

Reflections on Teaching Business and Legal Translation to Polish Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

The article addresses the issue of specialist translator training at the Teacher Training College. The author shares her experience of teaching Business and Legal Translation to Polish undergraduate students at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland, and reports the results of a survey she conducted among the course participants. She describes the course goals she set and the teaching methodology she employed, as well as the opinions of the students themselves. Concluding, the author recommends that translator training should be introduced in the TTC curriculum.

Introduction

Encouraged by her students at the Teacher Training College, the author launched an elective non-literary translation course designed for second- and third-year undergraduates. Given the current market trends and increased demand for business and legal translators in the wake of Poland's accession to the EU, introduction of a Business and Legal Translation Course appeared to be a reasonable choice. Not only was it supposed to provide students with real-life practice, but also to enable them to pursue translation studies for graduates with a view to becoming competent professionals in the future. The author had to determine, among other things, what texts to select and what teaching methodology to apply. She strived to harmonise the students' acquisition of economic and legal knowledge with the development of their translation skills. Hence, her priority was to equip them with effective translation strategies, to inspire them to use research instruments, and to develop in them certain qualities expected of translators. At the end of the course, the author distributed a survey to learn what the students' expectations were before they joined the course and to find out what their level of satisfaction was after they completed the course. Out of 30 students, 22 returned completed questionnaires.

Why teach Business and Legal Translation to Polish undergraduates?

Prior to the determination of the course goals and of the course content, the author identified translation market demand in Poland and analysed the students' learning needs. She believed that introduction of a Business and Legal Translation Course would fill a gap in the TTC curriculum, focusing primarily on language learning and TEFL instruction, and having little connectivity with the professional translation market. In addition, as relatively few students declared their intention to become EFL teachers, the author decided to introduce them to a new form of training that would support the development of both their linguistic and translation competence. Naturally, when designing the course content she had to take into account the undergraduates' expectations and the fact that the students wanted practical training rather than abstract education.¹

Thus, the author, aware of the growing demand for qualified and competent translators of specialist texts brought about by the increased volume of foreign investments in

Poland, concluded that undergraduate students at the TTC – perceived as future market forces – should be given an opportunity to participate in a translation programme suited to the needs of the industry as well as the changing social and political situation in Poland. Obviously, now that Poland has become an EU member state, Polish is one of the EU official languages, which generates even more demand for English-Polish translations, especially those related to legal and economic issues. Last but not least comes the issue of certified translation and new legislative requirements set for candidates wishing to become certified translators. These may find many clients among the steadily increasing population of Polish immigrants living the UK, which, in turn, requires that they should have detailed knowledge about Polish and British social life and institutions, trade and commerce, economic and financial bodies, and, of course, legal systems. At this point, it is worth adding that unlike translators living in the UK, translators offering their services in Poland enjoy more recognition and their social status seems to be higher than that of their counterparts in the UK.² Maybe that is one of the reasons why students are attracted to translation programmes designed to equip them with the skills and knowledge which, in their view, may open the door to a respected profession. On the other hand, also in Poland one may frequently encounter people who believe that translation is something any bilingual person can successfully perform, regardless of their education or professional background.

Typically, Polish specialist translators become freelancers cooperating with individual clients or translation agencies, in-house translators working in the Translation Department of a legal or banking institution, or translators working for an EU institution. They are normally graduates of Modern Languages Departments, Teacher Training Colleges, Translation Schools or Centres³ offering postgraduate programmes or specialists with sound SL and TL skills. Additionally, they upgrade their skills participating in numerous workshops, courses or seminars, and cooperating with experts in a given field, as well as more experienced translators willing to share their expertise. Most of these forms of training, however, require that the participants should have sound linguistic competence and some translation experience, which, obviously, excludes most undergraduate students. Regarding translators' prospective clients, these may include both individuals and institutions. Cooperating with a translation agency is a common phenomenon among freelancers, too. Yet, while translation agencies are less strict in the selection of translators with whom they cooperate (sadly, they often rely on less competent translators who demand lower rates of pay), EU institutions normally require credentials and a verifiable record of translation projects completed by a candidate translator. Given the above, the author intended to provide yet another alternative for undergraduate students, and to enable them to gain translation experience before facing real-life challenges, which, as she was well aware of, would ultimately put to the test their actual skills and knowledge.

Course goals and course participants

One of the first hurdles the author had to overcome was the determination of the course objectives and of the course content. As Gabr (2001b) suggests, designing a translation curriculum consists in the identification of both the market needs and those of the students, followed by the determination of goals and the preparation of training material. Further, he argues that the teacher's role is to select appropriate teaching methodology aided by effective evaluation instruments. Malmkjaer (2006) adds that among the factors that influence the content of the translation programme are the views held by prospective course participants, as well as the opinions expressed by potential end-users, i.e. the students' future customers. It is

also worth noting here that the students' prospective employers, e.g. translation agencies, seek employees with excellent language skills, as well as a solid professional grounding. What is more, they tend to frown upon university translation programmes claiming that these, offering mainly abstract education, are of little practical use to budding translators outside the academic environment (Malmkjaer 2006).

