
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE TRANSLATOR TRAINING

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Abstract. *The paper discusses the translator's role(s) in the globalized translation market and translator training issues in relation to knowledge and skills (linguistic, cultural, field-specific, etc.), necessary for young translators. Among the questions discussed in the paper are translation process involving linguistic elements, as well as translation as a cognitive process, interrelation between language and culture, dichotomy of literal vs free translation. The article engages with the challenges posed by a complex and responsible task of being a translator in a diversified world. Seeking to identify students' experiences of training and perceptions of the role they are going to play as professional translators an interview with students-trainees was conducted. The interview was focused on the question whether knowledge of translation theory aids in performing practical translation tasks. The data collected from the students' responses allowed identifying their learning patterns, most challenging areas in translator training, the (mis)match between theory and practice. The research was based on a qualitative research paradigm assuming students' experiences being of great importance in the process of assessing the value and quality of the translator training and interaction between theoretical insights of translator's roles and practical experience.*

Key words: *translator's roles, culture, translator training, translator's competence*

Introduction

Translations have historically maintained a central role in the diffusion of knowledge, culture, religions, arts, and sciences across national and cultural borders. Although the globalization processes have fostered an international milieu in which English is increasingly the lingua franca in popular culture, economic, technological, and academic conversations alike, distances and differences among cultures remain, and translations retain a central role in international communication. The landscape is, however, evolving at the turn of the 21st century.¹ Translator training and translator's role in the globalized translation labour market are the current issues discussed in scholarly publications in relation to translation knowledge and skills (linguistic, cultural, field-specific, etc.), necessary for young translators. Bearing in mind the changing landscape of translation, translator training has attracted scholars, educators, publishers, critics' attention² in terms of translation quality, translator's identity, employability, translator training and professional readiness. The scope of Translation Studies and understanding translation phenomenon are represented by issues from other fields such as linguistics, literary criticism, philosophy, cultural studies. Furthermore, according to some authors:³ "Translation issues have expanded to encompass concerns of power, national, regional, social, and individual identity concerns; concerns that go well beyond matters of purely linguistic nature." Tymoczko⁴ discusses translator's role as a neutral mediator, whereas Trotter and DeCapua⁵ referring to Pym⁶ claim that they are representatives of a minimal interculture and sociolinguistic beings.

Surveys conducted between 2023-2024 indicate about 250 translator training programmes of different levels, among them 187 master level and 60 bachelor level study programmes.⁷ However, this list is not finite, as new training programmes constantly evolve, very often paired with intercultural communication or digital technologies. In Lithuania today we have seven university degree translator training programmes of different levels. Bridging the gap between the university and world of work is a crucial task for all educators, understanding the relationship between classroom and the professional activities are of utmost importance.

The article engages with the challenges posed by a complex and responsible task of being

1 Sigismondi, Paolo (ed.). 2016. *Babel and Globalization: Translating in the 21st Century*. International Journal of Communication 10(2016), 862.

2 Tymoczko, M., "Translation, ideology and creativity = Traduction, idéologie et créativité". 2, 27-45 (2003), *Linguistica antverpiensia*; Gile, D. "Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training". Revised Edition. John Benjamins Publishing Company (2009); Pym A. *Exploring Translation Studies* (2010, 2023)

3 Trotter, E., and DeCapua, A., "The role of the literary translator in the new Europe and the literary translator as role model" *Linguistics and the Human Sciences* 1.3 448 (2005).

4 *Ibid.*

5 Trotter and DeCapua, *supra note*, 454.

6 Pym, A., *Method in Translation History*. UK, Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing. (2014).

7 Master's degrees in translation&interpreting in Europe <https://www.mastersportal.com/search/master/translation-interpreting/europe>; Bachelor's degrees in Translation & Interpreting in Europe <https://www.bachelorsportal.com/search/bachelor/translation-interpreting/europe>.

a translator in a diversified world overwhelmed by technological tools and AI. Among the issues discussed in the paper are: i. translation process involving linguistic elements, as well as, ii. translation as a cognitive process, iii. interrelation between language and culture, iv. dichotomy of literal vs. free translation. Therefore, the questions to be answered in this paper are: What role(s) are prescribed to a translator by researchers? How do these roles correlate with the curriculum designed to train translators? Is it efficient and up to date to meet professional requirements? What skills are necessary for a present translator in the labour market?

