

## Formation of german linguistic translation competence among university students

### Formación de la competencia de traducción de lingüistas alemanes entre estudiantes universitarios

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Recibido: 26/05/22

Aceptado: 28/08/22

#### Abstract

Everyone who wants to succeed in professional, scientific, and practical activities needs interpreting skills. They are a must in international business cooperation. Today no international negotiations can do without an interpreter. The study aims to determine the peculiarities of forming the translation competence of German language students. For this

purpose, an experiment was conducted in one of the higher educational institutions of Ukraine, which, according to the results obtained, allows us to evaluate students' success and study the conditions for the formation of future translators' competence. The research tasks are solved using the methods of description, observation, formative experiment, and statistics. The use of general scientific methods allows for determining positive changes in the experimental and control groups in the process of forming translation competence during the German language study. It is assumed that the creation of pedagogical conditions and the use of modern information resources can increase the skills level of future translators. It will have a positive impact on their employment and successful professional activities. To increase future translators' professionalism, it plans to develop educational projects to form translation competencies. To master them while studying German, students should focus on getting practical communication skills and technical knowledge.

**Keywords:** translation competence, innovative teaching methods, educational project, information resources.

## Resumen

Todos los que quieran tener éxito en actividades profesionales, científicas y prácticas necesitan habilidades de interpretación. Son imprescindibles en la cooperación empresarial internacional. Hoy ninguna negociación internacional puede prescindir de un intérprete. El estudio tiene como objetivo determinar las peculiaridades de la formación de la competencia traductora de los estudiantes de lengua alemana. Para este propósito, se realizó un experimento en una de las instituciones de educación superior de Ucrania que, de acuerdo con los resultados obtenidos, nos permite evaluar el éxito de los estudiantes y estudiar las condiciones para la formación de la competencia de los futuros traductores. Las tareas de investigación se resuelven utilizando los métodos de descripción, observación, experimento formativo y estadística. El uso de métodos científicos generales permite determinar cambios positivos en los grupos experimentales y de control en el proceso de formación de la competencia traductora durante el estudio del idioma alemán. Se supone que la creación de condiciones pedagógicas y el uso de recursos de información modernos pueden aumentar el nivel de habilidades de los futuros traductores. Tendrá un impacto positivo en su empleo y actividades profesionales exitosas. Para aumentar la profesionalización de los futuros traductores, planea desarrollar proyectos educativos para formar competencias traductoras. Para dominarlos mientras estudian alemán, los estudiantes deben concentrarse en adquirir habilidades prácticas de comunicación y conocimientos técnicos.

**Palabras clave:** competencia traductora, métodos de enseñanza innovadores, proyecto educativo, recursos de información.

## 1. Introduction

Today's environment makes new demands on translators. Not only knowledge of a foreign language is valuable, but also the level of proficiency in modern technology. It is conditioned by the fact that mastering foreign languages and developing translators'

competence is impossible without using effective software. With their help, it is possible to organize a more productive learning process and improve translation skills.

The term “competence” is defined by several significant components that combine (Junining, 2020; PACTE et al, 2018). These include cognitive, metacognitive, practical abilities, knowledge, belief, and behavioral values (Poland et al. 2003). In turn, the term “translation competence” is relatively new. It refers to the ability to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in practice, which means in studies, work activities, or self-development (Brøgger, 2017).

According to statistics, more than 16.5 million people worldwide learn German as a foreign language. It is considered to be the language of economics, science, culture, and diplomacy. Therefore, it is not unusual that interest in it is increasing. Accordingly, the demand for specialists with a high level of German language skills, including translators, is rising. Germany is home to the best research institutes and major companies, whose developments are essential to the world. To establish partnerships and to take advantage of these developments, it is necessary to know German. After all, relations with foreign partners are essential in building a successful business and help to build relationships with suppliers, partners, and customers. In this case, German is used for communication.

Thus, German opens up new opportunities for communication with foreigners, business development, and employment in Ukraine and abroad. The importance of German for a competitive specialist in the labor market confirms the need to create innovative pedagogical products. Furthermore, their use will help form the necessary foreign language competencies for students who study German.

## **2. Aims**

The study aims to assess the effectiveness of innovative educational product usage in forming translation competence among university students.

