

How to educate English language students in the age of artificial intelligence?

W jaki sposób kształcić studentów filologii angielskiej w erze sztucznej inteligencji?

Słowa kluczowe: filologia angielska, teorie tłumaczenia, nauczanie przedmiotów specjalistycznych takich jak tłumaczenia ustne i pisemne, sztuczna inteligencja (AI), strategie kształcenia tłumaczy.

Streszczenie: Nauczanie tłumaczenia studentów uniwersytetów może być wieloaspektowym przedsięwzięciem, które obejmuje zarówno koncepcje teoretyczne, jak i umiejętności praktyczne. Jak powszechnie wiadomo, tak zwana sztuczna inteligencja (AI) zaczęła wywierać coraz większy wpływ na nasze życie i zawody. Nadal istnieje zagrożenie upadku niektórych zawodów z powodu sztucznej inteligencji, takich jak między innymi tłumacze pisemni i ustni. Jedną z głównych obaw jest potencjalne wyparcie ludzkich tłumaczy przez technologie AI. W miarę jak systemy tłumaczeniowe AI stają się coraz bardziej zaawansowane, istnieje ryzyko, że mogą one zastąpić ludzkich tłumaczy w niektórych rodzajach pracy tłumaczeniowej, szczególnie w przypadku prostych, rutynowych zadań. Dlatego my, nauczyciele akademicki, mamy bardzo trudne zadanie do wykonania, aby nauczyć studentów uczenia się, rozwijania umiejętności tłumaczeniowych przy świadomym wykorzystaniu narzędzi AI. Ponieważ oczywiste jest, że tłumacze używają i będą używać sztucznej inteligencji do wykonywania tłumaczeń w mniejszym lub większym stopniu. Mówi się, że tłumaczenie maszynowe staje się coraz lepsze wraz z rozwojem sztucznej inteligencji, jednak nadal wymaga to szczegółowej weryfikacji. I tutaj nadal konieczne jest kształcenie tłumaczy, bez których przetłumaczony tekst może zawierać wiele błędów zarówno w strukturach gramatycznych, jak i stylistycznych. Artykuł prezentuje dyskurs, w jaki sposób kształcić studentów filologii angielskiej w erze sztucznej inteligencji?

Key words: English Philology, translation theories, strategies for educating translators, teaching specialised classes like oral and written translation, AI (Artificial Intelligence)

Abstract: Teaching translation to university students can be a multi-faceted endeavour that encompasses both theoretical concepts and practical skills. As it is widely known, the so-called artificial intelligence (AI) has started to have an increasing impact on our lives and professions. There is still the threat of the decline of some professions due to AI, such as translators and interpreters, among others. One of the primary concerns is the potential displacement of human translators by AI technologies. As AI translation systems become more advanced, there is a risk that they could replace human translators for certain types of translation work, particularly for simple, routine tasks. Therefore, we academic teachers have a very difficult task to do to teach students to learn, to develop translation skills with the conscious use of AI tools. Because it is obvious that translators use and will continue to use AI to do translation to a greater or lesser

extent. Machine translation is said to be getting better with the development of AI, however it still needs detailed verification. And here it is still the necessity to educate translators, without whom the translated text may contain many errors in both grammatical and stylistic structures. The article presents a discourse on how to educate English Philology students in the age of artificial intelligence?

Introduction of translation theories

The beginning of the teaching process is to introduce students to the foundational theories of translation, such as equivalence theory, functional theories, and cultural translation. There is a necessity to provide readings and lectures that explore these concepts, discussing the implications for translators and the various approaches to translation. According to Hans J. Vermeer, the translation has an aim and is a kind of an action which is presented in his *skopos* theory:

The *skopos*, which is (or should be) defined in the commission, expands the possibilities of translation strategies, and releases the translator from the corset of an enforced – and hence often meaningless – literalness; and it incorporates and enlarges the accountability of the translator, in that his translation must function in such a way that the given goal is attained. This accountability in fact lies at the very heart of the theory: what we are talking about is no less than ethos of the translator.¹