1. Translator's roles and characteristics

As indicated by Trotter & Decapua⁸ the role of the translator is critical as they must possess more than the knowledge of linguistic differences between the languages; they must be able to understand and convey the cultural similarities and differences between the source and the target languages. Translators are seen as *transmitters of a European culture*⁹, *mediators of communication*¹⁰, representatives of new inter-cultures between the source and target text, networkers¹¹ the role of the translator as a cultural mediator in transmitting texts from one culture to a different one¹². Such descriptions oblige translators with new roles and commitments and require in depth analysis of their training questions. Discussion about the translator's position reveals a very broad scope of scientific research and diversified viewpoint.¹³ Following Sigismondi: "The role of translator shifts then from the *traduttore traditore* (translator traitor) paradigm to the one of chief negotiator, whose skills are increasingly necessary to navigate a complex, multilayered, and multisemiotic global landscape."¹⁴

Munday¹⁵ focuses his attention on the position and involvement of the translator. Venuti¹⁶ discusses "the invisibility of the translator" in Anglo-American culture in relation to the use of the domesticating and foreignizing translation strategies. The terms

8 Trotter, and DeCapua, *supra note*, 449.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Tymoczko, M. "Translation, ideology, and creativity". *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series – Themes in Translation Studies*, 2 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.52034/lanstts.v2i.74>.

11 Williams, J. *Theories of Translation*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. DOI 10.1057/9781137319388.

12 Shirinzadeh, S., A. and Mahadi, T., S., T. *Translators as Cultural Mediators in Transmitting Cultural Differences* 3rd International Conference on Linguistics, Literature and Culture (ICLLIC 2014) Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 208 (2015) 167 – 174. Published by Elsevier. www.sciencedirect.com.

13 Munday, J. *Introducing Translation studies*, 2008; Also: Venuti, L. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. 1st edition. UK: Routledge (1995): 1- 42 ; *Exploring Translation Theories*. 1st ed. London, New York: Routledge, 2010.; Tymoczko, M. Translation, ideology, and creativity. *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series – Themes in Translation Studies*, (2021): 2. <https://doi.org/10.52034/lanstts.v2i.74>.

14 Sigismondi, P. "Babel and Globalization: Translating in the 21st Century". *International Journal of Communication* 10 (2016): 860–867.

15 Munday, J. *Introducing Translation studies* 2008.

16 Venuti, L. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. 1st edition. UK: Routledge (1995): 1- 42.

visibility/“invisibility” of a translator coined by Venuti¹⁷ gained attention from other translation scholars as well as regards the issue of fluent and/or transparent translation. Furthermore, the invisibility of translator’s work resulted in an approach to translation as a secondary activity. In her influential article Tymoczko¹⁸ sets out to problematise the trope of “in-betweenness” which has gained currency as a way of defining the translator’s location vis-à-vis the source and target texts and audiences. The author moves on stating that “translation is a major form of cultural activity that involves language interface, cultural mediation, restructuring of perspective, challenges to existing norms, and importation of difference.”¹⁹

Another important issue regarding translator’s characteristics is the aspect of culture in translation. Cultural translation is associated with material movement, the position of a translator, cultural hybridity and the crossing of borders. Describing the notion of cultural translation as a broad metaphor, Pym²⁰ calls for a wider discipline and looks at this phenomenon as “translation without translations”. This author builds on Bhabha (1994) and considers the translator’s role as “the position of someone who produces language from the “between space” of languages and cultures...”²¹ The position of a translator is conditioned by cultural hybridity; the latter being embedded in the translator’s role as she/he knows two languages and at least two cultures. Translation is seen as a key concept not just for “the encounter between cultures”.²² The interrelation between ideology and translation has also been discussed in multiple publications.²³ Sociocultural and ideological context where translators operate are relevant issues in modern research on translation. Furthermore, López and Caro²⁴ observe a shift in research on translation. They state: “The growing relevance and awareness of ideological aspects has been linked to the shift of the focus of research from the micro level of isolated linguistic units to the macro level of the socio-cultural context in which the translation act takes place”.²⁵

One more role prescribed for a translator in the contemporary research is the one of a mediator, specifically translator as a *neutral mediator* in the act of communication. Culture, according to Tymoczko,²⁶ is a construct embracing heterogeneous, varied and diverse phenomena and events to which the translator is inextricably bound through his or her ethnic, political or ideological allegiances translation theory and practice place into focus

17 Venuti, *supra note*, 16.

18 Tymoczko, *supra note*, 3..

19 *Ibid*

20 Pym, A. Exploring Translation Theories. 1st ed. London, New York: Routledge, 2010.

21 Pym, *supra note*, 147.

22 *Ibid*.

