



## Integrated Training of Translation and Interpreting Skills

Nataliya Belenkova<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*Recent developments in the theory and practice of training translation and interpreting skills have shown an increased interest of the researchers of this issue. Traditionally these two parts of language and cultural mediation are trained separately. However, as all language activities such as listening, speaking, reading and writing are taught in cohesion, it was assumed that training translation skills in a special setting could be correlated with training interpreting skills in the same setting.*

*The hypothesis of the research was as follows the output of training translation and interpreting skills is higher and the professional teaching and studying is more effective if developing the language and cultural mediator's skills i.e. the skills of a translator and/or interpreter in a specific setting is realized in close relation. This hypothesis was proved in the framework of the teaching experiment held in RUDN University.*

*The paper presents the course of the experiment and its findings. Practical recommendations on training translators and interpreters in a specific setting were put forward.*

*Keywords: Training interpreting and translation skills, language and cultural mediation, integrated learning, specific setting.*

### 1. Introduction

Contemporary lingo-didactics implements teaching language activities in an integrated way, i.e. the correlated perceptive skills of listening and reading as well as the productive skills of speaking and writing are trained coherently. Translating and interpreting as language activities have different areas of oral and written realisation but at the same time the process of coding and decoding the graphical or voiced utterances has much in common.

First, a translator/interpreter receives a message and should realize the meaning of the initial text in one language, then using mental operations, concentration, memory etc. and stirring up the language knowledge and awareness (general and special vocabulary, grammar structure, discourse specific features etc.) the information is decoded into the target language. Afterward, the decoded utterance should be produced into the target language.

Apparently, translation and interpreting as language activities are not identical. The appropriate skills should be evolved separately when focusing on the development of professional training. But on the other hand, at the initial stage of professional education, training translation and interpreting skills can be realized using the common learning materials.

The experimental training was held in Law Institute of the RUDN (Peoples' Friendship University of Russia) University at the master course "Translation and Interpreting for Public Services".

### 2. Teaching Practice

The main purpose of the integrated translation and interpreting course was to practise the use of translation and interpreting skills in the domain of public service in its various manifestation (healthcare, education, culture, law). The subsidiary aim of the course was identified as to memorize the special terminology of the appropriate setting.

The first step in the course planning was to choose the resources for learning. The most essential criteria to select the appropriate materials for learning were as follows the materials should be up-to-date, authentic and valid. That is why we did not concentrate on the content, didactic technologies, approaches and ideas of the course books published earlier [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6] etc. The focus was made on the recourses of the European Parliament [7], European Union [8] working groups of European Union member states' experts [8]. The reports from the sites serve as the core materials for teaching and training.

When the learning resources were determined, the structure of lesson cycle was set up. Each cycle consisted of two in-class lessons, which were aimed at developing the interpreting skills. The translation was to be made as an individual independent work out of class.

---

<sup>1</sup> Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (Russian Federation)



Every lesson started with a warmer when the students revised the topical vocabulary in pairs or mini groups. The activity was exercised in a quick pace with the regular change of the source and the target languages (the so called “two way interpreting”). Then the students working in pairs simulated the consecutive interpreting when one student read aloud the parts of one of the reports mentioned above and another one interpreted them into a target language. The students changed the roles so each learner could practise interpreting skills. Listening to the students the teacher monitored and observed their working activity providing support when necessary.

After this lesson, the students got a home assignment to make a written translation of the same extract, the focus was made on the stylistic, terminological and grammar accuracy of the translation. When the works were ready, the students changed them with each other via information communication technologies for further editing. Finally, the teacher accumulated all the works to check, correct the mistakes if necessary and make the assessment.

During the following in class session, the analysis of the typical mistakes made in the translation was carried out. At this stage, the students have the same information in two languages; they are familiar with the special terms and concepts of the text, the specific features of the sentence structure. Therefore, we suppose that the elementary skills of the simultaneous interpreting can be trained. The exercise should be carried out in a quick pace. In the experimental training the students also worked in pairs; they were not allowed to make any written notes. The role of the teacher was similar to his/her role in the previous lesson when the consecutive interpreting was trained. At the end of this lesson the teacher and the students summarised the output of the cycle.