The main objectives of the study are:

- determination of the main components that form translation competence;
- to create translation competence, determine the effectiveness of using innovative pedagogical products and new technologies at all stages of learning German at a higher education institution.

## **3. Literature Review**

The issue of forming foreign language competencies is considered in the works of many domestic and foreign researchers. To this day, educators are searching for effective pedagogical technologies to facilitate this process (Ashton, 2014; Fernández-Manjón et al, 2007). According to some researchers, foreign language competencies in students are formed by the interaction of professional and humanities disciplines (Jayashree, 2017;

Zhao, 2018). Particular attention is paid to digital educational resources, social networks, multimedia, and their combination with traditional educational methods. The role of students' independent work in learning a foreign language is also reviewed (Ko et al., 2013; Senthilkumar & Kannappa, 2017).

Most researchers consider the term "foreign language competence" as a combination of knowledge acquired in education and skills used in practice (PACTE et al, 2018). A specialist with such skills uses a foreign language in all life spheres.

Among other issues, which domestic and foreign researchers consider, we can note:

- the use of modern digital technologies, social networks, and multimedia in the formation of translator competencies (Shi, 2017);
- the performance of students who use innovative methods in learning (Saydalieva, 2019);
- innovative forms of learning for the formation of translation skills and abilities (Salgur, 2013; Puranik, 2020).

Special attention in the researchers' works is paid to the issue of managing and facilitating the use of innovative methods for training future translators (Way, 2016; Kim, 2011). Many of them insist on the necessity of introducing innovative programs in higher education curricula (Kiki-Papadakis & Chaimala (2016). Moreover, many research papers focus on promoting such implementation in training by the administration of educational institutions (Kuzmina et al., 2020). Despite the large number of works devoted to the formation of translation competencies, the introduction of innovative projects in this process and their inclusion in educational programs of higher education institutions require a detailed study.

#### **4. Methods**

Achieving the study goals was made possible through developing and implementing an innovative educational project. Various scientific methods allow obtaining the data needed to implement the project, including testing and questionnaire student surveys. Qualitative and quantitative methods allow investigating the received information.

Students and teachers of Zaporizhzhia National University were the research participants. Forty-four undergraduate students from two groups and two foreign language teachers were selected for the experiment. For four years, the students studied German using a new model, according to which the emphasis in the learning process was placed on the formation of translation competencies. In contrast to the experimental group, the control group was taught using the traditional model, which the universities have used for many years.

The first results of the experiment were obtained after the first semester of 2020–2021. In particular, required for developing skills in translation components were established.

Also, the features that need improvement were selected. In this case, using various digital technologies, multimedia, and educational platforms was appropriate. A pedagogical technology model was developed to develop translation skills. Its use will facilitate the acquisition of translation skills. A student who possesses them will be able to quickly master the terminology in the chosen industry and solve any situation requiring the ability to communicate in German. Increased attention in teaching the students of experimental group was paid not only to the level of theoretical knowledge but also to improving the motivation for learning and digital literacy.

The first stage of the experiment was preparatory. It included preparing the curriculum, teaching materials, consultations with the teachers, and student testing to understand the students' translation competence level.

The second stage was determining the components that make up the translation competence. At this stage, multimedia tools and educational platforms were introduced into the educational process of the experimental group. The innovative technologies in German study were combined with traditional teaching. Special attention was paid to the student's independent work and non-standard task solutions while studying a foreign language.

The third stage was final. At this stage, the level of translation competence of the students in two groups – experimental and control – was determined. The main indicator confirming their formation was the level of students' motivation. We also considered other characteristics of the students, which improved the learning process according to the new educational model.

Obtained from the experiment data determined the effectiveness of the innovative teaching model, digital technologies, and translation techniques. Effective teaching materials have been arranged and uploaded to the websites of the higher education institution. They are successfully used for teaching students.

During the experiment, students and teachers encountered some difficulties. They noted the long duration of the investigation, the impossibility of determining the reasons for changes in the respondents' opinions, and the impossibility of conducting a deeper study.

## 5. Results

The project implementation was made possible by the joint work of the experiment participants, who performed the set tasks at each stage. Before the experiment, the necessary data (including educational materials) was collected and systematized; technical and methodological preparations were made; consultations with teachers and students were also organized.

