Procedural approach to translation quality, translation standards and teaching translation at the undergraduate level: focus on pre- and post-translation stages

Iwona Sikora

*Politechnika Częstochowska/Częstochowa University of Technology
Częstochowa, Poland*
iwona.sikora@slovik.com.pl

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to draw attention to the significance of developing pre- and post-translation skills in translator's education. For this purpose, first the procedural approach to translation quality and translation process will be presented. Next, on the basis of students' translations, students' translation habits affecting the quality of their translations and indicating that more focus on the pre- and post-translation stages is required will be discussed. The last part will present practical exercises which can be used during a business translation course to bring the significance of this issue to students' attention and to improve their practical skills in these areas.

Keywords: procedural approach, translation quality, translator training, pre- and post-translation stages, translation process, ISO 17100.

1. Introduction

Translation is a complicated and multifaceted process in which pre- and post-translation stages are equally important as the translation proper stage. In fact, good preparation for a translation task as well as thorough checking and reviewing are inseparable components of the translation workflow which may be decisive to the quality of the final product. Any translator who wants to provide professional translation services has to be aware of the stages inherent in the translation process and their significance to the translation product quality. Therefore, a comprehensive approach to translator's education should also include instruction and practical exercises which will enable students to develop their pre- and post-translation skills (e.g., text analysis, information and terminology search, glossary and term-base preparation, checking, revision and proofreading). Yet, the observations of students' translation assignments suggest that especially post-translation activities, namely checking and revision, are frequently skipped and neglected and that more instruction in these fields is needed.

The aim of this paper is to draw attention to the significance of developing pre- and post-translation skills in translator's education. For this purpose, procedural approach to translation quality and translation process will be discussed. Next, on the basis of students' translations, students' translation habits affecting the quality of their translations and indicating that more focus on the pre- and post-translation stages is required will be considered. Lastly, practical exercises which can be used

during a business translation course to bring the significance of this issue to students' attention and to improve their practical skills in these areas will be presented.

The overriding goal of the study is to demonstrate certain implications for business translator education involving the obvious, although often neglected, fact that focus on translation proper is of utmost importance but it cannot be pursued properly without properly undertaken pre- and post-translation tasks.

2. Procedural approach to translation quality

Traditional approaches to translation quality discussed in Translation Studies literature focus on the relationship between the original text and the translation and the way it is perceived by human agents interacting with it, i.e. by the author, the translator and its readers (House, 2015). A detailed overview of these approaches is offered by House (e.g. 2001, 2015), who categorizes them as: mentalist (intuitive, anecdotal and subjective), response-oriented (behaviourist and function-oriented), and finally text and discourse-oriented approaches. These approaches are based on different theories of translation, which determine the way translation quality is approached and assessed (House, 2001). The main notions on which mentalist approaches are based include the intuitive and subjective concepts of faithfulness to the original and the natural flow of the translated text. In the behaviouristic approach the main criteria for translation quality assessment are equivalence of response, informativeness, intelligibility of the translated text and its recipients' reaction. In the functionalist model translation quality is assessed through the prism of text function and translation purpose. Finally, in the text and discourse-oriented approaches translation quality is evaluated on the basis of the text analysis, which takes into account the type of the text and compares source and target texts in terms of syntactic, semantic, stylistic and pragmatic aspects. The other notions central to these models are "norms of usage" binding in source and target language cultures and deviations from these norms, as well as form, function and appropriateness of the translation in the context of the target culture. Finally, in the functional-pragmatic model developed and then refined by House, translation quality assessment relies on the detailed textual and linguistic analysis, comparison and description of texts, in which the situational and cultural contexts, as well as relevance and appropriateness are accounted for (House, 2015). In this model translation quality assessment acknowledges also the socio-cultural and situational contexts in which texts are embedded.

As afore-mentioned, in the above-referred models the relationship between the original and the translation is the basis for the evaluation of translation quality, which is measured in terms of equivalence, appropriateness, intelligibility, function and purpose or compliance with various, textual, pragmatic, or socio-cultural norms. In these approaches quality is measured in terms of the end-product and therefore it is a product-oriented concept of translation quality. Product-oriented quality is perceived as "the totality of characteristics of an entity that bear on its ability to satisfy stated and implied needs" (ISO Standard 8402, unpaginated) and therefore, it is measured in terms of compliance with client's requirements and

specifications (European Union, 2012). Moreover, quality is assessed against customer satisfaction and in these sense, as specified in *Juran's Quality Handbook*, it may be understood in two ways as "those *features of products* which meet customer needs and thereby provide customer satisfaction" and as "freedom from deficiencies" (1999: 2.1-2.2). In the first sense, the customer is satisfied if the product fulfils their needs and is of acceptable quality for its planned purpose. In the second meaning, a good quality product should be free from errors as they could result in customer dissatisfaction, require implementing corrective measures and in consequence incur additional costs (Juran, 1999).

Since translation is defined both as a product and a process, quality in translation can be also perceived in two dimensions. According to Gouadec "quality in translation is both the quality of the end-product (the translated material) and the quality of the transaction (the service provided)" (2010: 270). In the procedural concept of quality the focus is shifted from the translation product to the translation process. The purpose of this approach is to prevent errors before they are made (and eliminate them if they appear) by standardising the various stages of the translation workflow. Implementing standards for each stage helps to reduce the risk of committing errors and as a result contributes to better quality of translation services. This concept is built on the assumption that if certain quality assurance procedures are met, the final product of such a standardized process will consequently be also of good quality (Gouadec, 2010; Mossop, 2014). This procedural approach to quality is propagated by translation companies and translation organizations, which in the standardization of the translation workflow seek, apart from increasing the quality of their services, their competitive advantage in relation to other translation service providers (TSPs) operating in the market. Obtaining ISO 17100 certificate makes a TSP stand out from the market, as it demonstrates conformity to certain rigorous norms and informs the client that the TSP possesses appropriate processes and resources and is capable of providing services according to client's requirements (ISO, 2015).

