

The Program “Translator in the Sphere of Professional Communication” in Russian Technical Universities

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Abstract-Additional qualification of a translator allows specialists in the field of technique and technology fulfilling functions of both an engineer and a translator in their workplace. The paper is devoted to the development and realization of the additional professional program “Translator in the sphere of professional communication” in Moscow Automobile and Road Construction State Technical University (MADI). It briefly describes the history of the program, the main reasons for its introduction. It shows the aims of the program and the main learning outcomes as cultural, general, professional and specific professional competences. The disciplines included in the curriculum are grouped in three blocks and provide the formation of the translation competency and foreign language communicative competence. 20 years of the program realization prove that the program helps students and specialists to acquire competences that make them competitive on the national labor market.

Keywords-additional professional program, translator in the sphere of professional communication, development and realization of the program

I. INTRODUCTION

Interpretation and translation are closely connected with the history of civilization. But only the establishment of international organizations after World War II required a great number of professional interpreters and translators. In its turn, it caused the development of the theory of translation and methods of translators training in linguistic universities. At the same time translation of technical and scientific texts were not in the focus of the researchers.

At the end of the 20th century, international contacts went far beyond the traditional spheres of diplomacy and foreign trade and penetrated production. In Russia, there appeared various joint ventures and enterprises cooperating with foreign firms. Few specialists were able to participate in business, scientific and technical negotiations, analyze documents in English that was used as a means of international communication. These factors caused a demand for people who were, on the one hand, engineers or other specialists having skills and habits in a particular field of knowledge and, on the other hand, having competency in translation and interpretation.

In order to solve this problem, in 1997 the Ministry of Education of Russia issued the Decree that permitted to launch an additional educational professional program “Translator in the sphere of professional communication” in non-linguistic universities including technical universities. The program is intended for those who already graduated from the university as well as for students who are studying at any level of higher education.

Nevertheless, there were a lot of problems to be solved. Some educators doubted that technical universities had the potential to succeed in realization of the additional professional program “Translator in the sphere of professional communication”. But by that time, some technical universities had had enough experience of training engineers with a good command of a foreign language that were able to work in the sphere of foreign trade. At some departments of foreign languages, there were some teachers who had worked as professional translators. MADI was one of the technical universities that had the above-mentioned advantages. Some educators were sure that only linguistic specialists could work as translators. MADI conducted a survey that showed that the majority of employers preferred to have engineers with a good command of a foreign language as translators in the sphere of professional communication [1]. Other problems were connected with defining the aims and content of teaching, choosing teaching materials and organizing educational process.

II. THE AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAM

MADI started realization of the additional professional program “Translator in the sphere of professional communication” in 1999. Before it, at the first stage of work, the Foreign Languages Department of MADI defined the aim of the program. Taking into consideration that the program education is part-time and additional to the main higher education the aim of teaching required some concretization and minimization to be realistic. It was formulated as the development of professional translation competence, the level of which provides the ability to adequately translate and interpret technical and scientific literature, business correspondence, and the materials of conferences, seminars

and meetings from English into Russian following the standards of terminology usage.

The approval of Federal State Educational Standards of Higher Education on “Translation and translation theory” in 2016 [2] gave the opportunity to clarify the field, the objects, types and tasks of learners’ professional activities.

As far as the field of professional activities is concerned, the learners are supposed to be prepared to participate as a translator in written intercultural communication limited to the speciality they have or are trained for. The objects of professional activities are methods, means, and techniques of written intercultural communication as well as informational, editorial and organizational activities in the sphere of translation. The professional activities are divided into two types. The first type concerns communicative activity of the translator and the second one covers informational activity. Being involved in the communicative activity, a learner should be prepared for fulfilling written translation of a written text according to the task of an employer and editing written texts. In the sphere of informational activity, a learner is supposed to be able to perform three tasks: preliminary evaluation of documents, summarizing and digesting of professional texts and permanent search of information in order to increase individual thesaurus including specific terminology.

According to Federal State Educational Standards of Higher Education on “Translation and Translation Theory” [2], as a result of educational process, learners should acquire cultural, general, professional and specific professional competences.

The cultural competences to be developed are as follows:

- the ability to realize the significance of future profession, to have high motivation for translation, to follow the rules of professional ethics;
- the ability to perform written intercultural communication for professional cooperation, being tolerant to social, confessional, cultural and other differences of communicants;
- the ability for clear and logical oral and written speech in Russian, for oral presentation of professional work results, participation in discussions;
- the ability for self-organization and long-life learning.

