FOSTERING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH THE STAGES OF TRANSLATION PROCESS

РОЗВИТОК НАВИЧОК КРИТИЧНОГО МИСЛЕННЯ НА ЕТАПАХ ПЕРЕКЛАДАЦЬКОГО ПРОЦЕСУ

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The paper explores translation as an educational tool for developing students' critical thinking skills, emphasizing that translation should be viewed not merely as a linguistic exercise but as a cognitively demanding and reflective practice. Critical engagement can be systematically cultivated though the three stages of the translation process – pre-translation analysis, translation proper, and post-translation reflection – each activating distinct aspects of analytical, evaluative, and metacognitive reasoning. At the pre-translation stage, students engage in interpretative analysis of the source text, identifying linguistic and cultural challenges and justify their translation options while participating in reflective discussions. The article proposes strategic activities that involve balanced teacher-student collaboration and are aimed at cultivating learners' analytical awareness and critical judgement. During translation proper, students apply reflective problem-solving patterns while verbalizing their reasoning and evaluating their choices and those of the peers in real time. The strategies of this stage are aimed at encouraging learners' metacognitive monitoring – shifting the focus from "what" students think to "how" and "why" they think, thereby enhancing autonomy and self-regulation. In the post-translation reflection phase, students reassess their decisions, considering textual coherence and intercultural sensitivity. The strategically structured activities at this stage are aimed at consolidating previously trained skills while developing moral awareness and ethical responsibility as translators.

The study concludes that structuring translation training round critical inquiry enhances students' autonomy and self-reflective skills as well as translation competence. It also stresses the need for balances teacher mediation – strong at the pre-translation stage and progressively reduced to open room for learner independence. Ultimately, the paper presents an integrated model demonstrating that critical thinking in translation is a cyclical evolving process.

Key words: translation training, critical thinking, pre-translation analysis, post-translation editing, critical reflection.

У статті проаналізовано переклад як навчальний інструмент для розвитку навичок критичного мислення студентів, тобто не лише як лінгвістичне завдання, а як когнітивно складну рефлексивну практику. Критичне мислення доцільно систематично розвивати на трьох етапах перекладацького процесу – доперекладацького аналізу, власне перекладу та післяперекладацького редагування – кожен з яких активує окремі аспекти аналітичного, оцінного та метакогнітивного мислення. На етапі доперекладацького аналізу студенти виконують інтерпретаційний аналіз вихідного тексту, а саме виявляють у ньому мовні труднощі і культурні розбіжності, обґрунтовують свої варіанти перекладу та беруть участь у дискусіях. У роботі запропоновано стратегічні завдання, які передбачають збалансовану співпрацю між викладачем і студентами та спрямовані на розвиток аналітичної свідомості й критичного мислення. Під час власне перекладу студенти застосовують рефлексивні моделі вирішення перекладацьких проблем, представлених на попередньому етапі, вголос проговорюють свої думки щодо пошуку шляхів подолання труднощів та оцінюють свої варіанти і варіанти своїх колег у режимі реального часу. Стратегії цього етапу спрямовані на заохочення метакогнітивного моніторингу студентів шляхом перенесення фокусу з «що» вони думають на «як» і «чому» саме так гадають, що допомагає культивувати відчуття самостійності та здатності до розумової саморегуляції. На етапі післяперекладацького редагування, а саме, рефлексії після перекладу, студенти заново оцінюють свої рішення, враховуючи текстову когерентність та міжкультурну чутливість. Стратегічно структуровані види навчальної діяльності на цьому етапі спрямовані на закріплення раніше набутих навичок та сприяння розвитку морального усвідомлення й етичної відповідальності перекладачів.

У дослідженні зроблено висновок, що структурування навчання перекладу навколо критичного аналізу сприяє розвитку самостійності та навичок саморефлексії студентів, а також їхніх перекладацьких компетенцій. Увагу сфо-

кусовано на необхідності збалансованого посередництва викладача, яке є достатньо помітним на етапі допере-кладацького аналізу і поступово зменшується, щоб дати простір для самостійності студентів. Загалом, у статті представлено інтегровану модель, яка демонструє, що критичне мислення в перекладі є циклічним процесом, що постійно розвивається.