The most well-known document regulating the provision of translation services is the EN 15038 standard issued by the European Committee for Standardization in 2006. As specified in the introduction, its purpose "is to establish and define the requirements for the provision of quality services by translation service providers." (2006: 4). The document specifies competences of translators and other agents involved in the translation production process (including revisers, reviewers and proofreaders), details requirements in relation to technical resources and describes procedures obligatory for the provision of translation services. On 1 May 2015 the International Organization for Standardization issued ISO 17100 *Translation services – Requirements for translation services* which superseded EN 15038. Generally, ISO 17100 is based on EN 15038 and the scope of issues addressed in both documents is very similar, but ISO 17100 provides, among others, a more detailed specification of translation processes. Translation processes will be the subject of discussion in the next section, but at this point it is worth mentioning that other attempts to regulate the provision of translation services include the German standard DIN 2345 from 1996, *Specification for Translation Service* (GB/T 19363, revised 2008) issued by China's General Administration of Quality Supervision in 2003, the *Standard Guide for Quality Assurance in Translation* (ASTM F2575)

published by the American Society for Testing Materials in 2006 and the Canadian standard CAN/CGSB 131.10 *Translation Services* published by the Canadian General Standards Board in 2009, which is an adaptation of EN-15038. A more detailed overview of these standards from the perspective of translation revision is offered by Mossop (2014).

2.1. Prevention is better than cure

Poor quality can have severe and far reaching consequences, including higher costs, customer dissatisfaction, loss of customer loyalty, damaged company reputation, not to mention legal consequences. The authors of the report on quality costs in the translation industry describe costs of poor quality by means of an iceberg effect metaphor – which means that only a small fraction of costs of poor quality is visible, and the majority is hidden under the surface as they are not easily detectable (European Union, 2012). The authors remind that "it is usually more expensive to correct an error than "to get it right for the first time" (European Union 2012: 5). It is also stressed that investing in quality assurance, human and technical resources pays off in the further stages as fewer errors are likely to appear and consequently expenditures on error correction are lower. In other words, quality is not only the matter of a product and subsequent error correction, but it is hammered out at every stage of the production process. Attention to details, following established procedures and using adequate human and equipment resources at earlier stages help to save time and money which would have to be spent on dealing with customer complaints. Thus, there are two ways of investing in quality – before and after. Either way, quality is a costly issue – both ways require considerable investments, but in line with the principle "prevention is better than cure", investing in quality before and during the translation process is more effective than investing after the damage is done, as certain reputation- and customer satisfaction-related issues cannot be repaired. Therefore, not as paradoxically as it could seem, "improving quality reduces the costs of poor quality" (European Union, 2012: 5). Furthermore, the report differentiates between *quality cost* and *costs of poor quality*, where the former represent costs incurred to achieve good quality and the latter are costs incurred to repair poor quality of the product (European Union, 2012).

According to the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation ensuring quality is important at every stage of the translation process:

> Quality in translation in the stage before translation corresponds to prevention of poor quality and includes recruitment, training, terminology, style guides, etc.; during translation, quality is a matter of choosing the right translator for the job and deciding the level of quality control, bearing in mind DGT's aim to provide "fit-for-purpose" translations. Finally, quality in translation after translation concerns *ex-post* controls and evaluation, audits and feedback on translation errors, which corresponds to appraisal costs and failure costs.
>
> (European Union, 2012: 11)

This approach to translation quality assurance is also reflected in the above-mentioned ISO standard, which underlines the importance of quality management at all stages of the translation process by detailing actions and procedures to be undertaken before, during and after translation.

3. Procedural approach to translation quality management – stages of the translation process

ISO 17100 is a process standard, which means that it specifies the conditions under which translation services are to be produced. It is also a management system standard, as it outlines a system for the management of translation services to be implemented by translation service providers.

Similarly to its predecessor, EN 15038, ISO 17100 outlines the requirements concerning all aspects of the translation process and its aim is to define core processes and resources as well as to establish norms which are necessary for the provision of high quality translation services (ISO, 2015). The issues covered within the standard include the requirements for human and technical resources as well as the areas of competences and qualifications for all agents (translators, revisers, reviewers, and project managers) involved in the translation workflow. Both documents also provide definitions of concepts related to the translation and translation services, which is of great significance as it helps to clarify terminological confusion related to the names of various revision activities.

One of the differences in relation to EN 15038 is that in ISO 17100 the section devoted to translation processes is much more elaborate and detailed. Generally speaking, translation processes are very similar in both documents, but a new thing in ISO 17100 is that the particular phases are grouped into three categories (pre-production, production and post-production stages), which provides a much clearer image of what the translation process should involve. Another novelty in comparison to EN 15038 is the post-production stage which was not included in the earlier version.

Let us now have a closer look at the particular processes and activities in each of the translation workflow stages. As already mentioned, the new standard distinguishes three main stages in the translation workflow: *pre-production, production* and *post-production*. Such a division emphasises the fact that translation proper is one of the stages of the entire process and that activities of the *pre-* and *post-production* stages are equally important to render professional and quality translation services.