Then, an academic teacher can proceed to familiarise students with:

- translation techniques that are used in translation, including literal translation, idiomatic translation, and transcreation, examples and exercises to help students understand when to apply each technique effectively;
- text analysis where students should be trained to analyse source texts thoroughly before beginning the translation process. This includes understanding the text's genre, audience, purpose, and cultural context. Students should be encouraged to identify key linguistic and cultural elements that may impact their translation choices;
- language proficiency where the importance of language proficiency in both the source and target languages is emphasized. Students ought to be provided with opportunities for strengthening their vocabulary, grammar, and idiomatic expressions in both languages through targeted exercises and language practice to avoid inter alia morphological, syntactic and phraseological mistakes and lack of stylistic, semantic and situational adequacy and equivalence;
- cultural competence where the significance of cultural competence in translation is stressed. Students should be encouraged to research cultural nuances, social conventions, and historical contexts relevant to the texts they are transla-

¹ Vermeer H. J., *Skopos and Commission in Translational Action. The Translation Studies Reader*, L. Venuti and M. Baker (eds.), London–New York: Routledge, 2001, s. 237.

ting as well as strategies for handling cultural differences and navigating sensitive cultural issues in translation should be discussed;

- technology in translation where students are introduced to translation tools and technologies, such as computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, machine translation, and online resources. Students should be taught how to effectively integrate these tools into their translation workflow while maintaining translation quality;
- practical translation exercises where students should be provided with a variety of translation exercises that reflect real-world translation scenarios. Texts ought to be assigned from different genres and fields, such as literary, legal, scientific, and technical texts, to expose students to diverse translation challenges;
- feedback and revision where students ought to be encouraged to solicit feedback on their translations from peers, instructors, and professional translators and the importance of revising and refining translations based on feedback, focusing on improving accuracy, fluency, and fidelity to the source text is emphasized;
- ethical considerations where ethical considerations in translation, such as confidentiality, impartiality, and respect for intellectual property rights should be discussed. Students should be engaged in critical discussions about the ethical dilemmas translators may encounter and strategies for ethical decision-making in translation practice;
- professional development which should provide guidance on building a professional portfolio, networking with industry professionals, and pursuing opportunities for further education and certification in translation as well as career advice and resources to help students prepare for a career in translation or related fields ought to be offered.

By incorporating these elements into the teaching approach, academic teachers may provide university students with a comprehensive understanding of translation theory and practice, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to become proficient translators.

How to educate students in the era of AI

To educate students some theories of teaching translation must be incorporated in the process of teaching. There must be mentioned the theory of Newmark about “comprising practical and academic areas in the process of theorizing translation and his eight methods of teaching translation in two categories of translation methods”.² However, according to Bassnett the most essential factor in the translating process is the ‘equivalence’:

² P. Newmark, *A Textbook of Translation*, Edinburgh, Pearson Education Limited, 2001, pp. 45-47.

Equivalence overall results from the relation between signs themselves, the relationship between signs and what they stand for, and the relationship between signs, what they stand for and those who use them.³

Furthermore, Bassnett indicates that "it is inappropriate to omit or contract expressions that are difficult in translations so the translator cannot be the author of the SL text, rather as the author of the TL text, and the translator has a clear moral responsibility to the TL readers."⁴

Apart from Bassnett's and Newmark's more traditional methods there should be mentioned the theory of Nord and Gile who emphasize the method as a real practice. Nord introduces the term 'functional didactics' and talks about the necessity of selecting texts, classifying translation problems and procedures, and monitoring students' progress. What is more, Gile states that "class discussion about basic translational concepts such as: communication, quality, fidelity to the message, understanding, and knowledge acquisition by using sources of information. Gile refers to initial learning stage where students gather concepts and basic models, while receiving feedback from their teachers."⁵

There are also theories based on contrastive approaches basing on linguistic approaches with translation methods seen as direct and obligatory.