Ключові слова: навчання перекладу, критичне мислення, допередкладацький аналіз, післяперекладацьке реда-гування, критична рефлексія.

Introduction. Current approaches to translation emphasize the importance of development high-order thinking skills alongside linguistic compe-tence. Translation is no longer regarded as a tool for language practice, but as an intellectually engaging activity that challenges learners to analyze, evaluate, make decisions, and solve problems [1; 2]. When appropriately arranged, translation training could provide an effective framework for developing criti-cal thinking abilities that are essential for profes-sional performance and intercultural communication.

Literature Review. In academic literature, critical thinking is conceptualized as a multifaceted construct encompassing analysis, evaluation, purposeful self-regulatory judgement, and the reasoning at the high-est level of quality in a fair-minded way [3; 4]. It also involves decision-making, self-reflexivity, and both cognitive and metacognitive processes, or "thinking about thinking" [5; 6]. According to R.V. Ryan, the core activities of critical thinking are investigation, interpretation, and judgement [7, p. 24]. Similarly, G. Klein emphasizes that critical thinking entails an active, exploratory approach and the ability to iden-tify and solve problems [8]. A number of other schol-ars underscore self-reflexivity as a defining parameter of critical thinking, suggesting that it emerges when individuals consciously reflect on their own thought processes [1; 6].

Many recent studies have recognized the impor-tance of developing critical thinking skills among translation students. Researchers argue that transla-tion performance directly depends on the transla-tors' capacity to judge, evaluate, make decisions, and assume responsibility for those decisions [2; 9; 10; 11]. Their findings emphasize that integrating critical thinking into translation pedagogy enhances students' analytical abilities and overall translation quality. M. Baker and C. Maier suggest that to encourage stu-dents to take responsibility for their choices, teachers should avoid prescribing strategies or predetermined solutions [2].

There is a broad consensus among scholars that critical thinking skills can and should be taught and learned. This view rests on the assumption that such skills are identifiable, definable, and transferable [5; 6; 8]. Thus, many researchers regard critical think-ing as an educational reality insisting that it must be cultivated systematically and methodically [6, p. 34].

Additionally, the authors also support the inquiry-based approach in translation training emphasizing that translation should be taught through exploration and discovery rather than reliance on ready-made solutions, thereby motivation students to question their assumption and adapt to diverse translation contexts. Furthermore, scholars suggest that teach-ing translation within a critical thinking framework may effectively integrate both teacher-centered and student-centered approaches [11].

Although the issue of fostering critical thinking through translation practice has been discussed in academic literature for several decades, the specific methods of implementing these principles at various procedural stages of the translation process have not been sufficiently addressed.

Rationale. It seems reasonable to consider the strategies that facilitate instilling and maintaining critical thinking in students through the lens of the three stages of translation process – pre-translation analysis, translation proper and post-translation reflection – since each stage activates distinct aspects of critical reasoning. During pre-translation analysis, translation trainers have to engage students in inter-pretative and analytical thinking as they examine the source text purpose, subject matter and indicate translation challenges. The stage of translation proper should foster reflective thinking requiring students to make informed decisions and justify their linguistic choices. In post-translation editing, learners develop evaluative and metacognitive skills by assessing their own and others' translations, eventually refining their reasoning processes. We argue that specifying the tasks at each stage could allow for targeted teacher's interventions. Eventually, this can ensure that critical engagement is sustained throughout the entire trans-lation process rather than treated as an isolated skill.

Therefore, the **purpose** of the study is to indicate the strategies of building up students' critical think-ing skills during the stages of translation process – pre-translation analysis, translation proper and post-translation editing.