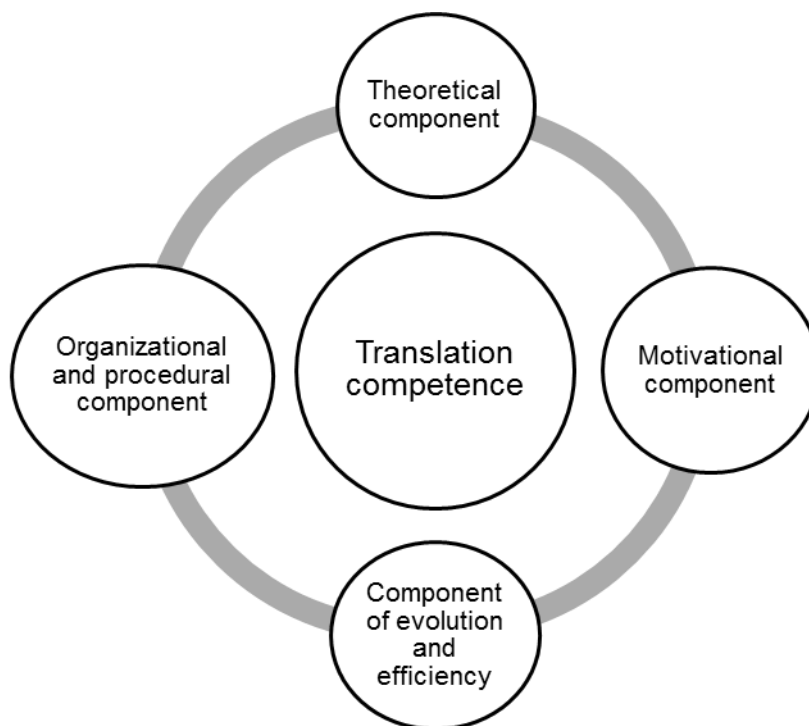
Before the practical implementation of the program to improve translation competence, a questionnaire survey was conducted among the students. The purpose of the

questionnaire was to determine their motivation for the translation activity and their ability to evaluate and analyze the information received. After that, the practical implementation of the project in the experimental group started. The training of the students took place in a mixed format. Traditional learning was combined with distance learning. At the same time, digital educational platforms and multimedia helped in learning German. In addition, increased attention was paid to the independent and creative work of the students participating in the experiment.

**Table 1.**  
*Students' translation competence level at the initial stage*

Indicators	Low		Satisfactory		Average		High	
	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG
<b>Motivation</b>	32 %	35 %	30 %	33 %	30 %	24 %	8 %	8 %
<b>Reflexivity</b>	34 %	29 %	37 %	38 %	15 %	18 %	14 %	15 %
<b>Technological effectiveness</b>	15 %	18 %	40 %	39 %	25 %	30 %	20 %	13 %
<b>Practical centrality</b>	45 %	43 %	27 %	26 %	23 %	24 %	5 %	7 %

At the practical implementation stage, the researchers identified the components that form the translation competence of students. They can include motivation, effectiveness, theory, and practice.



**Figure 1.** Students' translation competence elements.

Motivation is an essential component of translation competence formation. The higher its level, the better the student is aware of the importance of studying a foreign language. The high motivation of a student to learn is a factor in successful realization as a translator.

The ability to learn a foreign language determines the component of effectiveness. The future specialist must realize that his professionalism and qualification depend on the level of foreign language knowledge. Thus, these qualities define the possibility of getting a high-paying job.

The theory is an obligatory component of translation competence formation, which includes theoretical knowledge. Applying a foreign language in practice is impossible without a theoretical approach. Students acquire theoretical knowledge during their studies at a higher education institution: they learn to translate texts of various complexity, conduct correspondence, perceive oral speech, and master professional terminology according to the chosen direction. After getting the theory, students can put what they learned into practice where self-organization, the ability to work independently, responsibility, and discipline form the central value.

At the study's final stage, the experimental group's students were questioned again.

