

# TRENDS IN FORMATION OF INFORMATION COMPETENCE OF TRANSLATORS AT US UNIVERSITIES UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF GLOBALIZATION

**Svitlana Amelina, Rostyslav Tarasenko**

*The article deals with the key trends in formation of information competence of translators at US universities under the conditions of globalization. It is noted that professional tasks of translators become more difficult: from the traditional business and technical translation to the translation in high-tech sectors and highly specialized areas. It is stated that most US universities aim to train future translators forming their five competencies: linguistic, expert, cultural, managerial and IT-competence. It is determined that they are due to the orientation of the society to global information of social and productive spheres of life. The formation of information competence of translators at American universities is carried out by introducing both core specialized courses and elective/intensive courses for in-depth study of computer-aided translation to training programs; introduction of hybrid forms of learning; implementation of training translation projects; informational support through the specialized resources of the electronic library of the university.*

*Key words: information competence, course, the CAT system, translation project, translator.*

**Statement of the problem.** The impact of globalization on the economy and foreign relations leads to the increasing role of translation in cultural and economic exchanges. Requirements for training translators are increased, because their professional tasks become more difficult: from the traditional business and technical translation to translation in high-tech sectors and highly specialized areas. New activities of translators appear and develop. Translators adapt software to the peculiarities of the countries where it will be used. They provide translation of websites for international markets. Therefore, future specialists in translation must achieve high level of information competence to be successful in carrying out such diverse activities.

**The purpose of the article** is to consider the the current state and trends in formation of information competence of translators at us universities under the conditions of globalization.

**Analysis of research and publications.** The formation of professionally significant qualities and competence of translators has been the subject of research both domestic (V.Karaban, T.Kyyak, I.Korunets, and O.Cherednychenko) and foreign scientists (V.Komisarov, L.Latyshev, Y. Holtz-Myanttyari). Foreign

experience in training translators, in particular, on the basis of the competence approach, studied O.Martynyuk (USA), O.Syerhyeyeva (UK), N.Shamne, L.Rebryna (Germany).

However, trends in the development of competencies of future translators, in particular, the information competence has not been the subject of a separate study. Of particular interest is the question of improving the process of training translators in the United States in the context of globalization.

**The main material.** The majority of US universities focuses training of future translators on the formation of variety of competences. They identify five key competencies that are important for successful professional activities of translators. These include: language, expert, cultural, managerial and IT competencies. As the use of information technology has become commonplace in translation activities, information competence is crucial for professional translators. It includes not only the ability to use the basic options of operating systems and office suites, but also the ability to use specialized software for translation process and processing the results, to find the necessary information, to use and to form information terminological databases and more.

Formation of information competence at American universities is carried out in different ways, depending on the level of advance readiness of students, future scope of their activities, demands of translation services market and more.

Training programs for translators in the United States include core courses that provide basic knowledge of computer translation, though they may differ in name, volume and content. Thus, training of translators at California State University Monterey is performed within two years master program. The list of core subjects for study include "Introduction to computer translation" (1 semester, 2 credits) and intensive course "Advanced computer translation" (2 semester, 2 credits). If the students who began training already have some knowledge and skills to work with CAT-systems, they have offered in the first semester intensive course. The course "Introduction to computer translation" is a core course at Binghamton University, the State University of New York. It includes 4 credits,

but does not provide for differentiation in terms of prior training in information technology.

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee proposes in the program of translation and interpretation the core course "Computer-Assisted Translation" (3 credits), which provides the skills of translation by computer technology to speed up the translation process and to increase efficiency by automating storage and analysis of files, data search and usage. The course includes testing of controls and terminology databases for translators. The course also includes the study of management of terminology and databases for translators. In this case, students should know D2L, Microsoft Office Suite and Explorer; be able to conduct operations with file compression and perform the procedure view invisible files, process the information presented in different file formats, navigate the file structure.

The program for translators at the University of Florida includes two courses – "Translation" and "Interpretation" which are core courses for all students and 5 elective subjects, who are elected by students from 8 offered subjects. Students can choose from the following subjects: "Legal Translation", "Translation in Communication Media", "Business Translation", "Technical Translation", "Medical Translation", "Computer-Assisted Translation", "Advanced Medical Translation", "Professional T/I Internship". The most common combination of subjects chosen by students is a combination of "Computer-Assisted Translation", "Professional T/I Internship" and several subjects of specialized translation, emphasizing the importance of mastering information technology for future translators.

A number of universities are organizing the learning process based on the principles of interdisciplinarity and integration, making the formation of information competence within different disciplines. Thus, forming skills of computer translation at the American branch of Aston University is carried out not by a separate course, but by integrating relevant material to the course "Advanced Translation" (10 credits). Weekly seminars are discussions of issues of translation

related by genre specific of texts. Each workshop includes protecting translation strategy chosen for a particular type of text that changes every week. Preparation for each lesson includes study of background information, text analysis, and creating a version of translation. In this case, a prerequisite is the use of information technology.