Moreover, it should also be mentioned about the theory of translation by Kiraly. He states that "translation is not a process to repeat or transfer" and proposed his own approach which is based on "collaborative learning, social constructivism, empowerment and reflexive practice to teach translation"⁶.

It should also be mentioned about Hurtado, who says about three basic stages in teaching translation which are: "translation as what is going to be taught, translator's competence as knowledge and abilities required to translate, and the acquisition of the translator's competence as the mean to develop this competence"⁷.

Depending on what is going to be translated, there can be text with irony, a cultural phenomenon where techniques depicted by Hejwowski like:

1. "Domestication and foreignization
2. Substitution of an ironic expression
3. Replacement of an expression by an idiom

³ S. Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, London: Routledge, 2002, p. 34.

⁴ Ibid, p. 30.

⁵ <Microsoft Word – 7.doc (ijhssnet.com)>, *Identifying Translation Teaching Strategies: An Exploratory Study*, access date 28.02.2024.

⁶ D. Kiraly, *A Social Constructivist Approach to Translator Education – Empowerment from Theory to Practice*, Manchester, St. Jerome Publishing, 2000.

⁷ A. Hurtado, *La adquisición de la competencia traductora aspectos teóricos y didácticos en Didáctica de la traducción y la terminología. Colección estudios de traducción y terminología* Universidad del Valle, 2005, volume 2, pp. 17–50.

4. Omission

5. Correcting original phrase"⁸

should be incorporated.

Educating translators in the era of AI involves preparing them to leverage technology effectively while also emphasizing the unique skills, presenting above-mentioned translation theories and expertise that human translators bring to the table. Here are some strategies for educating translators in this evolving landscape:

- understanding AI and translation technology. The academic teacher may start by providing students with a solid understanding of AI technologies and their applications in translation, including machine translation (MT), computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, and natural language processing (NLP) algorithms, may explain the capabilities and limitations of these technologies to help students make informed decisions about when and how to use them;
- integration of translation tools that can teach students how to effectively integrate AI-driven translation tools into their workflow. Academic teachers can provide hands-on training with popular CAT tools and machine translation systems, demonstrating how to optimize their use to improve efficiency and translation quality;
- critical evaluation of AI outputs when students may be encouraged to critically evaluate AI-generated translations, emphasizing the importance of human oversight and intervention. They can be taught how to identify and correct errors, improve fluency, and ensure accuracy in machine-generated translations through post-editing and quality assurance processes;
- specialization and adaptability where the importance of specialization and domain expertise in translation should be emphasized. Students should be encouraged to develop specialized knowledge in specific subject areas or industries where human expertise adds unique value and cannot be replaced by AI as well as taught to adapt to evolving technology and industry trends by continuously updating their skills and knowledge;
- cultural and linguistic competence which highlights the significance of cultural and linguistic competence in translation, underscoring the limitations of AI in capturing cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and context-specific meanings. Students should be encouraged to cultivate their cultural awareness and language proficiency to provide translations that are linguistically accurate and culturally appropriate;
- ethical considerations where students should be engaged in discussions about the ethical implications of AI in translation, including issues related to data privacy, intellectual property rights, and bias in machine-generated translations. They should be taught to approach AI technology ethically and responsibly,

⁸ Hejwowski K., *Przekład: mity i rzeczywistość kognitywno-komunikacyjna teorii przekładu*, Warszawa: PWN 2006, p. 76.

adhering to professional standards and ethical guidelines in their translation practice;

- professional development and collaboration where students should be provided with opportunities to collaborate with industry professionals and researchers working at the intersection of AI and translation. They ought to be encouraged into the participation in professional organizations, conferences, and workshops to stay informed about the latest developments in AI technology and best practices in translation;
- continuous learning and adaptation while a mindset of lifelong learning and adaptation among students, emphasizing the need to stay curious, flexible, and open-minded in the face of technological advancements should be fostered. Students should be encouraged to embrace new tools and methodologies, while also honing their critical thinking and problem-solving skills as human translators.