**Table 2.**

*The final stage of students' translation competence formation*

Indicators	Low		Satisfactory		Average		High	
	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG
<b>Motivation</b>	35 %	46 %	30 %	45 %	30 %	34 %	8 %	12 %
<b>Reflexivity</b>	34 %	39 %	41 %	50 %	15 %	30 %	14 %	27 %
<b>Technological effectiveness</b>	15 %	18 %	40 %	50 %	28 %	41 %	20 %	24 %
<b>Practical centrality</b>	45 %	43 %	27 %	36 %	23 %	38 %	7 %	17 %

We managed to establish the positive impact of the innovative model of foreign language learning on the formation of students' translation competence. It was determined that compared to the control group of students trained by the traditional program, the experimental group students had a higher level of translation competence formation. In addition, the experimental group's motivation to learn increased by 10 %. In the control group, this indicator did not exceed 2 %.

## 6. Discussion

Translation competence is formed within the actual pedagogical process of foreign language learning. This fact has been found by numerous studies previously carried out by domestic and foreign scientists. Almost any field of activity requires knowledge of the native language from the specialist working in it. Foreign language skills are also welcome or mandatory. For this reason, the study of a native and foreign language is included in

the training program of specialists in various industries. To make the educational process in universities more accessible, simple and at the same time effective, various teaching methods are created, and modern pedagogical technologies are developed (Bergen, 2010).

As a result of the study, it has been established that German linguistic translation competence is formed as a part of the general professional competencies of future specialists. Due to the continuous changes in the labor market and higher requirements for specialists, higher education teachers have to work on improving and enhancing the educational process. In particular, they should develop and implement innovative educational projects using various digital technologies. Thus, it is possible to improve the quality of the educational process, reducing the time for learning a foreign language. An educational project that can meet the requirements of the modern labor market is presented in the study.

Using new technologies in translation activities has proven its effectiveness many times. For this reason, a number of researchers are working on developing a model for their effective implementation (Arbol, 2018; Bergen, 2010). Many of them insist on the necessity of using digital technology in students' work with translations. Texts can be edited, digitized, and archived using various programs. Text libraries and a glossary have been created to facilitate students' work. The use of digital technology requires students to actively work independently and organize themselves (Puranik, 2020; Vienne, 1996). It should be noted that using digital technologies is not only beneficial for students. They increase teachers' digital and translation competence (Kiraly, 2015; Fernández-Manjón et al., (2007).

Thus, learning the basics of translation in modern conditions requires students to improve technical skills, increase their motivation to learn, and the ability to perform tasks independently. In addition, students and teachers should master new forms of learning and combine them with traditional ones.

For the study, we used the experience of forming foreign language competence using digital technology, as described in the work of Stavytska (2017). It is about the development and implementation in the educational process of an innovative model of foreign language learning. It was created considering the students' level of motivation and focused on the practical application of the acquired skills (Stavytska, 2017). Its application showed positive results, which increased students' motivation to learn foreign languages by 15 %. According to the results of our study, this indicator increased by 10 %.

Despite the achieved results of the study, the effectiveness of foreign language teaching in many domestic institutions of higher education is insufficient. This issue requires further consideration. The topic of optimizing special translation and the role of digital technology in this process remains open.



## 7. Conclusion

According to the new educational model, experimenting at Zaporizhzhia National University made it possible to evaluate the success of students learning a foreign language (German). During the results evaluation of the experiment, the criteria of technological, practical, and reflexive activity were taken as the basis.

As a result of the experiment, an increase in the level of students' motivation for translation activity was established. It was facilitated by a set of organizational and educational activities to form translation competencies.

The educational materials that showed their effectiveness in teaching the students were systematized and placed on the university websites. In the future, they will be included in the educational program of the University.

The result of the experimental group was compared to the control groups, which helps to determine the formation level of translation competence. The positive attitude towards the activities of an interpreter in the control group increased only by 2 %. However, in the experimental group that used a new teaching model, the index increased up to 10 %.

The study results confirm the effectiveness of modern technologies, multimedia tools, and educational platforms in foreign language teaching. The modern approach to future translators' education makes it possible to train qualified, and professional specialists demanded in the labor market. Furthermore, the effectiveness of integrated learning projects used to teach students. Further development and implementation of them in the educational programs of higher educational institutions are planned.

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