Yet, voices can be heard that translation classrooms should not aim to imitate professional settings (Bernardini in Malmkjaer 2004). As Bernardini claims, translation programmes should educate translators rather than just train them. Thus, in her view, completing their education, novice translators should be aware of the complexities of the translation process, able to reflect upon their work with a view to developing their own translation strategies, and, finally, they should prove to be creative and resourceful, and able to deal with unexpected problems (Bernardini in Malmkjaer 2004: 20-21). On the other hand, González Davies (2004: 17-18), who also realises that the classroom is an artificial setting, supports optimising the classroom environment by transforming it into a discussion forum and hands-on workshop, adjusting the methods and techniques to the students' learning styles, designing the programme with clear goals and sequencing of material, initiating projects involving contact with professionals from outside the classroom, and including real-life situations and tasks to enable the students to have a foretaste of the professional world.

Another contribution to the discussion about the translation classroom setting is that of Gile (2005) observing that some employers feel that trainee translators learn too many unnecessary things (it is what they call "overengineering") which they will be unable to capitalise on in the real world, given practical constraints or economic considerations. He also warns that employers (customers) – in an effort to cut down their costs – may, in fact, cause the quality of translations to deteriorate by commissioning translations to less demanding (and not so well-trained) translators expecting less pay for their services than those with a degree in translation.

Considering the above and trying to reconcile the varied needs of TTC students with the goals she had set, the author of the article designed a two-module non-literary translation course (60 teaching units of 45 min.). The course goals were:

- to make students aware of the translation process (text analysis, pre-editing, translation, post-editing, revision and proofreading);
- to develop students' translation strategies;
- to introduce some aspects of translation theory;
- to improve students' command of English and of their mother tongue;
- to teach students how to use specialist terminology correctly (both in the SL and the TL);
- to equip students with specialist knowledge related to business and legal issues;
- to expose students to authentic business and legal texts in the SL and the TL;
- to develop students' personal qualities expected of translators;
- to develop students' autonomy and research skills;
- to introduce students to translation reference tools.

As Malmkjaer (2006) rightly observes, undergraduate translation programmes' participants tend to have poorer language skills than their postgraduate counterparts; yet, they can benefit from translator training, since it can facilitate their launch into the translation

profession. In a similar vein, Gile (2005) argues that translation can be taught to students whose mastery of the foreign language is relatively weak. Among the possible benefits they may derive from undergraduate translation programmes he lists: "comprehension of the process and of what professionalism entails in translation, stimulation and practice in analytical reading and in independent decision-making [and] the students' level of interest towards translation as an intellectual activity."⁴ To conclude, Malmkjaer (2006) states that translator trainers, offering both education and training, aspire to produce confident professionals who are ready to commence professional life and who can smoothly adjust to the demands of their jobs. Accordingly, she sees undergraduate translation programmes as a way to "prepare students for the translation industry and related occupations and for further academic study" (Malmkjaer 2006).

Further, González Davies aptly remarks that students who enrol in undergraduate translation courses are typically foreign language learners who seem to believe that translating is connected with languages and dictionaries in which they expect to find the only correct solutions to their translation problems (2004: 39). Optimistically, however, the author states: "Positive beliefs and reflection on what translation involves combined with certain aptitudes that need to be honed throughout his or her career can be instilled early on in the undergraduate years" (González Davies 2004: 41). Therefore, in her view, undergraduate translation programmes ought to be regarded as starting points in the development of students' translation competence, laying the foundations for students' familiarisation with advanced tools and resources, pre-socialisation (i.e. introduction to different disciplines), development of cognitive skills, and promotion of reflective practice instead of mechanical translation (González Davies 2004: 41).

As regards the course participants at the Kraków TTC, they were second- and third-year students who majored in TEFL and who were not acquainted with any translation theory. What is more, their mastery of English was not always above the standard, since their language skills were not verified before they embarked on the course. It is also worth mentioning that their command of the Polish language was not always satisfactory. Predictably, the course participants lacked specialist knowledge related to economic and legal matters, in the SL or the TL, and they did not attend any ESP or LE courses. On the contrary, most of the courses they did at the TTC were academically-oriented and did little to improve their knowledge of specialist language.