By incorporating these strategies into students' education, translators can be equipped to navigate the evolving landscape of AI and translation, leveraging technology effectively while preserving the human touch and expertise that are essential to the translation profession.

Problems with AI translation

While AI has made significant advancements in the field of translation, there are several challenges and limitations that translators need to be aware of.

First of all, the lack of contextual understanding. AI translation models may struggle to understand the nuances of language and context, leading to inaccuracies in translation. They may not grasp the cultural or idiomatic meanings embedded within a text, resulting in translations that sound unnatural or convey the wrong message. Secondly, translators should take into account complexity of language. Natural languages are inherently complex, with nuances, ambiguities, and cultural references that can be challenging for AI systems to interpret accurately. Translators are trained to navigate these complexities, but AI may struggle with subtle linguistic nuances and wordplay. What is more, translators should control the quality. While AI translation systems have improved in recent years, they still require human oversight to ensure translation quality. Translators play a crucial role in reviewing and refining machine-generated translations, correcting errors, and preserving the intended meaning of the source text. Moreover, there can be problems with domain-specific knowledge because AI translation models may lack domain-specific knowledge required for specialized translations, such as legal, medical, or technical documents. Translators bring expertise in specific fields, enabling them to accurately translate specialized terminology and concepts. There also appear ethical concerns associated with AI translation, such as privacy concerns, biases in training data, and the impact on professional translators' livelihoods. Translators must navigate these ethical challenges and advocate for responsible use of AI in

translation. Translators may face problems with limited language coverage. While AI translation systems support a wide range of languages, they may prioritize certain languages over others, leading to disparities in language coverage. This can pose challenges for translators working with less commonly spoken languages or language pairs. Last but not least, there are issues connected with customization and adaptation. AI translation models may not be easily customizable or adaptable to specific translation tasks or preferences. Translators often tailor their approach to meet the needs of clients and target audiences, which may require flexibility and creativity not easily replicated by AI. And finally, the problem with human touch and creativity. Translators bring a human touch and creativity to the translation process, incorporating cultural nuances, stylistic choices, and artistic elements into their work. While AI can produce functional translations, it may struggle to capture the artistry and subtlety of human translation.

Despite these challenges, AI can still be a valuable tool for translators, assisting with tasks such as terminology management, pre-translation, and post-editing. By leveraging AI alongside their expertise, translators can enhance efficiency and productivity while maintaining translation quality and integrity.

AI tools

There are several tools and platforms that utilize AI for translation purposes. I have made a research in the Internet to find the most popular and useful AI tools which I would like to present. Here are some of the most commonly used ones:

1. Google translate: Google Translate is one of the most widely used machine translation services. It utilizes neural machine translation (NMT) technology to translate text between more than 100 languages. Google Translate offers both web-based and mobile applications, making it accessible for a wide range of users.
2. Microsoft Translator: it is another popular machine translation service that employs AI technologies, including neural machine translation. It offers translation between multiple languages and provides APIs for developers to integrate translation capabilities into their applications and services.
3. DeepL: DeepL is known for its high-quality translations, especially in European languages. It uses artificial neural networks and deep learning techniques to produce translations that are often considered more fluent and accurate than other machine translation services.
4. IBM Watson Language Translator: it is a cloud-based service that offers translation capabilities for businesses and developers. It supports translation between multiple languages and provides customization options for specific domains and terminology.
5. Amazon Translate: it is a neural machine translation service provided by Amazon Web Services (AWS). It offers on-demand translation between multiple languages and is integrated with other AWS services, making it suitable for developers building multilingual applications.