In ISO 17100 the *pre-production* activities include analysing client's enquiry and order feasibility, preparing a quotation, drafting client-TSP agreement, obtaining all indispensable project-related information and preparing the project in relation to administrative, technical and linguistic aspects. As far as administrative activities are concerned, they include project registration and assignment of resources. The other necessary technical and pre-production tasks which should be carried out in this stage are: preparation and update of translation memories, terminological databases, style-guides, reference materials, style sheets, and last but not least carrying out a source language content-analysis. According to ISO

17100, linguistic specification constitutes an inherent phase of the *pre-production* activities and TSPs should ensure that they have processes to prepare, document and communicate such linguistic specifications appropriately. The *post-production* stage comprises of feedback and closing administration activities and requires TPSs to have processes for handling customer's feedback, assessing client satisfaction and for implementing appropriate corrective measures. The *production stage* includes activities to be performed by a translation project manager during the entire process and steps subsequent to translation proper. According to ISO 17100, this stage should consist of six steps, out of which four are obligatory and two are optional. The activities which are mandatory are *translation, revision, checking* and *final verification*, whereas *review* and *proofreading* are non-compulsory. It is not difficult to notice that *revision, checking* and *final verification* are treated as integral components of the translation phase and that the standard in this way emphasises their significance to the quality of the entire process. It also means that in professional translation services these obligatory steps should not be skipped and every translation should undergo a double-check bilingual procedure: the translation should be first checked against the source text by the translator and then by a reviser, who apart from translation competence should also possess appropriate revision skills and experience (ISO, 2015).

At this point it is worth mentioning that there exist other translation workflow models. For example, Holz-Mänttäri (1984) divides the translation process into four stages, each of which corresponds to one of the professional translator's roles: *product specification, research, text production* and *text evaluation*. Gouadec (2010) organizes the entire process into twelve steps and divides it into *pre-translation, translation and post-translation* phases, which correspond to the main phases in ISO 17100 (ISO, 2015). In Gouadec's classification the *translation phase*, which roughly overlaps with the *production stage* of ISO 17100, is further subdivided into *pre-transfer, transfer* and *post-transfer stages*. *Pre-transfer* activities include the analysis of the translation material, preparation of documentary resources, terminology mining, preparation, alignment and consolidation of translation memories. In the *transfer stage* the text is translated and *post-transfer* comprises quality control operations which are performed before the delivery of the translation product: revision, checking, introducing corrections, final verification and formatting according to client's specifications. As already noted, the activities performed in the *pre-translation* and *post-translation stages* are by and large the same as those in the *pre-* and *post-production stages* of ISO 17100 (Gouadec, 2010).
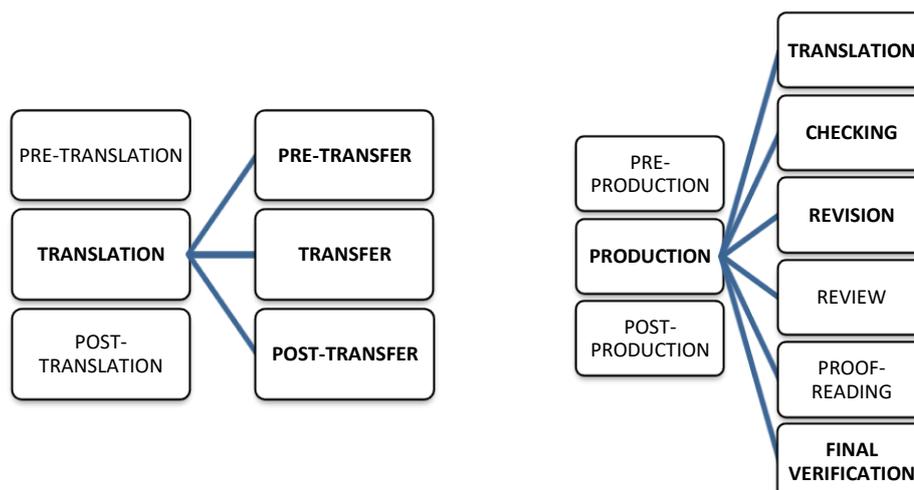
Fig. 1. A simplified model of the translation workflow according to Gouadec (2010) (left) and ISO 17100 (2015) (right)

Thus, to avoid confusion, it needs to be explained that the terms in the title of this article, namely *pre- and post-translation stages* are used here in the sense of Gouadec's (2010) *pre-transfer, transfer,* and *post-transfer* stages and in great majority cover the activities these categories contain in Gouadec's (ibid.) classification. However, as the main inspiration behind this article is the specifications set out in ISO 17100 and the idea of standardization of the translation process, the model proposed in ISO 17100 is adopted here, particularly in relation to the production stage. Summing up, in this article *pre-translation activities* (Gouadec's *pre-transfer*) refer to the analysis of the source text and translation order (specification), preparation of all necessary resources (including technical), terminology and information mining, preparation of translation memories and terminological databases, and setting up all necessary translation tools (i.e. CAT tools). In other words, *pre-translation* comprises all preparatory activities that a translator working as a freelancer should perform before commencing a translation project. Furthermore, *translation* is understood as Gouadec's *transfer* and ISO 17100's *production* and it refers to translation proper and all quality control activities in the order enumerated in the ISO standard. Finally, *pre-production* and *post-production processes* as defined by ISO 17100 are not discussed here, as they belong more to the scope of project management and translation agencies.

There is one more issue related to *post-translation* and quality control activities that requires clarification. It concerns the names, definitions and types of revision tasks. In Translation Studies literature there have been many attempts to define and classify translation revision tasks (for a brief review cf. Robert, 2007), which has lead to terminological disorder, as there exists a "confusing array of (...) synonyms increasingly used to express the revision concept" (Martin, 2007:58). Thus, *revision, checking, self-revision, proof-reading, editing* and *review* have different meanings and are used to denote different activities depending on the author and their particular approach to this issue. To avoid further confusion, in this work, the terms for various types of revision tasks will be used in the meaning defined in ISO 17100.