23 Tymoczko, 2014; Lopez and Caro, 2014; Pym, A. Exploring Translation Theories. 1st ed. London, New York: Routledge, 2010.

24 Rojo López, A. M., and Ramos Caro, M. The impact of translators’ ideology on the translation process: a reaction time experiment. *MonTI. Monographs in Translation and Interpreting*. (2015):247–271 <https://doi.org/10.6035/MonTI.2014.ne1.8>

25 *Ibid*, 251.

26 Tymoczko, *supra note*, 3.

the need for an informed ethics and the responsibility for collective action in the name of social change.

The question of creativity in translation occupies more and more of the research space within Translation Studies in line with the research into the stance and positionality of the translator. It is also an important issue while researching translator training. Referring to Itamar Even-Zohar (1978) Tymoczko²⁷ views creative dimensions of translation as well: “These creative dimensions of translation are particularly apparent in post-colonial contexts, illustrated here by the nexus of language interface, translation, and literary creativity in Ireland from the end of the nineteenth century to the present. Literary creation, translation, creative aspects of translation.”

Šalčiūtė-Čivilienė (2011) in her study overviewing translation situation and literary translation discourse in Lithuania since 1990 claims: “There are three areas where our research and scholarship in LTS strongly underperform, that is, the availability of large data, the application of standards in translation and teaching translation as well as the analyses of discourse and language change within literary and translation paradigms.”

A wide range of translator’s activities, overviewed in this section requiring specific skills and knowledge directly correlates with educational issues of the translator training and therefore, should be addressed in the paper. Bridging the gap between the university and world of work is a crucial task for all educators, understanding the relationship between classroom and the professional activities are of utmost importance. Williams speaks about the explosion of content and claims that “The increased volume of translation set in train by Web 2.0 as well as the entry of a significant number of volunteer translators into the field will open up additional areas of activity for the profession in quality assurance, technical writing and (post-) editing.”²⁸

Another important issue related to translator training is their employability. These days employability has not only become a veritable buzzword, but also one of the key indicators in the quality framework of Higher Education (HE) in so far as universities and degrees are regularly measured against the employability rates of their graduates and employers’ satisfaction. The issue has been discussed by a multiple of publications which discuss various schemes and initiatives with the effort to increase graduates’ employability²⁹. In Europe, the Bologna process can be considered as central to the development of employability within university curricula.

Rodríguez de Céspedes (p 141) explores how employability can be embedded in the curriculum providing a framework that HEIs can adapt to their particular contexts and needs following a holistic approach.

27 Tymoczko, *supra note*, 3.

28 Williams, J. *Theories of Translation*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. DOI 10.1057/9781137319388.

29 Begoña Rodríguez de Céspedes, Akiko Sakamoto & Sarah Berthaud (2017) *Introduction*, *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 11:2-3, 103-106, DOI: 10.1080/1750399X.2017.1339980.

2. Translator training in the 21 century

Over the last 20 years professions in multilingual communication have been rapidly developing, under pressure from technological changes and as a result of the transformation of markets, linked to globalisation, outsourcing and flexibility³⁰. Therefore, the training of translators has become a challenging pedagogical prospect. Following the Bologna Declaration³¹, a number of universities have launched translation programmes with reference to employability. These days employability has become one of the key indicators in the quality framework of Higher Education (HE) in so far as universities and degrees are regularly measured against the employability rates of their graduates and employers' satisfaction.

Šalčiūtė – Čivilienė³² in her study on translation situation in Lithuania analyses the situation in relation to translator training, labour market needs and translation industry, emphasizing the lack of empirical research into translator training. The author states that translator trainer's role is the least visible. The question of "teachability" of literary translation is also discussed. The author also claims: "In a narrow sense, translation theory and practice create their own cultures as systems of practices, beliefs, views, ideologies, and behaviour patterns embedded in and nurtured by other knowledge and culture systems." It is obvious that Šalčiūtė-Čivilienė³³ makes a distinction between theory and practice as separate fields of action and discourse considering practice "the primary source of learning".