It might be worth mentioning that besides the obvious characteristics such as having a good command of the SL and the TL, communicative abilities, and broad general and specialist knowledge (Hejwowski 2006: 154), a competent translator should exhibit perseverance in searching for meaning and demonstrate familiarity with translation theory. What a translator also needs, apart from a genuine talent and a stroke of luck, are: accuracy, diligence, excellent memory, ability to cope with stress and resilience (Pieńkos 2003: 388). Yet, among the course participants only some had these qualities and were self-critical. The majority of students were not committed enough to improve the quality of their translations and they lacked the determination needed for them to broaden their knowledge and to upgrade their SL and TL skills (even though the translation course was elective and the students chose to attend it themselves).⁵

Relevance of theory to translation training It is often claimed that translator training requires language and translation theories. Still, one may argue that translation is something one can learn only by doing and that no language or translation theory can replace hands-on

experience or on-the-job training. It seems reasonable, though, that a successful translation programme should be a marriage of theory and practice that complement each other. While theoretical input will, by no means, turn a novice into a skilled professional, it may equip him with a set of rules that will guide him in his translation performance (Pieńkos 2003: 72). Likewise, becoming acquainted with translation theory may bring to the attention of a would-be translator certain aspects of translation and, further, it may help him to select the most appropriate translation strategies.

Malmkjaer (2006) holds that a translation programme "should provide some understanding of the theories underlying the practice, and of the history of the development of both the practice and the theory that informs it" arguing that it is thanks to their familiarity with theoretical concepts and notions that students can gain more professional confidence. The relevance of translation theory to translator training is also discussed by Klaudy (2006), who remarks that findings of translation research may be applied in translation pedagogy either directly or indirectly. And while she realises that general translation theory cannot be applied directly in translator training, she recognises the possibility of applying text- or language-restricted partial translation theories.⁶ Further, she argues that linguistic translation theory may prove to be helpful in the translation classroom, viewing it as a frame of reference that the teacher may use to provide informative explanations to trainee translators.

Still, considering the scarce time allotted to the course (30 teaching units of 45 min. per term) and bearing in mind the fact that the programme had the form of practical classes and not lectures, the teacher at the Kraków TTC merely touched upon certain aspects of translation theory, suggesting further reading and recommending relevant sources to the students. It is worth stressing here that among the 22 surveyed students, only five believed that translation theory should not be included in a specialist translation course and 17 were convinced that the course should include some elements of translation theory (Figure 1).

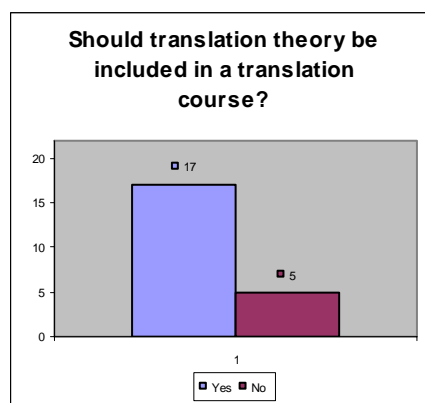


Figure 1 *Should translation theory be included in a specialist translation course?*

Translation classroom methodology One of the earliest advocates of learner-centred translator education, Kiraly (2000) argues that translator competence can be best developed thanks to collaboration coupled with authentic assignments. He believes that student translators should work on real translation tasks in order to gradually become more autonomous translators and to develop professional and interpersonal skills, knowledge and

competences. Needless to say, such an approach involves a transfer of roles; therefore, the trainer is to become a facilitator, while the student is expected to build up independence and to gain more professional competence. Instead of providing the right answers to students, the translator trainer should, in the author's view, aim to create a type of scaffolding (basis) for students' learning, thus enabling them to take on more responsibilities. In the social constructivist model promoted by Kiraly (2000), trainee translators participate actively in the learning process and are involved in curriculum design, task selection and the assessment of their own translation performance and of the translation programme itself.

Likewise, Gile (2005), in his discussion of translation pedagogy, highlights the importance of raising student translators' awareness of the translation process and its stages. Therefore, he focuses on two aspects: process-oriented training and product-oriented training, stressing the need to stimulate trainee translators' reflection, which is consistent with the assumptions underpinning the social constructivist view. Further, he accentuates that for process-oriented training to be implemented successfully, one needs motivated students and appropriate tools including a conceptual methodological framework and monitoring instruments.⁷ He advocates a two-stage approach suggesting that the process-oriented stage of training should be gradually replaced by the product-oriented phase (Gile 2005).⁸ Further, considering factors that have a bearing on translation curriculum design, Klaudy (2006) describes three approaches, i.e. the inductive approach (based on text selection), the deductive approach (based on topics related to translation techniques), and the functional approach (aimed at the development of particular skills). She emphasises the importance of the integration of these approaches, outlining their strengths and weaknesses. Likewise, adopting text-based criteria, González Davies (2004: 14) lists five overlapping approaches to classroom dynamics, namely: the linguistics-based approach, the cultural studies approach, the cognitive approach, the functionalist approach, and, finally, the philosophical and poetic approach.⁹