As already noted, ISO 17100 attaches great significance to revision and treats it as an inherent element of the translation process. The first procedure to be applied after *translation* is *checking* (referred to as *self-revision,* cf. Mossop, 2014) which is defined as the "examination of the target language content carried out by the translator" (ISO, 2015: 2) Checking is an obligatory step consisting in inspecting the translated text in order to eliminate possible grammatical, lexical or spelling mistakes. Moreover, the translator should make sure that there are no omissions and the text is compliant with the translation project specifications. Another compulsory quality control procedure is *revision* (sometimes also called *bilingual editing* or *other-revision*) which is defined as "bilingual examination of the target language content against source language content for its suitability for the agreed purpose" (ISO, 2015: 2). In this case, revision should be carried out by another person possessing competences of a translator in source and target languages and appropriate revision experience. Similarly to *checking*, *revision* is a bilingual operation, in which the reviser examines the translated text against the source langue text for errors and its suitability for purpose. The reviser has also the responsibility to examine the translated text for terminological content and compliance with client's requirements, style guide, semantic accuracy, appropriate TL grammar, syntax, and punctuation. Moreover, the reviser should make sure that the text is appropriately formatted and compatible with any local and applicable standards. The reviser either corrects the errors or recommends corrections to be introduced by the translator. The next two steps, namely *review* and *proofreading* are optional and should be implemented if they are required in project specifications. *Review* (also referred to as *monolingual editing*) is defined as "monolingual examination of target language content for its suitability for the agreed purpose" (ISO, 2015: 2). *Review* should be performed by a domain specialist with qualifications in a given domain confirmed with a higher education diploma or appropriate experience. However, as *review* is a monolingual operation carried out on the translated material, the reviewer does not have to know the language of the original. On the other hand, *proofreading* consists in the examination of the already revised target language content and applying corrections before the translation is printed (ISO, 2015). The final and obligatory part of the translation process is final verification and release. At this stage, the translation undergoes final verification according to project specifications before it is delivered to the client. The person responsible for this phase is the project manager, who in case of any defects should apply corrective measures (ISO, 2015).

The figure below presents the activities in the ISO 17100 *production* stage, with the obligatory procedures presented in blue boxes.

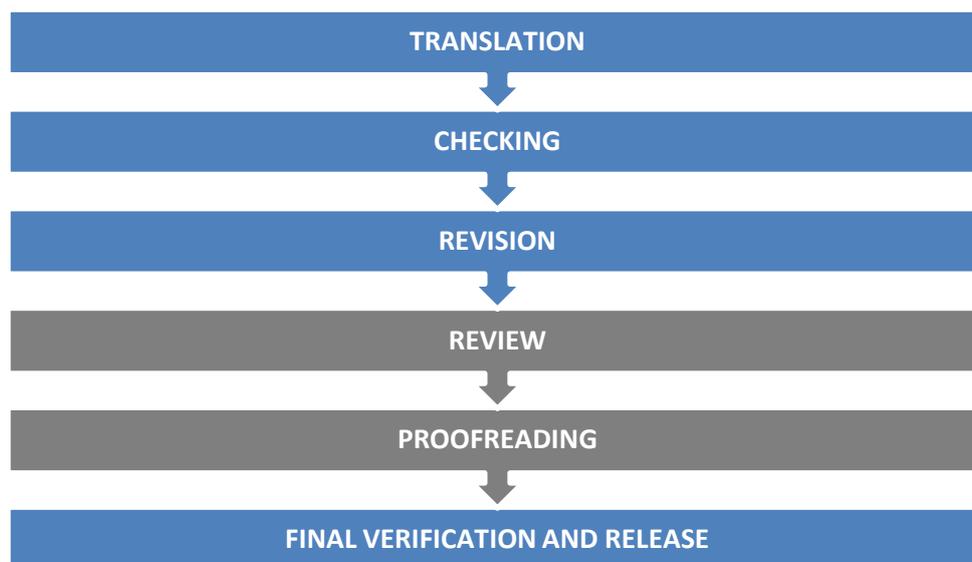| TRANSLATION |
|:---:|
| CHECKING |
| REVISION |
| REVIEW |
| PROOFREADING |
| FINAL VERIFICATION AND RELEASE |

Fig. 2. Obligatory and optional activities of the production stage in ISO 17100 (2015)

Summing up, the publication of EN 15038 and subsequently ISO 17100 has drawn more attention to the various stages of the translation process and made it evident that high quality translation services are a sum of various efforts and processes, a result of efficient management, appropriate planning and preparation, as well as effective quality control management implemented at the right stage and time. Thanks to these standards, more attention has also been drawn to the various types of revision activities, which have been recognized as the inherent components of the translation production stage. As the standard was created in response to translation market requirements and its aim is to enhance the quality of translation services by regulating the translation process, it has also certain implications for translator education. Trainee translators need to be made aware of the subsequent stages of the translation process and they need to develop skills necessary in these stages to be able to render professional services either as freelancers or perform efficiently one of the roles of translation service providers in the translation workflow. Therefore, it is important to make future translators aware of this fact and incorporate activities for practicing these skills in translator education schemes. Finally, following the stages increases the likelihood that fewer errors will go unnoticed and the final product will be of better quality.