Master's Program in Translation Studies at Kent State University, Ohio, includes a core subject "Terminology and Computer in Translation" (3 credits), the focus of the study is given to work with databases and translation memories.

New York University includes the subject "Theory and Practice of Terminology" (3 credits) to the Program in Translation Studies. This course introduces the main principles and methods of processing terminology and documentation. Various methods of terminological research with special emphasis on the use of terminology in translation are considered. Students study typical methods of terminology storage, structure of databases and computer control system for terminology.

The core subject "Text Processing for Translation" (1 credit) is proposed at the Babel University to study the characteristics of the use of terminology in the translation of texts using information technology support. Its content is aimed at getting skills for quickly creating dictionaries and parallel alignment of source and translated texts on the page, the study of the main types of texts, using the extended function set of software translation.

Given the fact that the translation is turned into a technical activity, US universities are oriented to meet new social and economic needs. Reality shows that demand for translation of online content, including marketing websites, social media, training in computer support is extremely increased. In this regard, consumers of aforementioned information resources have to order translation. Understanding how to deal with the more "technical" formats, is crucial to the success of translators in the current competitive environment of translation services. Therefore the majority of American universities include in programs for Translation Studies the subject "Software Localization", which allows to prepare

future translators specifically to solve the above-mentioned specific tasks directly associated with the formation of information competence. It is a core subject at the University of Kent, Ohio, California State University Monterey (3 credits). During the study of this subject, students can learn how to create, draw and publish web content. Using a specially equipped computer laboratories, students work out various operations with real site to create its workable "localized" copy.

The rapid development of electronic communications causes the introduction of courses related to the creation, translation and content of websites. An example is the course "Introduction to Software Localization and Websites" (3 credits) at New York University. In this course, students learn to adapt the software for international markets, and translate websites. The course takes into account that it is carried out based on traditional translation skills, knowledge of cultures of other peoples and awareness of translation and information technology. The subject "Creating Websites" (1 credit) are offered to students at the Babel university with the same purpose. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to create their own home pages on the Internet and understand the markup language HTML, needed to translate web sites. Thus, skills of creation and translation of websites, acquired at universities Babel, New York, Monterey and others allow translators to take a special niche in the market of translation services.

Under the new courses focused on public requests is the subject "Writing texts for new media" (1 credit) proposed by the University of Dallas. During the study, students examine impact of digital forms of presentation and dissemination of information by the media on social processes. In this case, the focus is on creating practice writing texts for network services (blogs, wikis, podcasts, Youtube, Twitter). The student's knowledge of technological, rhetorical and ethical aspects of the use of network communication is also taken into account in evaluating.

Modernization of the training translators in the United States involves not only updating the content of training programs and related courses or modules, but also changes in the methodological and technological aspects through the use of

information technology. This can be done by combining classroom work with elements of distance learning. In particular, the University of Chicago provides training for translators as hybrid program (traditional seminars and online workshop), concentrated in semantic terms in legal, medical and financial translation. To obtain a certificate of translator, students must study two core courses and four electives. All students are required to begin for the study of subjects: "Introduction to Translation", "Translation Tools" (core) or "Project Management for Translators" (elective).

Based on the basic knowledge of computer technology, students learn more sophisticated approaches to translation process using appropriate tools hardware and software in the study of the subject "Translation Tools». Contents of the subject involves the study of:

- range of additional specialized tools and applications that can improve the accuracy and coherence of translation,
- computer tools that perform optical recognition of symbols and conversion of files to help "normalize" the source texts,
- peculiarities of work with various forms of presentation of original documents (spreadsheets, presentations, manuscript photocopy, web-sites of varying quality, etc.),
- text alignment procedure that allows the translator to relate the source text and the translation, and quickly set up or get a translation memory database that can be used for future translations.

It should be noted that the study of the advanced features of computer translation (including translation memory tools) is aimed at ensuring the ability of translator to form, to accompany and to update the appropriate terminology database for later use in translation. Course program also includes the study of lexical and syntactic resources that exist in the Internet, using software MemoQ and Wordfast. Within the course the skills of marking, localization of websites and using online systems of automated translation are practiced to perform translation projects.

The present day requires skills not only for individual work but also for collective professional activities, ability to work in translation projects, performing with different functions – from the ordinary translator to the editor and the translation project manager. At the universities Babel, Monterrey, Chicago, students are provided by opportunities to gain a sufficient level of specialized knowledge on coordination, cooperation and management translational activity to carry out translation projects.

In particular, in preparation for the implementation of real translation projects at the University of Babel future translators are gained skills of translation work in a virtual team. Using high-quality distance education programs, the University's mission is to enrich students by knowledge and skills in translation to prepare them for the implementation of translation activity in the information and globalized society. The following goals are achieved especially through distance learning: developing skills necessary for translation; studying modern theories of translation; acquiring the ability to use hardware and software when performing translation using information technology; developing the ability to perform multilingual web search for needed information. Such organization increases efficiency of formation of the students information competence skills by integrating using services of computerized learning environment with skills in the use of hardware and software tools and computer networks in professional activities of translator.