When designing the Business and Legal Translation Course at the Kraków TTC, the author followed the principles underlying the above-mentioned methodologies and approaches. The course design and the classroom procedures were based, accordingly, on humanistic teaching (with a friendly atmosphere in the classroom promoting the students' participation in teamwork), cooperative (or transactional) learning stimulating peer interaction, and social constructivism (stressing learner autonomy and the social dimension of knowledge and meaning construction). Thus, the teacher's goal was not only to encourage communication, collaboration and interaction among the students, but also to facilitate their acquisition and improvement of the SL and the TL, to assist them in their broadening of specialist knowledge, to bring to their attention the importance of creativity and problem-solving skills, and to equip them with research skills and peer evaluation skills.

Selection of training material Naturally, selecting appropriate training material is another significant consideration in curriculum design. González Davies (2004: 18-19) suggests adopting the following guidelines: topic-based organisation (providing up-to-date information about issues related to a given discipline), text type selection (introducing students to different text typologies and their conventions), and using teaching material (including texts used for practising specific translation skills and activities designed for SL or TL practice). Klaudy (2006) also outlines the principles that are to be followed in the selection of texts for the translation classroom. Among these she mentions factors such as topics, genres and the level of difficulty. Obviously, each approach has both advantages and disadvantages. The

author argues that even though thematic selection of texts may not help the teacher exemplify all translation problems, it may be useful for creating wordlists and glossaries. At the same time, she stresses that selection based on genres may help raise students' awareness of both certain translation problems and genre-specific characteristics of such texts, adding, however, that it is difficult to find texts that display all the features of a given genre and stressing that it is also impossible to analyse all the genres in one translation programme. Finally, Klaudy (2006) discusses text selection that depends on the level of difficulty (lexical, structural or cultural) of the texts to be translated. Yet, she stresses that the level of difficulty of a text depends to a large extent on the competence of the translator and the type of translation he or she specialises in.

Given the students' knowledge, abilities and interests, the author of this article limited the texts types to specialist texts intended for the general public and less difficult specialist texts aimed at specialists other than lawyers. Consequently, the texts used for translation practice included notarial deeds, certificates and diplomas, insurance documents, contracts and agreements, office documentation, reference letters, banking documents, vehicle registration documents, and pharmaceutical documentation. The students frequently translated selected sections of longer specialist texts exemplifying certain translation problems. As the author's aim was to teach students how to translate 'lawyer's language' (*język prawniczy*), rather than 'the language of the law' (*język prawny*), legislative and statutory texts were excluded from translation practice. Further, the students analysed and translated press releases on current affairs from Polish newspapers such as *Rzeczpospolita* or *Gazeta Prawna*, including articles related to EU affairs. Not surprisingly, use of parallel texts – providing useful terminology, context, and collocations – was encouraged by the teacher.¹⁰ In consequence, the students realized that a TL text may be more useful in translation than a bilingual dictionary: their mentality of a language learner changed to that of a translator.

Translation classroom activities It appears natural for translation work in the classroom to be organised in a manner enabling the students to practise and reflect on the subsequent stages of the translation process, which involves linguistic and extra-linguistic processing. As González Davies (2004: 20) advises, translation classroom procedures should help trainee translators to revise their beliefs about translation and translators, to get rid of personal and professional constraints, understand the importance of constant updating of their knowledge and skills, and, further, they should develop the students' autonomy, independence, and problem-solving skills. She also adds that the teacher should raise the students' awareness of text typologies and related conventions, as well as improve their understanding of the translation assignment and the reader. Predictably, among the objectives she mentions the need to motivate students (González Davies 2004: 20). Ways in which student translators may be motivated are discussed by Hubscher-Davidson (2007), who underlines the need to vary translation task types as well as the need to arouse the students' curiosity with a view to obtaining the most effective results. She also stresses the relationship between individual learner styles and the methods and techniques that should be applied in translator training. Further, Hubscher-Davidson (2007) adds that students' translation performance and satisfaction with the outcome of their work may be enhanced by way of innovative, cooperative and inclusive teaching methods.

Perfectly aware of her own limitations and yet filled with gusto and enthusiasm for teaching translation, the author of the article – willing to share her experience of translating business and legal documents – developed translation classroom activities. Assuming the

students wished to gain an insight into the translation process and to acquire specialist knowledge, and reflecting upon the current market needs, the teacher designed class activities that stimulated the students' interests, promoted their interaction, aroused their curiosity, and motivated them to use research tools and to perfect their SL and TL skills. To avoid monotony and repetitiveness, the author varied the text types, as well as the translation tasks and situations. Naturally, handing in finished translations was not always the teacher's aim; therefore, highlighting translation problems and remedying translation errors were frequently more significant than the final product itself.¹¹

Below is a selection of activities the teacher introduced in the translation classroom.