Results and Discussion. In this paper, we advo-cate the view that critical thinking, as a fundamental disposition of human mind, can and should be inten-tionally taught. At the same time, it could be effec-tively acquired by translation trainees through guided practice. This raises an important question: how can

critical thinking be systematically and sustainably developed across different translation tasks and situations? Scholars who explore the development of critical thinking through translation practice emphasize the importance of the trainer's role, suggesting that explicit instructions and strategic guidance are instrumental in shaping learners' analytical awareness [9; 10; 12]. We fully acknowledge this standpoint, as the trainer's mediation is indeed essential for scaffolding students' reasoning processes and modelling critical inquiry. However, it is equally crucial to determine the extent and nature of the trainer's legitimate intervention in the trainee's translation decision-making. In other words, the educational challenge lies in balancing teacher-centered and student-centered approaches so that both the objectives of translation training and cultivation of critical thinking skills can be achieved in a mutually reinforcing manner. In this light, it seems particularly promising to examine students' cognitive and procedural engagement at the three abovementioned stages in order to identify where the trainer's guidance might be intensified or, conversely, gradually reduced to foster learner autonomy.

Pre-translation analysis. In our study, we follow the model developed by S. Cragie and A. Pattison, which is designed "to help the translators to develop analytical and practical skills" [13, p. 1]. The authors regard the stage of pre-translation analysis as one "where potential challenges start to emerge, and where a general strategy or framework for the translation takes place" [13, p. 4]. This model encourages translators to consider a number of features of the source text, such as its subject matter, communicative purpose, genre (or text type), vocabulary and grammar, cultural references, etc. [13, p. 8]. Specifically, S. Cragie and F. Pattison have worked out a detailed set of guiding questions that can be used at the pre-translation stage, for example: What challenges arise in terms of vocabulary and grammar in the text? Which information should be prioritized, and which can be considered of second importance? Answering such questions allows students to demonstrate their decision-making skills and justify the choices they make in the translation process. We believe that teaching critical thinking in translation classes is fundamentally about structuring tasks and activities in such a way that students actively analyze, evaluate, and justify their translation decisions rather than merely transfer words from one language to another.

Building on the key concepts of S. Cragie and A. Pattison's model of pre-translation analysis, we propose a modified framework that focuses specifically on cultivating students' critical thinking skills.

Our model incorporates 11 strategies that can be used by instructors.

1. The instructor assigns texts containing cultural references, ambiguous words, or expressions open to multiple interpretation. The texts are selected from diverse genres, such as media reports, advertisements, fiction, travel guides, etc., to expose students to different discourse types and communicative purposes.

2. Students are motivated to maintain a translation journal to record challenges, choices and reasoning throughout the process.

3. Students are asked to identify lexical, grammatical, stylistic, and culture-related challenges before attempting translation itself.

4. Students propose multiple translation options for a given word, phrase, or sentence.

5. They then justify their choices, explaining why a particular rendering is the most appropriate in a given context.

6. Students compare their translation with those of peers or professional translators (when available).

7. Students are encouraged to negotiate differences and propose alternative strategies, thus developing awareness of interpretative variation in translation.

8. They respond to reflective prompts such as: What alternative translation could work? What cultural assumptions underlie this text? Does my translation convey the same tone and effect as the original? How might a reader from the target culture interpret this?

9. Post-task reflections allow students to share their reasoning, highlighting their problem-solving strategies, and learn from the perspectives of others.

10. Students participate in structured debates or group discussions to defend or reconsider their choices, weighing the strengths and weaknesses of different strategies. Discussion activities invite students to weigh the trade-offs between equivalent and adequate translation, or between formal and dynamic equivalence, encouraging awareness of translation strategy and theoretical background.

11. They are encouraged to critically, but respectfully, evaluate their peers' assumptions, provide constructive feedback, and respond using analytical reasoning rather than intuition alone.

We argue that this model demonstrates a step-by-step approach to scaffolding critical thinking skills during the pre-translation stage with particular emphasis on the meticulous source text analysis, evaluation of the chosen translation challenges, and peer discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of translation choices.