4. Teaching translation at the undergraduate level

In this section, the question of what to teach during a translation course at the undergraduate level will be addressed. To explore this issue, we need to take into account the contemporary translation market requirements for translators. As specified in the aforementioned standard, translation process is a sequence of various stages and procedures which requires various sets of skills and abilities. Providing translation services is a complex task and translation skills alone are no longer enough to render them professionally. When we look at translation stages, it

is evident that each of these stages (*source text analysis, information and terminology mining, preparation of termbases, translation memories, setting up translation tools, text production, quality control*, etc.) requires a set of different skills. Apart from translating, translators have to be expert terminologists, project managers, information researchers, revisers and editors. In translation agencies these roles are normally divided and performed by several specialists, but freelancers running their own businesses have to perform all these roles by themselves. The various stages of the translation workflow illustrate also the enormous diversification and specialization of translator's professional roles which have taken place recently partially due to the advent of translation technologies and market diversification. In other words, modern translators are required by the market to perform various roles while providing translation services (either as freelancers or working for translation agencies), and the role of a translator is only one of them. For this reason, translation training should account for this diversification and translation programmes should offer students the possibility to become acquainted with all the above-mentioned major roles as well as to develop all necessary skills and competences to perform these roles efficiently.

According to Davies (2004a), teaching translation at the undergraduate level requires different approach, course design and procedures than teaching at postgraduate levels due to different students' aims, background, preparation or attitude. She rightly observes that students' knowledge and beliefs about translation have significant impact on the learning process. This is so since at this initial stage students have usually a very low awareness of what translation entails. They tend to think naively that translation is a simple transfer of words between two languages and all solutions can be found in dictionaries. Davies (2004a) is of the opinion that undergraduate studies should lay foundations for and introduce students to the translation profession by instrumentalisation and pre-specialisation. The first is understood as familiarising students with translation technologies, tools and resources and the second involves introducing students to different roles of translation service providers and in this way preparing them for future specialisations in the various roles mentioned above. Davies further specifies that undergraduate studies in translation should offer subjects which develop:

- translators' linguistic skills (SL and TL linguistic competence, awareness of cross-linguistic transfer);
- thematic knowledge in various areas including terminology management; translation skills: (problem-spotting and problem-solving, encouragement of creativity and self-confidence as translators, awareness and use of strategies, ability to decide on degrees of fidelity according to translation assignment and text function, learning to meet client's expectations, ability to produce quality translations at speed, overcoming constraints, practicing direct and reverse translation to meet real market demands, self and peer evaluation skills) (Davies, 2004);
- information mining skills with the use of paper, electronic and human resources; technological competence (familiarization with general and dedicated translation tools and technologies);

- and last but not least professional translation skills (including various revision processes, translation management tasks and real life practice tasks) (Davies, 2004a).

As can be seen, these areas correspond to the competences specified in the PACTE model of translation competence, which include bilingual, extra-linguistic, translation, instrumental and strategic (and psycho-physiological) sub-competences (PACTE 2011). Davies (2004) concludes her discussion of the pedagogical content of undergraduate studies with the statement that in the first stage of translation education students should acquire general and procedural skills (knowing how), and later at the graduate and post-graduate levels, they should develop their declarative knowledge (knowing what) and further expand their procedural skills. She further emphasizes that the sooner the students develop procedural skills, the more these skills become internalized, which provides a solid foundation for professional work.

Nord (2005), however, is of the opinion that a solid linguistic and cultural competence should be the foundation for teaching translation and not the object of such training. In her opinion translation should not be taught too early, before students acquire adequate TL competence, because in such a case translation classes turn imperceptibly into language classes. According to Nord (2005), translation training proper should start when students have sufficient linguistic and cultural competence, are acquainted with translation tools and have some theoretical background in translation strategies and intercultural communication. Her model of translation training follows a pig-tail philosophy where translation competence is developed gradually and systematically by grading the difficulty of translation tasks and grounding practical exercises in theoretical concepts. According to Nord (2005), at the initial phase of translation training grammatical and stylistic norms should be less important than pragmatic accuracy. This means that retaining the function of the text should have priority over linguistic correctness, which should receive more attention in the advanced stages of translation training. Nord also addresses the issues of quality control and emphasizes that quality management should be included to a certain extent in translation training and students need to learn to revise their own and others' translations.

On the other hand, Nord (2005) is aware that students begin their translation studies with insufficient command of the target language and therefore she advocates adapting the development of linguistic and cultural competence specifically to translator training at the undergraduate level. Likewise, Malmkjaer (2006) argues that, even though undergraduate students may possess poorer language skills, they can still benefit from translation training at this level, if the teaching of language and translation skills is incorporated into the study programme from the beginning. Moreover, even though undergraduate translation studies may not produce full-fledged professional translators, they prepare students for further development and initiate them into the profession. A similar stance is presented by Gile (2009), who admits that despite weak linguistic competence, undergraduate students may still gain from a translation course because they get

acquainted with the translation process and learn what professionalism means in translation.