Analysing SL texts – students identify the source, text type, register, style, target reader.

Translating 'hybrids' – students retranslate into the SL selected parts of the SL text that have already been translated into the TL¹²

Précis-cum-translation – students write a summary of the SL text in the TL (writing and translation practice)

Discussing different versions of translated texts in class – students, assisted by the teacher, defend their own versions justifying their translation choices

Peer correction – students peer correct their draft translations, suggesting and justifying alternative solutions

'Real-time' feedback – the teacher monitors students *while* they are translating in class, helping them to solve their translation problems and to select the most appropriate translation strategies

Translating with a partner – students consult each other while translating, working out a compromise

Correcting faulty translations – students correct publicly available poor-quality translations (e.g. information from official Web sites of certain financial institutions)

Identifying translation problems, suggesting remedies and appropriate translation strategies – students exchange their ideas, comments, suggestions and select the most appropriate translation strategies, analyzing their suitability for the intended purpose and the TL reader

Reading assignments – students read specialist texts and do research on selected topics (preparation for translating specialist texts)

Translation and retranslation – students translate a SL text and then (after some interval) retranslate the TL text back into the SL. Then they compare their retranslations with the original SL text (focus on reinforcing terminology and collocations)

Creating glossaries and databases – students create their own translation reference tools such as thematic glossaries and databases

Reading parallel texts – students fish out useful terminology and collocations, comparing SL and TL styles and registers

Evaluation of students' performance For translator training to be effective, the teacher must also design suitable evaluation instruments enabling him or her to monitor the students' progress and to appraise their translation performance. Among various goals of pedagogical assessment (as opposed to professional assessment), González Davies lists, *inter alia*, comparing the students' performance with that of the other course participants and suggesting remedial work, where necessary; observing the students' progress throughout the academic

year; classifying problems that occurred in the students' translations, and finally adjusting the curriculum to the students' needs (based on the obtained results) (2004: 31). It should be mentioned, however, that while it is usually the teacher who analyses the strengths and the weaknesses of the completed translations submitted by the students for grading, the students themselves can also be actively involved in self- and peer evaluation of their draft translations. Understandably, before the students' work is evaluated, the following points should be considered:

- skills/competences that are to be evaluated;
- person who is to evaluate translations;
- time at which evaluation is to be carried out;
- manner of evaluation.

(cf. González Davies 2004: 32-33).

It might be added that guidelines for correcting and editing students' translations and a summary of what the author calls "formative feedback" to students' translations are provided by Klaudy (2006). González Davies also suggests grading criteria that can be applied in the translation classroom; she encourages using two complementary marking systems: a (pedagogical) numerical system and a (professional) holistic marking system (2004: 33-34). Additionally, an interesting discussion of error analysis and the assessment of translation quality in the context of translator training can be found in Anderman and Rogers (1997). Here, the authors study FL learners' and student translators' performance from the perspective of error analysis.

The author of the article successfully implemented 'real-time' feedback: she monitored the students' work in class and guided them in their selection of the most appropriate translation strategies. In this manner, she became aware of the dilemmas the students faced *while* they were making translation choices. In addition, the students received home assignments which they discussed in the following class (thus receiving 'historical' feedback from the instructor).¹³ During the discussion, they could defend their own translations, justifying the strategies they employed. The teacher, in turn, assessed their choices and provided her version of the TL text. She frequently compiled the most common errors and analyzed them in class suggesting improvements, encouraging the students to contribute to the discussion by providing their own corrections or solutions. Moreover, at the end of each module of the course, the students submitted their translations for individual evaluation by the teacher. The assessment criteria included not only the precision of the transfer of meaning and ideas, and the legibility of the TL text, but also the naturalness of the TL and the use of creative solutions to translation problems.¹⁴ Obviously, any language inaccuracies (such as incorrect grammar, spelling or punctuation) or omissions of important information were brought to the students' attention and affected the course grade they received.

Students' evaluation of the course Among the goals of translation course evaluation, Gabr (2001a) lists the following interrelated functions: determination of the effectiveness of the transfer of knowledge, determination of the relevance of the course content and delivery to the participants' learning needs, and determination of the need to continue (in a modified form, if necessary) or discontinue the course. As regards course evaluation tools, Gabr (2001a) believes that the most effective ones include: feedback from students (at the reaction

level or at the learning level), feedback from instructors (who sometimes are curriculum developers as well), and observation by independent evaluators (e.g. department heads or coordinators).