After implementing this model in translation class, we arrived at an important observation – it is necessary to motivate students to think "beyond the obvious" – to avoid mechanical or unimaginative translation and to feel free in their interpretative choices. As S. Kadiu puts it, learners have to be "more daring and experimental in the choices they make" [11, p. 155]. They need to know that their voices are valued and that creativity and critical reasoning are integral to translation. Encouraging students to think "outside the box" often results in a rich variety of translation solutions, as illustrated in Table 1 below:

As can be seen from Table 1, not all translation solutions are equally successful. However, their variety provides a fertile ground for evaluation, reflection and discussion. Students can analyze why certain options sound more natural, culturally appropriate, or stylistically fitting, while others may distort the original message. This diversity of approaches creates an ample field for practicing argumentation, peer feedback and self-reflection – the integral components of critical thinking in translation education.

Translation Proper. While pre-translation stage aims to prepare learners for the act of translation through source text analysis, contextual inquiry, and anticipation of potential challenges, the stage of translation proper places them directly in the process of making and justifying translation decisions. At this point, the focus shifts from preliminary exploration to the conscious application of problem-solving strategies in practice.

Drawing on the recommendations of R. Paul and L. Elder [14, p. 19], we have designed the follow-ing model of teacher-student interaction for the stage of translation proper. The model emphasizes reflective engagement and the explicit articulation of students' thought processes as they confront challenges in real translation situation. At this stage students are encouraged to comment on, explain, and justify their translation choices through a series of structured activities:

1. Students identify translation challenges that arise during the translation process – those that may have been overlooked during the pre-translation phase but become evident in the act of translation proper.

2. They are asked to think aloud, verbalizing the reasoning behind their problem-solving approach.

3. While doing so, students comment on the available translation options and evaluate their respective strengths and weaknesses.

4. They highlight the inferences they draw from this evaluation and explain how these inferences influence their final decision.

5. Students clearly articulate the macro- and micro-strategies they adopt, providing well-reasoned explanation for their choices.

6. The instructor motivates students to monitor the implications of their translation decisions and remain aware of the broader consequences of their actions.

7. Students are reminded that translation is an open-ended process and may require the revision of initially adopted strategies. When they modify their strategies, they are expected to justify the reasons for doing so.

Table 1

Students' Translation Solutions

The original sentence:
If you want to be healthier and fitter, the big lesson is to escape the New Year resolution mentality and instead consider long-term, sustainable changes to your health and fitness. The focal translation unit: ***the big lesson is to escape the New Year resolution mentality.***

Student 1	найголовніше – позбутися новорічних обіцянок
Student 2	в першу чергу відмовся від фраз «почну з понеділка» чи «от з Нового року точно!»
Student 3	головний урок полягає в тому, щоб позбутися мислення у стилі новорічних обіцянок
Student 4	найважливіше – припинити давати обіцянки кардинально змінитися з наступного року
Student 5	головний урок полягає в тому, щоб позбутися звички ставити короткострокові цілі на початку року
Student 6	головний урок полягає в тому, щоб позбутися ментальності новорічних обіцянок
Student 7	головне – це позбутися мислення на кшталт "почну з понеділка"
Student 8	час вирватися з полону новорічних обіцянок, які розчиняються швидше, ніж святковий настрій.
Student 9	важливо відмовитися від мислення у форматі «новорічних обіцянок»
Student 10	головне – відмовитися від нездійсненних обіцянок на майбутнє
Student 11	головний урок – уникайте обіцянок «почну з Нового року»
Student 12	важливо уникати прямих обіцянок собі «почати все з чистого аркуша»
Student 13	вам варто забути про рішучі новорічні плани
Student 14	головне – залишити позаду звичку робити новорічні обіцянки

8. Learners discuss and critically assess the translation decisions made by their colleagues, offering arguments for or against particular solutions.

9. Finally, students read their translation drafts in class and provide feedback on their colleagues' findings and reasoning.