Activities such as technical writing, editing and post-editing language consultancy and screen translation, for instance, are becoming core components of a translator's day-to-day practice. Translating has, moreover, become multimedial and multimodal as ever-greater use is made of computer-assisted tools such as hypertexts, translators' workbenches and Internet. As stated by Bowker³⁴ "In the contemporary translation industry, it is inconceivable to imagine working professionally as a translator without the support of a range of technologies, many of which have been developed or customized specifically for this industry." Hence, the focus is drawn on translator competences. What competences are necessary? What knowledge should a good translator acquire? What extra linguistic skills should be trained? The author stresses the changing character of translator's work and emphasizes the flexibility which „reflects the phenomenon of job mobilisation in general”³⁵

The concept of 'competence' embraces the combination of aptitudes, knowledge, behaviour and knowhow necessary to carry out a given task under given conditions.

30 The EMT Board and Competence Task-Force, European Commission. *EMT Competence Framework*. October, 2022; Directorate General for Translation, 2010.

31 The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999 <https://ehea.info/page-ministerial-conference-bologna-1999>.

32 Šalčiūtė – Čivilienė Šalčiūtė-Čivilienė, G. "Strands in Literary English-to-Lithuanian Translation Criticism In Lithuania Since 1990" *Lietuvių Kalba* 5, 2011, www.Lietuviukalba.lt.

33 *Ibid.*

34 Bowker, Lynne. *De-mystifying Translation: Introducing Translation to Non-translators*, 1st ed. London: Routledge, 2023: 44-45. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003217718>.

35 *Ibid.*

Gile³⁶ (2009) referring to Maillot's (1981) presents *four areas* of translator's competence:

- Good passive knowledge of passive working languages
- Good command of active working languages
- Sufficient knowledge of the themes and subject-matters addressed by the texts or speeches they translate
- declarative and procedural knowledge about Translation.

The programme *Translation and Editing* is of applied nature, designed for intensive development of translation and editing skills. The purpose of the *programme* is to prepare professional translators – editors having general philological education and comprehensive knowledge about the culture of the countries of the study languages, theoretical principles of translation and editing and being able to translate and edit texts in humanities and social sciences. (see Figure 1).

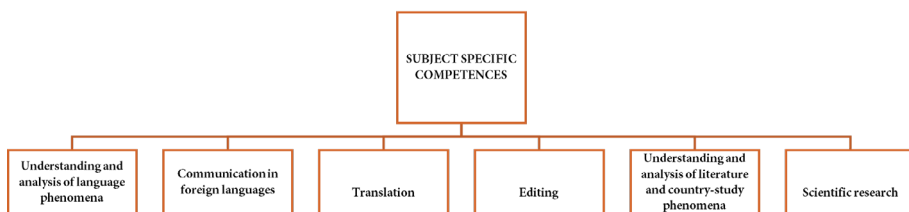


Fig. 1. Subject specific competences

The fourth component which the author categorizes as *declarative and procedural knowledge* about translation is, however, very broad as it combines knowledge of two areas. Declarative knowledge covers the knowledge about the marketplace, clients, information sources, tools and even specific expectations. Procedural knowledge is the ability to perform actions, meaning using techniques for ad hoc knowledge acquisition, problem solving, decision making, mastery of translation technology and technical skills for specialized forms of translation (web translation or audiovisual translation).

The final component is, however, very broad and combines different skills and aspects of translator training involving mastery of technological tools and awareness of clients' expectations and translation market. Moreover, Gile emphasises intellectual criteria and even personality features as important for translators.

36 Gile, D. *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*. Revised Edition. Bejamins Translation Library: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1075/btl.8>.

3. Methodological strategy and research principles

The methodological strategy used for the research was case study research of students' learning experience who are majoring in translation and editing. The research was based on a qualitative research paradigm assuming students' experiences being of great importance in the process of assessing the value and quality of the translator training programme.³⁷ I selected the sample based on my judgement as a teacher involved in translator training and the purpose of the research³⁸, looking for those who "have had experiences relating to the phenomenon to be researched"³⁹, *id est* students of the Translation study programme. Moreover, I intended to see the relationship between the theory and practice in translator training.