The author of the article decided to obtain feedback from the course participants, who were asked to fill in questionnaires. Having analysed the students' opinions in the survey, she could both reflect on the outcome of her work and rethink her future training strategies. She also felt inspired to continue her effort. The figures provided below indicate what the students' expectations were before they joined the course, what difficulties they encountered during the course and how they assessed their knowledge and skills after the course.

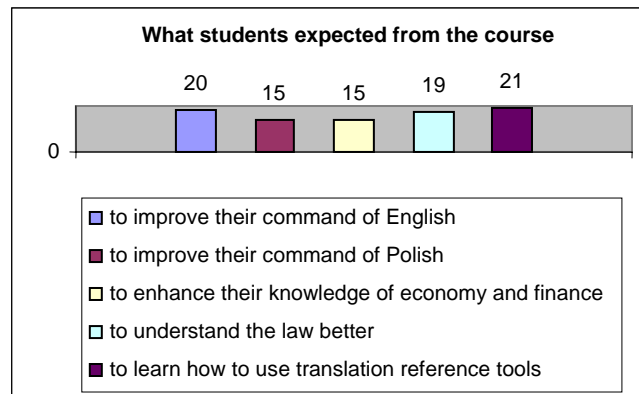


Figure 2 *What students expected from the course*

As Figure 2 shows, almost all the students embarked on the course hoping to improve their command of English (20). At the same time, improving Polish mattered to 15 of the course participants. Apparently, they regarded translation classes as a tool for improving their language skills. What is more, 15 students wanted to enhance their knowledge of economic and financial issues, while 19 wished to understand the law better and to gain an insight into legal matters. As could be expected, almost all the students (21) expected to learn how to use translation reference tools.

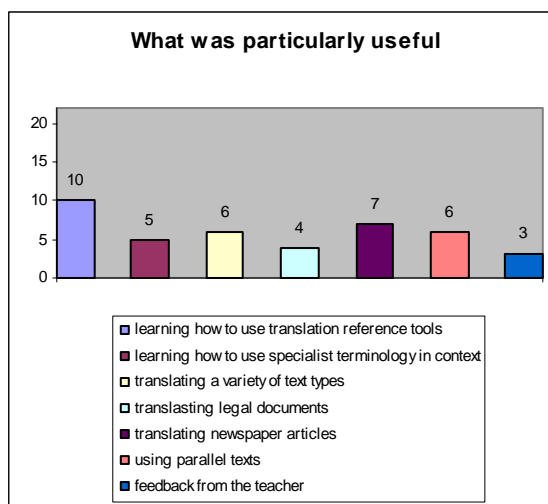


Figure 3 *What was particularly useful*

Figure 3 shows what the students deemed to be particularly useful in the course. As could be expected, nearly a half of the students appreciated most learning how to use translation reference tools (search engines, translation forums, monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, language corpora, parallel texts, etc.) About one-fourth of all the students felt that they had learnt how to use specialist terminology in context. While six of them were pleased about the variety of text types used for translation, four claimed to have benefited most from translating legal documents and seven believed that translating newspaper articles helped them to develop useful translation strategies. A comparable number of students realised the usefulness of working with parallel texts. Some emphasised the attention of, and individual feedback from the teacher too.

Optimistically, all the course participants realized the importance of word choice, and 16 out of 22 gained more confidence in their language skills. Some of the students believed that the course helped them to broaden their minds and they regarded the classes as a nice change from TEFL instruction. Yet, not all the course participants would welcome an obligatory translation programme at the TTC; 14 suggested that such a course should be introduced in the curriculum and eight opposed the idea. The students also recommended that translation training should be offered only to those who have successfully completed a preliminary translation test.

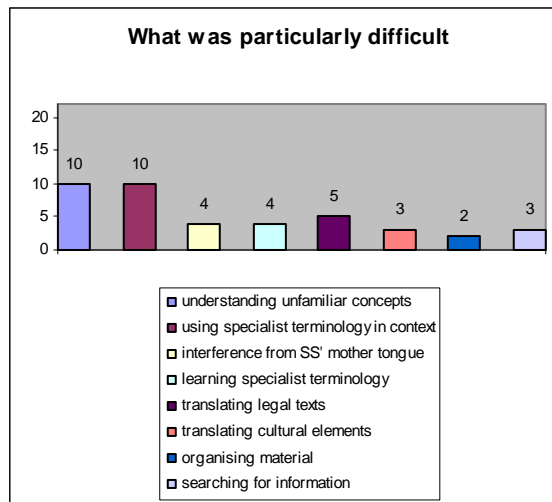


Figure 4 *What was particularly difficult*

In their first attempts at specialist translation, the students inevitably faced dilemmas. As can be seen from Figure 4, the most common difficulties encountered by the students included: understanding unfamiliar economic or legal concepts in the SL or the TL (10), using specialist terminology in context (10) and interference from their mother tongue (mainly dealing with syntactic calques). Unsurprisingly, for four students learning specialist terminology meant a great effort, while five regarded translating legal documents (due to the length and complexity of sentences as well as untranslatability of certain terms such as system-specific concepts) as the most demanding task. Likewise, several students experienced difficulties when trying to render SL culture elements in the TL. Surprisingly, to some students, organizing material and searching for information were problematic.