Afterwards the following educative cycle started using another part of the learning materials.

Evaluating the efficiency of such a cyclical mode of activity 80% of the learners supported this way of training translation and interpreting skills especially at the starting level of professional education. The other 20% of the respondents agreed that such sequences of the lessons were quite useful but suggested that the simulations of the real interpreting practices should be exercised during the classes and not familiar texts should be used.

The output of the students participated in the experimental training was compared with the results of the other students. In a two-month period the students of the experimental group felt more self-confident in interpreting, the pace of interpreting was higher, they needed less time to transform the structures of the utterances to be interpreted. They memorised a great scope of special vocabulary and enhanced their memory capacity. The quality of the translated texts was also much higher. Moreover, the students noted that they spent less time to formulate their thought when making translations.

On the other hand, there might be an opinion that the use of the same learning material for more than once is not informative, educative and in general is demotivating. However, the students' survey showed that it is not true as at each lesson of the cycle, the students face new difficulties so the information for interpreting and translation is viewed from different angles and consequently considered as fresh.

### 3. Conclusion

The development of translating and interpreting skills like training other language skills can and should be implemented in the integrated way. This idea was confirmed during the experimental teaching practice held in Law Institute, RUDN University and was supported by the opinion of the participants of the experiment. The results of the study demonstrated the efficiency of the suggested lingo didactic technology. Professional skills of translators- and interpreters- to be are improved; the active vocabulary and grammar are practised in a greater degree. Observing the success in translation and interpreting, the students are highly motivated and interested in the further work. Moreover, as the role of the teacher is not so evident, the students feel creators and constructors of their learning so their self-conscience is increasing.

As a whole, the integrated way of training translation and interpreting skills was considered as positive and worth being implemented in professional education practice.

### References

- [1] Alekseeva I.S. Pis'mennyy perevod. Nemetskiy yazyk: Uchebnyk. / Written Translation. The German Language: Textbook. St. Petersburg, Soyuz Publishing House, 2006. 368 p.
- [2] Alekseeva I.S. Professional'noye Obucheniye Perevodchika: Uchebnoye Posobiye po Ustnomu i Pis'mennomu Perevodu dlya perevodchikov i prepodavateley, /Professional training of an interpreter: A textbook for oral and written translation for translators and teachers, St. Petersburg: Soyuz Publishing House, 2001: 288 p.



- [3] Chuzhakin A.P. Ustnyy perevod XXI: teoriya + praktika, perevodcheskaya skoropis'. Uchebnik dlya stud. perevodcheskikh fakul'tetov (including English — American and English — Australian glossaries). / Interpretation XXI: theory + practice, translation cursive. Textbook for students of the translation faculties (including English - American and English - Australian glossaries). Moscow, MGI named after. Ye. R. Dashkovoy Publishing House, 2001. 255 p.
- [4] Garcia, R. Instructor's Notebook: How to Apply TPR for Best Results. 4th ed. Los Gatos, Calif.: Sky Oakes Productions, 1996. 80 p.
- [5] Geoffrey S.-B., A Practical Guide for Translators. 5-th ed. Multilingual Matters, 2010. 200 p.
- [6] Nolan J., Interpretation Techniques and Exercises. Multilingual Matters Ltd, Clevedon • Buffalo • Toronto, 2005. 328 p.
- [7] [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS\\_IDA\(2015\)554169](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_IDA(2015)554169)
- [8] [https://ec.europa.eu/health/strategy/policy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/health/strategy/policy_en)
- [9] [https://ec.europa.eu/culture/news/2016/0422-handbook-cultural-awareness-expression\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/culture/news/2016/0422-handbook-cultural-awareness-expression_en)