6. SYSTRAN: it offers machine translation solutions for businesses and organizations, including both cloud-based and on-premises deployment options. It supports translation between multiple languages and provides customization options for specific industries and use cases.
7. Linguee: it is a translation tool that combines machine translation with human-curated bilingual dictionaries. It provides translations based on context from a vast database of bilingual texts, making it useful for understanding the usage of specific terms and phrases in different contexts.
8. Yandex. Translate: it is a machine translation service developed by Yandex, a Russian technology company. It offers translation between numerous language pairs and provides additional features such as dictionary look-up and text-to-speech synthesis.

These are just a few examples of AI-powered translation tools and platforms available today. Each tool may have its own strengths and weaknesses, therefore it is important for translators to evaluate them based on their specific needs and requirements. Additionally, while these tools can assist with translation tasks, human expertise and oversight are still essential to ensure translation quality and accuracy.

Conclusion

To sum up, it should be noticed that our world is changing, is changing in a greater phase than it was i.e. 10 years ago. There appear new technologies, the development of AI has been increased in the last 5 years and has been influencing our reality to begin with new solutions in different areas like medicine, physics, IT to end with household appliances and our family life.

However, people should use new tools in a clever and responsible way, the same with translators, they have to be aware of AI pros and cons. But as it is supposed, professional work of translators cannot be identified with AI translation. We, the translators will be in some way forced to use AI tools to do the translation. Why can this happen? One of the major argument is that AI translations are faster than the ones with CAT tools. Secondly, the price of AI translations can be lower than the translation done by a professional translator with CAT tools. What is more, there probably will appear numerous people who will not be professional translators but with the use of AI tools they will be able to do the translation, and if their offer is cheaper than the offer of a professional translator the market will force us, the translators, to offer lower prices for our work.

Human translators often provide more than just translation services; they offer cultural insights, context, and personalized communication. There is a risk that AI translation could lead to a loss of the human touch in translation, which may be valued by clients seeking more than just literal translations.

What is more, there are ethical issues. AI translation systems may inadvertently perpetuate biases present in the training data or introduce errors that could have ethical implications. Translators must be aware of these potential biases and errors and take steps to mitigate them during the translation process.

Nevertheless, our future seems to be a totally new future to which we, people shall adjust.

That is why, there are some advice for future translators to build a successful professional career. They should:

- master multiple languages because fluency in multiple languages is essential for translators, invest time in mastering their target and source languages, including vocabulary, grammar, idiomatic expressions, and cultural nuances;
- specialize in specific industries or subject areas where there is a high demand for translation services as specialization can help stand out in the competitive market and command higher rates;
- stay update and keep abreast of the latest trends, developments, and technologies in the translation industry. This includes advancements in machine translation, CAT tools, terminology management systems, and industry-specific knowledge;
- embrace technology to enhance a translator's efficiency and productivity and familiarize themselves with translation tools, CAT software, machine translation engines, and other relevant technologies. However, remember that technology is a tool to aid translator's work, not a replacement for human judgment and creativity;
- build their network, because networking is crucial for finding clients, collaborating with other professionals, and staying connected with industry trends as well as attend conferences, workshops, and networking events, join professional associations, and engage with fellow translators online;
- learn continuously as translation is an evolving field, so commit to lifelong learning and professional development and take courses, attend webinars, and pursue certifications to enhance your skills, expand students' knowledge, and stay competitive;
- develop cultural awareness because cultural understanding is vital for producing accurate and culturally sensitive translations and familiarize themselves with the cultural norms, customs, and practices of the languages students work with to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations;
- focus on quality, the quality should be prioritized in the translations and students should pay attention to accuracy, consistency, readability, and adherence to client instructions as well as establish quality assurance processes and seek feedback from clients to continually improve their work;
- market themselves by creating a strong online presence by building a professional website, optimizing the translator's LinkedIn profile, and showcasing the

- portfolio and client testimonials. Develop a marketing strategy to reach potential clients and demonstrate the translator's expertise and value;
- be patient and persistent because building a successful career as a translator takes time and perseverance. That is why, they should be patient, stay focused on their goals, and consistently strive for excellence in their work as well as keep refining their skills, expanding their network, and seizing opportunities as they arise.

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