Methodical provision to the referred organization of educational process at the University of Babel is carried out through electronic library resources which can be classified as follows:

- Internet resources (materials related to general issues of translation, business translation, technology of translation; online dictionaries, electronic texts, online software, useful web sites and magazines, reference books),
- database (list of graduates and their graduation projects, materials of English grammar in translation, on-line services to address legal issues, incorrect translations dictionary),

- materials for download (English grammar in translation, translation style advices, workshop with translation, terminology of software).

In particular, electronic library makes possible to access to web dictionaries, and translation software databases; to use materials of 500 monthly magazines published by Babel Press, which examined the problems of translation teaching and research materials. In addition, the Library collection includes examples of translated texts with features of grammatical transformations in translating, instructions for the creation and performing translation projects, advice on translation style and terminology databases. The library also contains more than 100 master papers.

Also noteworthy is the fact that for the efficiency of the formation of information competence of future translators US universities direct their attention not only to students currently enrolled, but also to potential students. Thus, at the University of Monterrey recommendations are developed to guide the pre-mastering computer in the aspect of its application to perform automated translation. They include familiarization with navigation through the file structure in modern Windows operating system and management of file properties; study the peculiarities of Windows in the aspect of setting up, taking into account regional specifics of the language; acquiring skills to use specialized functions of Word, Excel and other Microsoft Office applications in native and foreign languages; mastering the tools of search engines for online information search.

Of great interest is the fact that the universities in United States do not ignore their graduates. Given the importance of systems of computer-aided translation (CAT) in translation work, intensive course is developed at the University of Monterrey for those who speaks languages at a high level and is a professional translator. Its content involves gaining skills in the use of translation memory (TM) and the mastering of terminology management tools at all stages of the translation project. Focusing on practical approaches proposed course contains in addition to the theoretical foundations required for the study of translation technology based on the professional terminology and knowledge of the practical

application of these tools in technologies. When translating documents separately given time to practice skills in using software of CAT - SDL Trados (TM) 2009 and MemoQ TM, which is most common among translators. The value of the translation memory is demonstrated in the aspect of optimization of translator's activities by reducing repetitive translations of similar units that saves time and financial resources. Powerful alternative tools for the implementation of the automated translation are separately considered that can satisfy the needs of the professional translators at lower financial cost.

Thus, the activity of universities to improve the quality of training translators in the aspect of the formation of information competence is not limited only by the orientation of students enrolled, but extends to other categories – students, recent graduates and even translators who have a long experience in translation.

Responding to the challenges of our time, American universities are searching for innovative solutions to the problems of training in translation. An interesting innovation is implemented at the University of Kent, Ohio, as the possibility to obtain a double diploma – Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Master in Translation, designed for students with sufficient knowledge of foreign languages who want to integrate the management skills in translation activity. This program is designed for those whose career goals are management positions in middle management in structures of the language industry. An example of such activity is the organization and performing translation projects in translation bureaus and translation departments of corporations or international organizations and institutions. To ensure translation quality by international standards [1, 2] these projects necessarily involve the presence of translator skills in the use of CAT in carrying out of translations. Therefore, the content of the dual-diploma-program includes depth study of CAT systems as a working tool in carrying out of translation projects.

**Conclusion.** Thus, based on the analysis of the system of training translators in the United States the following trends in the development of their information competence are identified:

- implementation of the specialized core courses whose content is aimed at mastering advanced features of operating systems, office suites, and the use of specialized software for translation activities,
- study of computer tools for the creation and use of terminology databases and databases of translated materials within traditional translation courses,
- offering selective or intensive courses for in-depth study of systems of computer-aided translation (CAT) and terminology management systems,
- directing the preparation of future translators for new professional activities due to actual market demand and related with localization of Internet resources and computer programs by subjects "Software Localization", "Translation of websites" etc.,
- developing of new programs for translators, whose activities in the field of translation will be combined with professional knowledge of other specialty and will need the acquisition of skills to work with CAT-systems (dual diploma),
- organization of carrying out of educational translation projects in order to develop skills of team and managerial activities using systems of computer-aided translation (CAT) with tasks differentiation (translator, editor, project manager),
- implementation of a hybrid form of training as a combination of traditional and distance forms, which increases the efficiency of formation of information competence by integrating using services of computerized learning environment with skills in the use of hardware and software tools and computer networks in professional activities of translator,
- providing information supporting the process of translator training through specialized university library electronic resources (material in Translation

Studies, online dictionaries, examples of translated texts, terminology database, etc.).

### **References**

1. 2002: ISO 12616 «Translation-oriented terminography».
2. Doyle, Michael Scott: Translation Pedagogy and Assessment: Adopting ATA's Framework for Standard Error Marking, in The ATA Chronicle, November/December 2003.