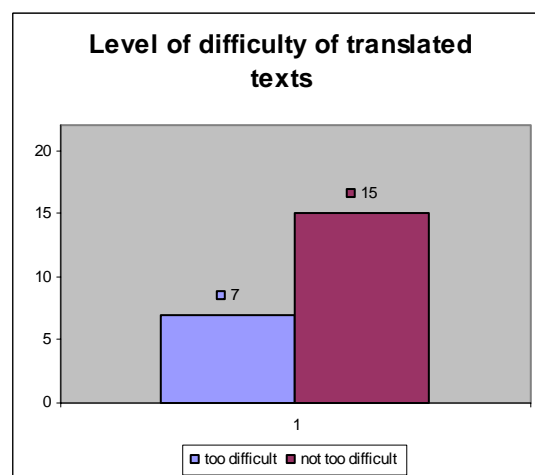


Figure 5 *Level of difficulty of translated texts*

To the teacher's delight, only seven course participants believed that the texts used for class and home assignments were too difficult (Figure 5). However, they pointed to the fact

that regardless of how difficult the texts were, the translation task itself – involving a transfer of SL words and the concepts they carried into the TL – posed a challenge. Additionally, about two-thirds agreed that students should, to some extent, affect the selection of training material. The students enjoyed most translating newspaper articles, whereas legal documents (e.g. agreements, registration certificates, insurance documentation) turned out to generate the greatest number of translation problems.

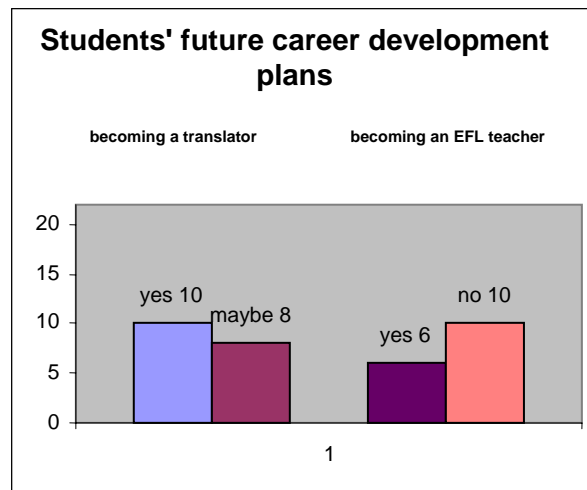


Figure 6 *Students' future career development plans*

As regards the students' future career development (Figure 6), 10 out of the 22 surveyed course participants expressed their willingness to pursue a translation career, while eight considered translation to be an option. By contrast, only six of the course participants intended to become EFL teachers and ten of them definitely rejected this career path. It should be noted, though, that the 22 course participants constituted roughly one-fourth of all second- and third-year TTC students, respectively. Unfortunately, the author has no data on how many of all TTC students expect to become EFL teachers.

Conclusions Designed as a starting point, undergraduate translation programmes at the TTC can prove to be relevant to EFL students' learning needs and their future career development. Yet, it should be remembered that their design, accounting for the undergraduates' backgrounds, attitudes, linguistic abilities and competences, will differ substantially from that of graduate or postgraduate curricula. As there is no one fail-safe teaching approach that can be successfully applied in every translation classroom, the teacher should adopt solutions that are best suited to the environment in which he or she works. Needless to say, promoting trainee translators' autonomy and stimulating social interaction are just as important as developing the students' language and translation competence. And even though relatively few students at the TTC consider seriously the possibility of becoming professional translators in the future, they are potential translators since they are proficient in at least two languages¹⁵. They are likely to find employment outside the education system, e.g. in the media or the banking sector, and, consequently, their future careers may demand from them translation skills. Thus, every TTC graduate may have to demonstrate his or her translation abilities in a professional environment. Therefore, it seems reasonable that they should be

offered translation practice at the TTC as such specialist training differs from general language skills development. In addition, translation provides students with an opportunity to improve their command of their mother tongue (which seems to be underestimated in the course of the studies at the TTC) and to broaden their intellectual horizons.