Summing up the above discussion, translation training is a complex process in which a whole range of factors has to be accounted for (among others, students' linguistic skills and knowledge, translation market requirements, translation profession norms, models of translation competence, translation process, and the various roles translators have to perform). It is barely possible to pack all these aspects into two years of undergraduate studies and for this reason translation training should be dispensed gradually. During the initial years solid foundations should be constructed as this will enable further development and professionalization. Therefore, Gile (2009) advocates adopting a two-stage approach to translation training: *process-oriented training* coming before *product-oriented training*. The role of the first stage is to focus on the process not the product, on demonstrating how to translate to achieve quality. In other words, the aim of this stage is to develop procedural knowledge, introduce students to translation problems and procedures, teach translation strategies and teach about reasons for translation errors. Moreover, this stage should aim at enhancing students' awareness of the significance of the translation process for translation quality, and making them realize that good preparation and revision are obligatory in the translation workflow. *Product-oriented training* should be introduced after students master the fundamentals of the translation process and it should focus more on linguistic aspects and students' translation choices. Although Gile (2009) postulates concentrating on the translation process during the first few weeks or months of training depending on the length of the course, this dichotomic model can be well applied to solve the dilemma what to teach at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Therefore, it can be assumed that translation courses at the undergraduate level should constitute an introduction to the translation profession, initiate students to professional skills and lay foundations for further development and education. Although the main focus should be on procedures, strategies and techniques, it does not mean that the development of linguistic competences can be neglected. As mentioned earlier, language training should be incorporated into translation training from the very beginning and adapted to students' specific needs. As highlighted by Davies (2004), during this stage students should learn to understand the process of translation and acquire critical skills through reflective learning. They also need to develop awareness, reflectiveness and resourcefulness, which, as Bernardini (2004) points out, are the characteristics essential for professional translators and should be treated as long-term goals pursued throughout the whole translation training process.

4.1. Teaching business translation at the undergraduate level

In this section, several issues concerning teaching business translation at the undergraduate level will be addressed. The discussion will refer principally to Business English Studies offered at the University of Applied Sciences in Nysa, and at the Technical University of Czestochowa, Poland within which business translation is taught.

The principal aim of the aforementioned studies is to educate experts in specialized communication in business English, who, apart from proficient command of English, possess also practical knowledge and expertise in business-related fields. Thanks to this combination of linguistic skills with thematic knowledge, the graduates of the business English specialization are prepared to undertake jobs connected with different forms of communication in business environment. The curriculum of business English specialization offered at both universities is composed of three major components, each of them focusing on a different set of skills and competences. The first group includes practical courses (*practical grammar, general and specialized vocabulary, listening, writing, phonetics, speaking, public speakingin Polish and English, etc*.) aimed at building students' linguistic skills. This module is complemented with courses developing students' cultural knowledge and competences (*civilisations and institutions of the English-speaking countries and culture* and *literature of the English-speaking countries, negotiations with elemnents of intercultural communication*). The second major group comprises courses concerned with developing students' specialist knowledge in economics, trade and business management (for example: *micro- and macroeconomics, European Union studies, elements of commercial and administrative law, business management and organisation, marketing and public relations, elements of busines law*, *buiness ethics, social communication,* and *media studies*). On the verge of the above-mentioned modules, there are courses combing linguistic skills with specialised economic and buiness knowledge (*business English, legal English, commercial correspondence in English*), which equip students with practical knowledge of specialised business terminology supported with theoretical knowledge of business and economic phenomena and processes. Finally, there is a group of courses whose aim is to initiate students to the arcana of practical translation and interpreting in business contexts. This translation-oriented module is introduced during the third year of studies and includes courses such as: *practical translation, practical interpreting,* and *theory of translation and specialied langauges*. Moreover, within this module the students are acquianted with translation technologies and practical issues of the translation profession (*information technologies for translators* and *pragmatics of translation profession*).

Summing up this short overview, the graduates of business English studies are educated to become business English specialists competent to engage in various forms of business communication and are prepared to work in economic and government organizations cooperating with international partners. The skills acquired during the course of studies enable the graduates to seek employment in various types of businesses operating in all sectors of economy (including the sectors of services and translation and tourism industries) where a good command of English, communication skills and cultural competences are required. The main focus of the aforementioned curriculum is on developing linguistic skills and specialised business knowledge as well as introducing students to translation activities.

One of the limitations of this study programme is that translation training starts at the third year and lasts for two semesters. The total number of hours for translation training is 180, out of which 120 is devoted to practical classes, and 60

for introducing theoretical issues. The number of hours planned for developing practical translation skills is relatively high; however, in students' opinions not sufficient. According to them, translation training should be incorporated into the curriculum earlier, staring with the second year, so that they could have more time to practice translation skills and get acquainted with translation technologies. Of course, during their second year the students' linguistic competence is still developing and they may be not ready to start translating. Indeed, insufficient language skills are the main obstacle and challenge encountered in teaching business translation to students at the undergraduate level. As practice shows, the candidates usually start their studies in business English with A2 or B1 level of English of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. When they start the translation module which is introduced during the third year of studies, they should be approximating level C2, however in practice this is usually B2 (or C1), which is definitely insufficient to commence translation activities. This means that the students during translation classes contend not only with a new type of mental activity but they still struggle with language – grammatical, lexical and stylistic issues which they have not mastered properly yet. As stressed above, trainees at this level are usually not aware of the various linguistic and pragmatic intricacies and they tend to think that translation is a straightforward activity consisting in simple replacement of words between two languages (Davies 2004). This stage is described by Davies (2004) as the *unconscious incompetence stage*. When students start discovering what translation is about and when they start to discern the challenges and problems it entails, they enter the *conscious incompetence stage*, in which they realize that translation is not as easy as it seemed, that their knowledge of English is not sufficient, that they have to work hard to improve it and that there is a long way ahead of them and a lot to be learnt. With this realization comes the next level referred to as *conscious competence*, when trainees develop their translation skills, problem solving strategies, and build their knowledge and competences much more consciously. Finally, they reach the expert stage, the stage of *unconscious competence*, in which most of the skills are internalized and trainees are able to apply the knowledge and skills learnt to produce good quality translations (Davies 2004).

