fact that the wolf did not eat the grandmother, but locked her in a trunk, and that it was not three woodcutters who released her, but one hunter, also did not confuse the students. French trainees, on

the contrary, translated the content very accurately, despite the existence of a large number of versions of this fairy tale.

## 5. Conclusion

Therefore, the training of future translators to work at joint ventures includes several complementary aspects. First of all, it is work with special texts related to various industries. Working with these texts involves possession of all types of translation – written and oral (sight translation, consecutive and simultaneous translation). Special attention should be paid to the problems of intercultural communication in order to better understand each other within an international team. In this regard, classes in “mixed” groups (e.g. French/Russian) seem to be the most effective.

Specific authentic educational material adopted to mixed group needs, simulation of typical translation situations of intercultural communication, ability to determine the type of the source text, its pragmatic purpose and potential receptor are essential in translators training in Russian higher education institutions. The authentic text used for training during translation classes include business correspondence, (letters of inquiry, complaint or offer), official documents (invitations, condolences congratulation, etc.), corporate documentation and papers of individuals (birth certificates, Certificate of Birth, of Secondary Education, etc.), documents of business and multinational corporation (statutes, agreements of federal and local government bodies using digital technologies).

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