The research was conducted in two stages: i) case study of students' experiences; ii) a comparative analysis of obtained data and researchers' insights found in theoretical and research literature within Translation Studies.

The research sample was composed of 21 interviewees from different years of studies (2nd year – 5 students, 3d year -5 students, 4th year -11 students). The participants selected for this research have had different learning experience as the 4th year students are in their last study year and soon graduate the university. The participants of the study were coded by letters and the year of study (e.g. 2A; 2B, etc.).

Case study research is most often described as qualitative inquiry.⁴⁰ Grounding on Stake⁴¹ that "<... interviews and observations are the preferred and dominant data collection method" in the qualitative paradigm, I have chosen a semi-structured interview composed of six questions, two of them were open ended. In choosing a methodological position, careful consideration of the different case study open ended approaches is required to determine the design that best addresses the aim of the study, and that aligns with the researcher's worldview. The goal of this alignment is to engender coherence between the researcher's philosophical position, their research question, design, and methods to be used in the study.⁴² The interview was conducted seeking to identify students' experience of training and perceptions of the roles they are going to play as professional translators. The specific phenomenon to be discussed is the importance of translation theory in their training. Data are obtained about how the participants "think and feel in the most direct

37 Groenewald, T. "A Phenomenological Research Design Illustrated". *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), (2004): 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690400300104>.

38 Harrison, H., Birks, M., Franklin, R., and Mills, J. (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 18(1), Art. 19, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1701195>.

39 *Ibid.*

40 Harrison *et al*, *supra note*, 38.

41 Stake, Robert E. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. New York, NY: Guilford.

42 Farquhar, 2012, Luck *et al.*, 2006, Stewart, 2014, Yin, 2014 in Harrison, Helena; Birks, Melanie; Franklin, Richard & Mills, Jane (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 18(1), Art. 19, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1701195>.

ways”⁴³. The data are analysed and compared to the characteristics of a translator found in literature research and the aims of the study programme.

My central research question is about the relevance of translation theory: whether the knowledge of translation theory aids in practical translation assignments. My actual research questions are: *What knowledge and skills do you find as the most important for you as a future translator? Is theory of translation important when doing practical translation assignments? When you are given a translation assignment what might be the most problematic issues? What skills would you like to further develop that are crucial for your future career as a professional translator?*

As indicated in the research literature, the interview is reciprocal: both researcher and research subject are engaged in the dialogue. Kvale⁴⁴ (1996) remarks regarding data capturing during the qualitative interview that it “is literally an interview, an interchange of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest,” where researcher attempts to “understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold meaning of peoples’ experiences.” At the root of phenomenology, “the intent is to understand the phenomena in their own terms — to provide a description of human experience as it is experienced by the person herself” and allowing the essence to emerge⁴⁵.

Descriptive and comparative methods were used for the analysis of the collected research responses. The data were analysed and compared to the characteristics of a translator found in literature research as well as the *Translation* study programme curriculum.

4. Discussion of the case study results

The analysis of the data was carried out in two stages: i) analysis of participants’ responses; ii) comparative analysis of the overviewed researchers’ assumptions and the study results. The students were asked what knowledge and skills they find the most important for them as future translators to operate successfully in professional settings.

43 Bentz and Shapiro (1998): 96 in Harrison, Helena; Birks, Melanie; Franklin, Richard & Mills, Jane (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 18(1), Art. 19, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1701195>.

44 Kvale 1996 (1-2) in Harrison, Helena; Birks, Melanie; Franklin, Richard & Mills, Jane (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 18(1), Art. 19, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1701195>.

45 Bentz and Shapiro, (1998), 96; Cameron, Schaffer and Hyeon-Ae, (2001) in Harrison, Helena; Birks, Melanie; Franklin, Richard and Mills, Jane (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 18(1), Art. 19, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1701195>.