Coming back to the students of business English specialization, they start their translation education convinced that translation is a simple task, and unaware of their own linguistic deficiencies. At this stage their performance is usually unsatisfactory and their translations leave a lot to be desired, especially in terms of linguistic correctness. However, since the process of building linguistic competence is a long one and most students need more time to improve their language skills, it is not realistic to expect that it will happen overnight. Therefore, to make the translation classes beneficial for students in spite of their weaker linguistic performance, it seems rational to adapt the model advocated by Gile (2009) and concentrate on the translation process, allowing the students to hone their language skills "in the meantime". Focusing on the translation process helps the students to build healthy working habits, which in turn will allow them to work more efficiently in the future. Moreover, as explained above, it is believed that following certain procedures and sticking to specified rules have a direct correlation to the quality of the product, as the risk of making mistakes and

overlooking already made errors is diminished. Therefore, this means that at this level a greater focus should be on pre- and post- translation activities enabling better preparation and quality control rather than on linguistic accuracy.

5. Analysis of students' translations and implications for translation training

In this section, on the basis of an analysis of students' translations, main problems and areas which need improvement in students' approach to pre-and post-translation stages will be discussed. For the purpose of this article, translations performed by students as their in-class or homework assignments within the course of practical translation at the above mentioned specializations were examined. The analysis was performed on the basis of errors spotted in students' works, as it was assumed that error analysis (cf. Sikora 2015) can constitute a source of valuable information about the development of students' translation competence and the potential causes for the occurrence of errors. In this sense, the analysis of translation errors was treated as a didactic tool informing about the stages of the translation process and activities which were and were not performed by the students in the particular stages. The mistakes which were identified in students' translations were classified as such which indicate problems in either pre- or post-translation stage. This means that particular errors may have appeared (e.g. spelling errors, lack of diacritics, bad formatting, a translation equivalent used in a wrong context) because certain activities which should have been performed at particular stages were skipped or neglected. The results of the analysis point to certain deficiencies in the pre-and post-translation stages which, if not eliminated, may have detrimental influence on the translation product quality and in this way draw attention to the importance of these stages in the translation workflow and their significance to translation quality.

In relation to pre-translation activities, as defined in section 2 above, it was observed that students' translations contain mistakes indicating that they have a tendency to commence a translation task not understanding its content and terminology, which often leads to various factual and linguistic errors. The other problems indicative of poor preparation include using wrong terms in wrong contexts, translating names of institutions, proper names and addresses when it is not necessary, translating literally unknown terms and concepts without appropriate information research, and finally lack of terminological consistency. Frequent mistakes indicating deficits in the post-translation phase include problems with physical presentation of the translated document such as poor formatting and layout (wrong spacing, double or no spaces), typographical defects (inconsistent use of font types, sizes, bolding or underlining) or document organization (wrong or no page numbering, problems with creating lists or tables of contents). The other areas include punctuation errors (wrong use or no commas, full stops, unnecessary or lack of necessary spaces, wrong use of capital letters), spelling errors, missing diacritics in Polish, omissions, non-translated fragments, repetitions as well as poor unnatural style, awkward structures, non-existent collocations, wrong grammar forms both in English and in Polish. It is possible that some of these mistakes (e.g. wrong spacing, spelling errors, missing diacritics, and wrong formatting) emerged

because students simply had not revised their translations before submitting. The other reasons could be lack of formatting and document organization skills, carelessness, poor attention to detail, lack of awareness of translation quality aspects, insufficient as well as poor source and target language skills. Definitely, some of these errors could have been eliminated if the students had not skipped the self-revision stage; others emerged because students have not yet developed certain competences and at this stage they probably could not have been avoided.

It should be however noted that the analysed translations were performed by trainees who are still learning and developing their skills and thus have the right to make mistakes and produce imperfect translations. Moreover, it could also be the case that some of the mistakes appeared because of poor linguistic skills of the undergraduate students.

Summing up, the analysis reveals specific needs of trainee translators in relation to pre-and post-translation stages and indicates areas that are particularly sensitive and require more attention. First of all, the investigation suggests that students do not devote enough time to pre-translation activities, namely: text analysis, text comprehension, information and terminology search, vocabulary preparation. It also shows that post-translation activities, namely checking and revision are frequently skipped and neglected and that more instruction and practical exercises to help students develop their pre- and post- translation skills are needed. Finally, the analysis indicates that there is a need to enhance students' awareness of the translation process and its inherent stages, attention to detail, resourcefulness, inquisitiveness and persistence, and last but not least motivation.

To remedy the situation a range of activities aimed at developing pre- and post-translation skills can be applied.

6. Activities to improve pre-and post-translation skills

There is a wide range of activities, tasks and exercises which can be designed to help students practice particular pre- and post-translation skills and build their translation process awareness.

The aim of pre-translation activities is to prepare students for translation tasks and in this way minimize the risk of possible mistakes that can appear due to text miscomprehension, wrong identification of text type, misunderstanding client's requirements, lack of specialised knowledge, miscomprehension and wrong use of specialised terminology, as well as insufficient information mining skills. Pre-translation activities can be further divided into three categories. The first category comprises exercises aimed at practicing text analysis and reading comprehension. Examples of such exercises could be discussing translation brief and client's requirements, analyzing source and target text function and purpose, as well as identifying potential translation problems.