Obviously, translator training is connected with the study of specialist language. While most courses at the TTC are academically-oriented and as such they offer little or no exposure to specialist language or jargon (no ESP courses are offered either), there is practical demand for students to become familiar with terminology other than that associated with TEFL methodology. One should bear in mind that – given the discernible evolution of market needs – it is no longer enough for future EFL teachers to study solely general language (Pieńkos 2003: 343). Thus, given the current rapid development of science and technology, the globalization of economy and communication, and the growing demand for translators worldwide, translation practice and the study of specialist language should not be denied their importance in undergraduate language curricula. Regardless of whether TTC students intend to become professional translators or not, translator training may serve as a springboard for their future career paths and it may simply increase the number of options they have following graduation.

Given the above, the author suggests that a General Translation Course, designed as a grounding course for second-year students, should be introduced in Term 4.¹⁶ An Introduction to Business and Legal Translation Course, being a follow-up programme intended for third-year students, could be introduced in Term 5 and continued in Term 6. An additional course on Cultural Aspects of Translation (for third-year students) appears to be a viable option, too. Yet, whether the current curriculum is realigned to accommodate the needs of the competitive employment market and whether any translator training is introduced as part of undergraduate studies at the TTC depends primarily on the resources the TTC can provide, as the teacher's enthusiasm and love for her profession do not suffice for the programme to be successfully implemented.

In *SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation* [online]. 2008, vol. 3, no. 1 [cit. 2008-04-21]. Available on web page <http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTI03/pdf_doc/6.pdf>. ISSN 1336-7811.

Notes:

¹ As Malmkjaer remarks, students, both at the undergraduate and at the postgraduate level, are impatient to start translating (2006).

² Cf. Malmkjaer (2006).

³ Postgraduate specialist translation programmes are offered by institutions such as: the UNESCO Chair for Translation Studies and Intercultural Communication of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, the School of Translation and Interpreting at the AM University in Poznań, the Translation Studies Centre in Sosnowiec, to name a few. An extensive list with Polish schools for translators can be found at:

http://www.textum.pl/tlumaczenia/portals_tlumaczy/informacje/rozwój_zawodowy/szkoly.html.

⁴ Gile (2005) brings up another factor affecting the design of a translation programme, i.e. graduation requirements. He wonders what level of proficiency is to be expected from graduates who enter the real world and whose linguistic grounding is often insufficient when they embark on a translation programme.

⁵ Some course participants were members of the Student Translation Office launched by the Jagiellonian University in 2006 with a view to providing free-of-charge translations to students and NGOs (<http://sbt.student.uj.edu.pl/site/onas.html>).

⁶ See Holmes (1972/1988) for his classification of Translation Studies.

⁷ Gile (2004) suggests the use of IPDR (Integrated Problem and Decision Reporting) as an effective translator training monitoring tool. In her view, IPDR, regarded as a form of introspection, stimulates students' reflection, raises their awareness of translation problems, and, eventually, improves the quality of submitted translations. In IPDR, which is part of every translation task the author assigns, students report the problems they encountered while translating a particular text, they describe the steps taken to solve the problems and provide the rationale for their final decisions. They are also expected to include references to all the sources they consulted together with the TL context in which they found the desired word or phrase.

⁸ The concepts of *process* and *product* and their application to translator training have also been discussed by González Davies (2004: 62). She calls attention to the reconstruction of the translator's mental processes and stresses the difficulty in determining the relationship between the analysed process and the result of a translator's work.

⁹ Discussions of current approaches to translator training can also be found in Kelly (2005) and Baer and Koby (2003).

¹⁰ Apart from parallel specialist texts, the students compared press releases from *the Warsaw Voice* (www.warsawvoice.pl) and PAP online reports (www.pap.pl) with those appearing on Polish news portals such as www.gazeta.pl, www.onet.pl or www.interia.pl and financial Web sites including www.parkiet.com and www.bankier.pl, fishing out useful SL and TL vocabulary connected with Polish and European economy and politics.

¹¹ Multiple ideas for translation classroom activities can be found in González Davies (2004) promoting both process- and product-oriented activities that respect varied learner styles and take into account the needs of students with little translation experience. Coffey (2002), on the other hand, recommends that translator trainers use SL corpora as teaching and testing materials. Varela Salinas (2007), who highlights the benefits of Web-based translator training and stresses the need to incorporate more interactive e-learning tools in the translation classroom, makes suggestions that may also be of interest to translator trainers.

¹² Dzierżanowska (1990) suggests this form of translation exercise as a modification of gap filling. She believes that both task types are particularly useful for practising terminology, collocations, and situational grammar.

¹³ See the discussion on *real-time feedback* and *historical feedback* presented by Frankenberg-Garcia (1999).

¹⁴ See the classification of translation difficulties suggested by Gerding-Salas (2000).

¹⁵ Under the revised TTC curriculum, students are required to study FL methodology in two foreign languages. The students at the Kraków TTC are offered instruction in English and German.

¹⁶ The TTC offers a six-term programme of study.

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