Table 1. Skills necessary for translators

Year of studies	Responses			
	<i>Ability to analyze ST professionally</i>	<i>Acquisition of key issues of translation theory</i>	<i>Good knowledge and skills of your mother tongue</i>	<i>Good knowledge and skills of a foreign language you are studying</i>
2 nd year	3	1	3	4
3 ^d year	1	2	2	5
4 th year	6	3	9	9

The data indicate that study participants do not treat the theory of translation as an important field of knowledge in their future career path. Only six respondents marked the answer “Acquisition of key issues of translation theory” as the most relevant for their future profession. However, more study participants view importance of their ability to analyse ST in professional settings, whereas practical linguistic skills seem to be of greater importance. The knowledge and skills of a foreign language are seen as the most important by most of the study participants (18 trainees), slightly less important are their mother tongue skills (14 trainees). The students’ understanding of their profession correlates well with Gile’s⁴⁶ two areas of a translator’s competence: i) good passive knowledge of passive working languages; ii) good command of active working languages (see Table 1.).

The data related to the open-ended question (*Is theory of translation important when doing practical translation assignments? Why/why not?*) revealed the difference between the students’ approach to the theory according to the year of study. The senior participants (4th year) acknowledge the importance of the theory for practical tasks, whereas younger students’ perception regarding the role of the theory for completing practical assignments is either neglected or related to their general knowledge base. For the 4th year students the theory of translation is important “...< because it helps to choose the most suitable translation strategy for a given text. It helps to deal with grammar differences between ST and TT and find the way to translate ST” (4A). “In every subject theory is basis on which practice is built.” (4B). “It is important because it helps us to overcome practical problems which arise during translation” (4G). The second year students’ negative approach to translation theory can be illustrated by such responses: “Not really, because theory is theory” (2C). Another response (2E) shows the student’s inability to apply theoretical assumptions into practice: “Not really, theories of translation is too difficult to apply and I try to find my own best way to translate”. Some students assume that theoretical knowledge is not important. Another worth mentioning response illustrates students’ narrow understanding of the necessity of the translation theory: “Experience is everything what you need nowadays.” (2B). However,

46 Gile, D. *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*, Revised Edition. Benjamins Translation Library; John Benjamins Publishing Company, (2009). <https://doi.org/10.1075/btl.8>.

language knowledge is not enough and therefore referring to Gile a translator's profile includes the so called extra-linguistic knowledge and even ad hoc knowledge, apart from acquisition of translation techniques, understanding translation strategies, styles, genres to be able to cope with difficulties. A professional translator must be able to perfectly understand the source text and understand the context well enough to produce a translation that accurately renders the same meaning as the source text, which is written in the same style and uses proper vocabulary regarding the type of a text (promotional, literary, legal, etc.).

The third question focused on translation strategies and techniques. The responses to this question (*When you are given a translation assignment what do you usually do?*) indicate students' experience, which stands in opposition to the responses neglecting the importance of the theory. Six participants indicate that they read the ST to find out the style and register of the text which imply some students' understanding of the theoretical concepts such as text register and style and their relevance for translation process. The philosophy and methodological grounding of the study programme embraces a good command of languages, subject specific knowledge and technological skills. One of the subject-specific competences indicated in the study programme description states: *Knowledge of principles of translation theories and principles of practical translation, as well as translation processes, methods and strategies, specifics of different registers, and translation tools and the second states: Ability to accurately and coherently translate texts conveying texts' content, style and respecting the aims and socio-cultural context.* Students of the programme are provided with knowledge about different registers and questions related to them, such as vocabulary, sentence structure, etc. as well as stylistic peculiarities of different literary and non-literary texts. They are taught to analyse and evaluate pieces of literature within the translation theory course as well as other subject courses. I assume that participants' responses reveal that development of these competences is underestimated.

In the preparation for translation process most of the study participants underline difficult vocabulary or most complex passages. Most of the participants read the whole text to grasp the main idea of the text. Thus, students are provided with the knowledge and skills how to deal with professional translation, what the stages of translation are.