Although the activities at the stage of translation proper continue to develop analytical, evaluative and decision-making skills, the focus here shifts from "What I think" to "Why I think this way" or "How I arrive at this conclusion". In other words, students are expected to verbalize their thought processes and monitor their own reasoning. We believe that when they are able to support or critique their translation decisions with clear arguments, they develop a sense of control over their cognitive activity.

Therefore, the stage of translation proper should be organized in a way that stimulates learners' reflective thinking which, apparently, is one of the essential components of critical thinking skills [11]. The above proposed model can thus be regarded as a metacognitive practice structured in set of strategies to foster students' reflexivity and self-reflexivity. In the subsequent stage – post-translation reflection – students are invited to synthesize and evaluate their experiences while reinforcing the habits of critical reflection established during the stage of translation proper.

Post-Translation Reflection. The post-translation reflection (editing) stage serves as a culmination of the translation process, guiding students from active decision making toward a higher level of metacognitive awareness. Herein, learners engage in reflective editing during which they may reassess their translation choices in light of textual coherence, stylistic appropriateness and ethical responsibility. Reflection thus becomes not merely a technical revision activity limited to linguistic refinement but intellectual and moral exercise. During this stage students are encouraged to look back at their translation drafts and critically analyze the rationale behind their earlier decisions. They are also invited to explore how alternative solution could better serve the communicative and ethical goals of the target text.

At this stage, teacher-student activity may be shaped in the following set of strategies:

1. Students revisit their completed translations to identify areas where meaning, tone, or cultural nuances might have been misinterpreted, oversimplified, or inadequately conveyed.

2. They are asked to articulate the reasoning behind these earlier decisions and to evaluate whether those decisions align with ethical principles such as respect for the source culture and responsibility toward the target audience.

3. Students are prompted to suggest and justify possible revisions that would enhance not only textual coherence but also intercultural sensitivity and ethical soundness.

4. The instructor facilitates group reflection session where students compare their edited versions, exchange feedback and discuss how critical self-evaluation can lead to more ethically grounded translation practices.

5. Finally, learners are encouraged to share their reflective commentaries in which they are supposed to articulate what they have learned about their own thinking processes.

We may argue that through these activities learners reinforce their reflective and metacognitive habits developed during translation proper. Specifically, they learn to recognize the moral parameters of their interpretative choices, cultivating a sense of responsibility [11, p. 68] that extends beyond textual accuracy.

Consequently, taken together, the trainers' strategies adopted at each of the stages – pre-translation analysis, translation proper and post-translation reflection – form an integrated educational model aimed at developing both critical and ethical dimensions of translation competence. The study demonstrates that each stage, when appropriately arranged, serves distinct yet interrelated function: pre-translation phase activates analytical and anticipatory thinking; translation proper engages learners in reasoning and metacognitive monitoring; and post-translation reflection consolidates this experience through ethical evaluation and self-reflexive revision. The cyclical nature of the sets of strategies testifies to the fact that critical thinking in translation is not a linear outcome but continuous, evolving process.

Additionally, we have to highlight the issue of teacher-student relationship in translation training from the perspective of critical thinking education, since it influences the way, the strategies are shaped and set. In our opinion, effective translation training integrates both teacher-centered and student-centered elements. However, while the instructor's guidance is essential at the initial stage of the pre-translation analysis, it should be gradually reduced as students gain confidence. It is reasonable to assume that minimizing teacher intervention, especially during discussions, helps foster autonomy and encourages students to rely on their own analytical judgement.

Conclusions. This study has examined the strategies of fostering students' critical thinking skills during the stages of translation process – pre-translation

analysis, translation proper and post-translation editing (reflection). The findings demonstrate that a set of teacher-student activities at each stage contributes distinctively to the development of critical and reflective engagement with both the source and target texts. Overall, the results of this study indicate that integrating systematic critical reflection into all three stages enhances students' autonomy and intellectual awareness as well as professional competence. Moreover, the findings highlight the educational value of structuring translation classes around critical inquiry rather than product-oriented assessment.

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