The second group of activities is concerned with exercises intended to improve students' information mining skills and expanding their repertoire of information and terminological resources. As this is not possible for translators to be experts in all domains and in professional reality they are often confronted with tasks which exceed their competencies, information mining skills are crucial to overcome such

deficiencies, especially in the era of the Internet, when various information resources are readily available. This means that future translators should have the means and methods – they should know where to look for information (resources), how to find it efficiently and quickly (searching skills) and how to assess the reliability and usefulness of the resources used (critical assessment). Consequently, this area requires particular attention, because well developed information mining skills will allow students to eliminate factual errors and avoid mistakes related to text misunderstanding, using wrong terminology, or using words in a wrong context. Moreover, thanks to internalizing information mining skills students will be able to work more efficiently in the future. Activities in this group should contain exercises acquainting students with various available resources (parallel texts, Internet websites, monolingual and bilingual paper and online dictionaries, terminology management tools and applications, search engines, translator and language forums, databases, termbases, language corpora, encyclopaedias, machine translation tools) as well as exercises aimed at developing and polishing students' searching skills (searching techniques: monolingual vs. bilingual search, using keyboard shortcuts, search operators, copy-pasting techniques, opening multiple tabs, using the "find" function, etc.) Exercises which could be used at this stage include:

- compiling a list of resources to retrieve specialized information or terminology,
- finding and explaining specialist information, using parallel texts for retrieving information,
- dictionary look up activities for a list of specialized terms,
- Google Translate exercises in which students have to machine translate a list of slang or idiomatic expressions, and
- terminology search exercises in which students provide a list of specified Internet resources they used for completion of the assignment.

The last group of pre-translation activities is related to terminology preparation and management. Before starting a translation assignment students can compile wordlists and glossaries in various formats using available online applications (for example, Google Docs) and build more professional termbases with the use of CAT tools (for example MultiTerm Trados, or memoQ termbase). Exercises of this type develop healthy professional habits of storing terminological work for future use and also have a direct impact on translation quality due to enhanced terminological consistency. They also foster students' awareness of the significance of terminology management as part of translation workflow. Moreover, they encourage resourcefulness, motivation and persistence which are indispensable characteristics of any professional translator.
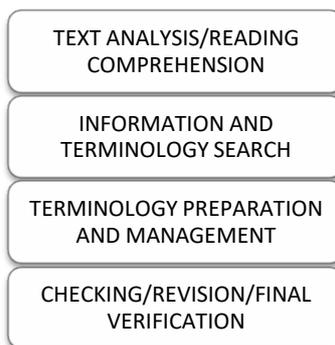
| TEXT ANALYSIS/READING COMPREHENSION |
| INFORMATION AND TERMINOLOGY SEARCH |
| TERMINOLOGY PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT |
| CHECKING/REVISION/FINAL VERIFICATION |

Fig. 3. Areas of pre- and post-translation activities (selected)

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Post-translation activities are related mainly to quality management and control and their aim is to raise students' attention to quality issues, attention to detail, sensitivity to client's specific quality requirements, awareness of various quality levels (rough draft, in-house quality, publication quality), orderliness and accuracy. Furthermore, as a result of activities in this group students should learn various forms of self- and peer-revision and realize that a neat layout and proper formatting also count as translation quality factors. Thanks to well planned exercises students have a chance to learn that revision, review and final verification are the inherent stages of the translation process which contribute significantly to translation quality as they allow for elimination of errors and omissions. Since this stage is often skipped or neglected, it is essential to automatize revision-related activities through regular practice (the same is true for preparatory tasks) so that they become future translators' second nature. Exercises which could be used to instil in students healthy revision habits and enhance their awareness of this stage include:

- peer correction and evaluation exercises with the use of the "track changes" function in MsWord or in the Google Docs application,
- spotting errors in texts both in source and target languages,
- correcting faulty translations – e.g., authentic restaurant menu taken from a local restaurant, local tourist guide or brochure,
- self-reflection forms in which students describe problems they encountered while translating and solutions they implemented,
- in-class discussion of quality aspects and evaluation criteria – as a form of preparation for a translation assignment and post-translation feedback,
- post-editing of machine translated texts – e.g., students post-edit several texts (instruction manual, newspaper article, recipe) translated both into their native language and to L2 to assess the quality and usability of machine translation for various text types. These exercises may be used to show the students the limitations of machine translation tools and to make them realize that post-editing machine translated texts is usually time- and effort-consuming,
- performing tasks with special formatting specifications to boost students' formatting skills and to make them realize that neat formatting is one of the quality aspects which should not be neglected,
- stimulating reflection by group discussion of translation problems,

- detailed feedback and discussion after each revision exercise prior to final verification to discuss solutions selected, praise good points, find alternative solutions, indicate areas which need improvement and in general to foster students' self-confidence and motivation.

These activities should foster diligence, regularity, and accuracy and facilitate the development of professional habits, in order to help the students become confident and efficient translators.

7. Concluding remarks

Summing up, teaching translation at the undergraduate level has certain limitations, which are connected mainly with students' insufficient linguistic skills. To overcome students' deficiencies, and let them grow and benefit from the training, it seems better to concentrate first on the process of translation and teaching the students the subsequent stages of the translation workflow. Students knowing how – knowing which procedures they should follow and which norms they should obey – will gain more confidence and will be more likely to avoid mistakes which can appear if the preparation and checking stages are omitted or performed carelessly. Moreover, by practicing the subsequent stages the students will have a chance to develop healthy professional habits, which will enable them to work more efficiently in the future. Also, standardization of the translation workflow and knowing how to use translation tools appropriately should help the students to produce better translations in the future. What is more, at the initial stage when students are still busy learning their foreign language, focusing on procedural knowledge should be more motivating and empowering than focusing on linguistic mistakes and deficiencies. More specifically, before students will be able to concentrate on linguistic issues and linguistic accuracy, they need to:

- become acquainted with translation problem and procedures,
- develop awareness of the significance of translation process stages to the quality of the final product,
- become aware that good preparation and revision are the obligatory states of the translation process which can considerably boost its quality, and
- understand that translation proper is of utmost importance but it cannot be pursued without properly undertaken pre-and post-translation tasks.
- Training at this stage has a very important role to fulfill – it should instill in students certain professional values, skills and habits to make them better translators in the future.

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