The answers to the fourth question (*When you are given a translation assignment what might be the most problematic issues?*) illustrate the importance of translation theory for translation practice. The majority of the participants selected the answers *Culture specific words* (19 respondents) and *Finding the right equivalent* (15 respondents), and *Difficult terminology* (12 respondents) which also underlie the knowledge of theoretical concepts of translation. The participants' view at culture specific words and collocations as a possible problematic issue for completing a practical translation assignment coincides with scholars' approach to culture as being of great importance⁴⁷ as tasks of translation are carried out

47 Munday, J. *Introducing Translation Studies*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group, 2008. Pym, A. *Exploring Translation Theories*, 1st ed. London, New York: Routledge, 2010. Tymoczko, M. "Ideology and the Position of the Translator - In What Sense is a Translator 'In Between'?" In Calzada Pérez, Maria (ed.). *Apropos of Ideology: Translation Studies on Ideology - Ideologies in Translation*. St. Jerome's Publishing, (2003): 181-201.

in a cultural context.⁴⁸

The fifth question (*What skills would you like to further develop that are crucial for your future career as a professional translator?*) disclosed that the study participants experience lack of knowledge of foreign language lexis (14 interviewees) and grammar skills (13 interviewees), the senior respondents would like to learn more about translation strategies to cope with translation difficulties (7 respondents), to enrich their native language vocabulary (6 respondents) or to learn more about “Idioms and cultural aspects of a foreign language” (2B). The finding reveals students’ professional attitude towards their future career. The comparison of responses between the students from different study years indicates differences in students’ approaches to the skill development. The distribution of responses revealed that the 2nd year students are the least experiencing lack of knowledge about translation strategies to cope with translation difficulties. Furthermore, they do not see the necessity to improve their mother tongue. Conversely, they need more foreign language knowledge and skills (see Table 2).

Table 2. Skills necessary for the future career

Year of studies	Responses						
	<i>Improve foreign language grammar</i>	<i>Develop foreign language lexis</i>	<i>Enrich vocabulary of my native language</i>	<i>Improve my native language grammar</i>	<i>Improve my native language punctuation</i>	<i>Learn more about translation strategies to cope with translation difficulties</i>	<i>Indicate any other answer not mentioned</i>
2 nd year	4	4	1	-	2	-	1
3 ^d year	3	3	4	2	2	3	-
4 th year	7	6	5	4	4	4	-

The last question of the interview was focused on reflection in the learning process. The responses were different depending on the year of study (see Table 3.). The second-year interviewees perceive this activity mostly negatively. Their attitude toward writing reflections can be illustrated by several answers “No. It’s totally waste of time. I know my mistakes. I know by myself to what I should pay attention more. I think no need to write reflections for students” (2C). Another respondent (2B) pointed out: “Yes, but just to understand it yourself, not to write about it”. The latter response shows that students might be not eager to reveal their learning problems. However, the senior students perceive reflection in the learning

48 Shirinzadeh, S., A. and Mahadi, T., S., T. *Translators as Cultural Mediators in Transmitting Cultural Differences* 3rd International Conference on Linguistics, Literature and Culture (ICLLIC 2014) *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Elsevier, 208 (2015): 167 – 174. www.sciencedirect.com.

process as a useful self-evaluation tool: “Reflection is very important in learning process because when I am translating, I am trying to analyse what difficulties I have and what to do with those difficulties” (3E). Another interviewee understands this even in a broader sense indicating not only the problems while translating but also the level of the acquired skill by stating: “Reflection is important as it helps to see difficulties of translation to which aspects more attention should be paid. It also shows the strongest points; helps to analyse general knowledge of translation strategies and the ability to apply them.” (4A). The students’ responses to this question revealed the level of their maturity as university students: the younger ones tend to ignore the importance of reflection activity, whereas the senior ones understand the value of reflection for their development and overall learning process. However, language knowledge is not enough and therefore, a translator’s profile includes the so called extra-linguistic knowledge and even ad hoc knowledge⁴⁹ a professional translator must be able to perfectly understand the source text and understand the context well enough to produce a translation that accurately renders the same meaning as the source, is written in the same style and uses proper vocabulary with regard to the type of text (promotional, literary, legal). The senior participants’ assumptions on the role of reflection and its importance could be distinguished into four broader categories: i) overall learning process; ii) development of translation skills; iii) self-evaluation; iv) self-awareness (see Table 3).

Table 3. The role of reflection in study process

Year of study	Overall learning process	Development of translation skills	Self-evaluation	Self-awareness
3d year	5	2	2	-
4 th year	6	4	5	4

Senior students understand the importance of reflection in their studies on a wide range: interestingly, apart its relevance for overall learning process (6 respondents) and development of translation skills (4 respondents), they highly rate the importance of reflection for self-esteem and self-evaluation of their performed translation tasks.