General professional competences of learners were described in the following way:

- the ability to work with several sources of information using various information resources and technologies, to take up search, storage, processing and analysis of information from various sources of information and data bases, to present it in the required format with the help of up-to-date

information and computer technologies, to edit texts in Russian;

- the ability to follow the rules of information safety and confidentiality;
- the ability to apply knowledge in the field of geography, history, political, economic, social and cultural life of the foreign language country as well as knowledge of this country’s role in the regional and global political processes;
- the ability to take up search for professional information in all sources of information including electronic data bases.

Professional competences were defined according to the tasks of a translator in communicative and informational activities. They are as follows:

- the ability to perform linguistic analysis of a text/discourse using systemic knowledge of current state and history of the foreign language development;
- the ability to adequately apply the rules of a text composition in two languages in order to achieve coherence, logical structure and integrity of a text;
- the ability to use formal, informal and neutral registers of communication;
- the ability to perform preliminary translation analysis of a written text in order to provide exact understanding of the original text, forecasting translation difficulties and techniques of overcoming them;
- the ability to use methods of information search in manuals, dictionaries, technical and scientific literature as well as in Internet;
- the ability to apply translation transformations to achieve the necessary level of equivalence of a written text when interpreting or translating it;
- the ability to perform preliminary editing of the text after its translation and final editing of the translated text;
- the ability to interpret a written text taking into account lexical and stylistic features of the original text according to grammatical and stylistic norms of the text in the native language;
- the ability to perform generalization, critical evaluation and systematization of information, to analyze arguments of a discourse;
- the ability to evaluate the quality and contents of information, to find most relevant facts and concepts, to interpret them and to express personal opinion;

- the ability to work with various sources of information, to prepare summaries and annotations of written texts, to prepare analytical reviews on certain topics, to find, collect and analyze actual material, making reasonable conclusions;
- the ability to make linguistic analysis of a text for its translation, to create necessary linguistic and cultural comments of a translator.

Specific professional competences are closely connected with speciality of learners. They are formulated in the following way:

- the ability to make complete and compressed written translation of technical and scientific literature in the sphere of a learner's professional activities, providing exact correspondence of the translation to lexical, stylistic and semantic content of the original text, the requirements for scientific and technical terms and definitions usage;
- the ability to summarize and annotate foreign literature, scientific and technical documentation in the sphere of a learner's professional activities.

III. THE CURRICULUM OF THE PROGRAM

In order to achieve the above-mentioned learning outcomes it was necessary to design the curriculum of the program "Translator in the sphere of professional communication". At the beginning of the program realization, only the disciplines were determined but later they were united into three blocks. Block 1 includes compulsory disciplines; Block 2 contains elective subjects and Block 3 is for final assessment of the competences the learners acquired.

Block 1 contains the following compulsory disciplines: "Introduction to linguistics", "Stylistics of the Russian language and culture of speech", "Practical course of English", "English for business communication", "Oral professional communication", "English lexicology", "English theoretical grammar", "English stylistics", "Theory of translation", "Practical course of translation".

Block 2 includes two elective disciplines: "Introduction to interpretation" and "Preparation for international examinations".

Block 3 requires performing a final work and taking a final examination.

The discipline "Introduction to linguistics" trains learners for new translation activities and contributes to further development of English communicative competence. The main aim of the discipline is acquiring theoretical statements of linguistics and practical skills necessary for linguistic analysis of the discourse. The work load of the discipline is equal to 72 contact hours (2 credits) and creates the foundation for the disciplines "Stylistics of the Russian language and culture of speech", "English lexicology",

"English theoretical grammar", "English stylistics", "Theory of translation".

The discipline "Stylistics of the Russian language and culture of speech" is based on the results of studying the subject "Introduction to linguistics" and aimed at acquiring stylistic norms and cultural traditions of the Russian language necessary for presenting the translation of a written text in the native language. The workload of the discipline is equal to 72 contact hours (2 credits) and it creates the foundation for the subjects "English stylistics" and "Theory of translation".

The subject "Practical course of English" is aimed at further development of English communicative competence acquiring the ability to participate in oral and written intercultural communication in everyday and academic situations. The workload of the discipline is equal to 144 contact hours (4 credits) and the foundation for studying "English for business communication", "Oral professional communication" and "Practical course of translation".

The discipline "Practical course of translation" is intended for further development of English communicative competence in the sphere of business and formation of basic translation skills in the field of business correspondence. The learners have the opportunity to make presentations, write various types of business letters and e-mails, translate business correspondence from English into Russian, to study the main rules of business negotiations. The workload of the discipline is equal to 144 contact hours (4 credits) and creates the foundation for studying "English for business communication", "Oral professional communication" and "Practical course of translation".

The subject "Oral professional communication" is supposed to develop oral skills of learners to be ready to participate in professional communication. They are trained to make presentations on professional issues, to take part in professional discussions, to put and answer questions according to the format of international conferences, seminars and symposiums and knowledge of psychological rules. The workload of the discipline is equal to 36 contact hours (1 credit). The subject is based on the results of studying the disciplines "Practical course of English", "English for business communication", "English lexicology", "English theoretical grammar" and in its turn is the foundation for elective course "Introduction to interpretation" and final examination.

The discipline "English lexicology" is aimed at creating theoretical base for proper usage of lexical units in the process of oral and written communication, interpretation and translation of written scientific and technical texts. Special attention is paid to the usage of professional terminology, the work with dictionaries, encyclopedias and electronic sources of information. The workload of the discipline is 36 contact hours (1 credit). Studying this discipline is based on the results of "Introduction to linguistics" and "Stylistics of the Russian language and

culture of speech'. At the same time, it is the foundation for the disciplines "English theoretical grammar", "English stylistics", "Theory of translation" and "Practical course of translation".

The discipline "English stylistics" gives learners theoretical knowledge in order to decode properly scientific and technical texts for their translation taking into consideration the stylistic features of the texts, stylistic peculiarities of words, and various formats of sources of information. The workload of the discipline is 36 contact hours (1 credit). Studying this discipline is based on the results of "Introduction to linguistics", "Stylistics of the Russian language and culture of speech", "English lexicology" and "English theoretical grammar". At the same time, it is the foundation for the disciplines "Theory of translation" and "Practical course of translation".

The discipline "Theory of translation" is of vital importance for the success of the program. The main aim of it is to give theoretical knowledge in order to prepare learner for translation activities, describing the main theories of translation, the main theoretical notions, the main features of translator activity, methods and techniques of translation. The workload of the discipline is 36 contact hours (1 credit). Studying this discipline is based on the results of "Introduction to linguistics" and "Stylistics of the Russian language and culture of speech", "English lexicology", "English theoretical grammar", "English stylistics", "English theoretical grammar", "English stylistics". At the same time, "Theory of translation" is the foundation for the discipline "Practical course of translation".

The discipline "Practical course of translation" is responsible for the formation of translation competence. The learners are supposed to develop universal and specific skills of interpretation and translation of written scientific and technical texts from English into Russian focusing on the professional texts, applying adequate translation methods and techniques. The workload is 252 contact hours (7 credits) including individual consultations with a teacher.

IV. MAIN RESULTS

The realization of the program "Translator in the sphere of professional communication" shows that it can be considered to be an element of life-long foreign language training in engineering education. The total workload of the program is equal to 1511 contact hours (42 credits). The complete course lasts 2,5 years and is divided into 5 terms. Having studied the program, the learners are able to prepare their final qualification work and to pass a final exam.

The qualification work includes translation of an up-to-date professional article from English into Russian that is accompanied with the analysis of the translation difficulties they met and description of translation techniques they used for overcoming them. The work is assessed by a language teacher and by a specialist in the professional field.

The final examination checks up both the translation competency and English communicative competence. Therefore, it consists of four parts. At first, a learner prepares a written translation of an original professional text. Then he/she interprets a business letter without any previous preparation, makes an oral presentation of the content of the article from the final qualification work, and finally answers questions of the members of the examination board concerning the presentation made.

The experience of MADI shows that engineering students with the qualification of a translator are in demand on the labor market. Acquiring translation competence contributes to the development of professional competency of engineers as the survey undertaken by the teachers of MADI proves that by the end of the program learners improve their ability of situational analysis, problem solving, working in a team [3].

V. CONCLUSIONS

The development of international contacts in the field of technique and technology caused the demand for engineers with additional qualification of a translator of written professional texts. In order to train such specialists engineering universities launched additional program "Translator in the sphere of professional communication" that is an element of long-life foreign language training in engineering education. 20 years of the program realization in MADI shows that non-linguistic universities have the resources for training translators, the aims and the content of the program give learners the opportunity to reach the level of translation competence that makes them competitive on the labor market. Moreover, acquiring translation competence contributes to the development of professional competency of engineers.

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