Vice versa, the third-year students do not see the value of reflection for their self-evaluation (2 respondents) and self-awareness (none) although they perceive the relevance of reflection on the overall learning process.

Conclusions

Within the framework of approaches discussed above the translator’s roles prescribed by scholars range from a neutral mediator in communication to transmitter of cultures or representative of inter-cultures between the ST and T’T. Translator is in the position of

49 Gile, D. *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*, Revised Edition. Benjamins Translation Library: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1075/btl.8>.

producing a language from “between space” of languages and cultures while cultural hybridity is embedded in the translator’s role. The data on the study process, relevance of skill development, importance of reflection collected from the case study participants allowed identifying their learning patterns, most challenging areas in translator training, the (mis) match between the scholars’ theoretical insights and students’ experiences and approaches to the study process. The findings revealed:

- Senior students acknowledge the importance of the theory for their practical assignments of translation.
- They possess a more responsible understanding of their profession which involves not only a good command of their mother tongue and foreign language but also the necessity of translation strategies, techniques and extra-linguistic knowledge to cope with translation challenges. Among the skills which should be enhanced are translation skills.
- Senior students value reflection in their studies acknowledging its importance for self-esteem and professional development.

The findings of the research disclosed that students’ learning experience lead to a more mature picture of the translator’s profession, ability to assess their strengths and weaknesses. Most importantly, the global world and its challenges should be reflected in the curriculum of the programme, the need to develop new knowledge and skills should be reconsidered in order to integrate them into the existing content of the study subjects. Therefore, the programme curriculum should be updated and reviewed in line with the challenges and needs that come from the translation market. New skills such as machine translation, mastery of digital tools, change of translator’s activities as post editing should be reinforced.

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TEORINĖS IR PRAKTINĖS VERTĖJŲ RENGIMO PERSPEKTYVOS

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Santrauka. Straipsnyje analizuojamos mokslininkų svarstymai apie vertėjo vaidmenį(is) šiuolaikinėje visuomenėje, kurioje ji(s) yra originalo teksto perteikėjas verčiama kalba, tarpininkas tarp kultūrų, tinklų kūrėjas, mediatorius. Vaidmenys kinta priklausomai nuo kintančios visuomenės. Todėl svarbu suprasti, kokių žinių ir gebėjimų reikia būsimiems vertėjams, kaip jie vertina studijų procesą. Iš atvejo tyrimo dalyvių (būsimų vertėjų) surinkti duomenys apie studijų procesą, įgūdžių ugdymo aktualumą, refleksijos svarbą leido nustatyti jų mokymosi modelius, sudėtingiausias vertėjų rengimo sritis, (ne)atitikimą tarp mokslininkų teorinių įžvalgų ir studentų patirties bei požiūrių į studijų procesą. Išvados atskleidė, jog vyresniųjų kursų studentai pripažįsta teorijos svarbą atliekant praktines vertimo užduotis. Jie turi atsakingesnį požiūrį į savo profesiją, apimančią ne tik gerą gimtosios ir užsienio kalbos mokėjimą, bet ir vertimo strategijų, metodų išmanymą bei ekstralingvistines žinias, būtinų siekiant susidoroti su vertimo iššūkiais. Vienas iš įgūdžių, kuriuos studentai pageidauja tobulinti, yra vertimo įgūdžiai. Vyresnieji studentai vertina refleksiją, pripažįsta jos svarbą savi-monei ir profesiniam tobulėjimui. Tyrimas atskleidė, kad studijų patirtis studentams leidžia susidaryti brandesnį supratimą apie vertėjo profesiją, gebėjimą įvertinti savo stipriąsias ir silpnąsias puses. Teorinės įžvalgos liudija, kad programos turinyje turi atsispindėti globalaus pasaulio iššūkiai, nuolat persvarstomas naujų žinių ir gebėjimų ugdymo poreikis, siekiant juos integruoti į esamą studijų dalykų turinį. Atsižvelgiant į iššūkius, kylančius iš vertimo rinkos poreikių, turėtų būti stiprinami tokie įgūdžiai, kaip mašininis vertimas, skaitmeninių įrankių įvaldymas, post-redagavimas.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: vertėjo vaidmenys, kultūra, vertėjų rengimas, vertėjo kompetencija

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