TRANSLATION SUPPORT MODEL OF THE UKRAINIAN ARMED FORCES UNDER THE ONGOING HYBRID RUSSIAN WARFARE

Ivan NEVMERZHYTSKYI, Veronika KARPENKO, Roksolana POVOROZNYUK

“Taras Shevchenko” National University of Kyiv, Ukraine
translating@gmail.com

Abstract: *The article explores the specifics of translation and interpretation components in the framework of the Translation Support Model of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (the Model) in the context of ongoing hybrid Russian warfare against Ukraine. The functional-interpretive approach of modelling the translation process is reviewed as a theoretical basis for the Model. Translation Component of the Model is implemented primarily through the Translation Project Management (TPM), and consists of the Organizational and Instructional components, implemented with such principles as circularity, continuity and fluency. Translation Workflow as well as Roles and Functions are the constituents of the Organizational component within TPM concept. The first one is described via the following stages: Acquisition of the original text (OT) from the Client, Organization and planning, Preparation of the OT for translation, Pre-translation analysis, Uploading the Project into the CAT software, Translation, Editing, Proofreading, and Finalization. The Instructional component facilitates the effective use of the translation resources (Translation Memories and Terminology Bases), categorized according to the NATO functional classes (J-structure). The interpretation component of the Model is mainly regarded through the prism of risk mitigation strategy, being the crucial aspect in the hybrid warfare setting.*

Keywords: model of translation, military translation, translation support, hybrid warfare, translation process

Introduction

Since 2014, Ukraine has been subject to annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and occupation of the Donbass region as a result of the hybrid Russian aggression. The geopolitical development demanded a direct involvement of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) and their accelerated cooperation with allies and partner-nations. Considering the inadequate ESL acquisition skills prevalent among the military personnel, the above-mentioned tasks fell to the lot of military translators and interpreters.

In the context of real combat actions, along with the imminent threat of further

expansion, which was part of the putative enemy's plans, the translation support activities acquired a vital and diversified character. In response to the newly emerging needs, the Translation Support Model had to be re-interpreted under the new, emergent conditions.

From the general translation theory perspective, the issue of translation activity model was considered by some of the outstanding scholars, among them there are such translatorial opinion leaders as L. Nelyubin, D. Seleskovic, M. Lederer, A. Schweizer, J. Retsker, L. Barkhudarov, S. Strelkovsky, K. Nord, J. Dancette, K. Rise, L.-R. Steigelbauer, V. Balabin.

The suggested model of translation support in the UAF will facilitate the provision of the fully equivalent and adequate translation services for the broad range of standardization, training, interoperability, capacity building, acquisition, and other tasks in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, at the most cost/time-efficient basis, and secure an effective and resolute response to the hybrid Russian aggression.

1. Theoretical basis of the Translation Support Model in the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF)

Taking into account the impact of pragmatic factor involving differentiation of the target audiences (TA), translational situations and subject range (thematic stock) in the translation support process, it is necessary to address both functional and interpretive aspects of modelling the translation support process for the UAF.

According to the previous studies, the most adequate theoretical model for the translation support in the UAF is a functional-interpretive model of translation (FIMT) [1].

It is derived from the existing translation models by D. Seleskovich, M. Lederer, masterminding the interpretive model of translation, and C. Nord, J. Dancette & K. Ménard, suggesting the functional model of translation [2, 3].

2. Specific features of the Translation Component in the Translation Support Model (TSM) for the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF)

At present, massive, diverse and vital character of the linguistic support accounts for a streamlined and effective translation process. The Translation Project Management is regarded as its integral part. Considering the FIMT as a cornerstone of the UAF translation support model, we have suggested our Translation Project Management model, which was tested at the Linguistic Research and Development

Department. The outline is graphically represented in the *Figure 1*.

Considering the above-mentioned hybrid warfare conditions, the Translation Project Management System was designed accordingly.

The Translation Project Management encompasses two basic components:

- Organizational component;
- Instructional (Lessons Learned) component.

2.1. The organizational component of the Translation Project Management (TPM) is defined by the observation of such principles as circularity, continuity and fluency. The successful implementation of this combination of principles brings the translator to the next stage of the translation project. This incremental implementation ensures optimal use of time and human resources.

The organizational component of the TPM specifies the following:

- 1) Translation Workflow;
- 2) Roles and Functions in the framework of TPM.

A translation project is organized according to the general principles of translation project's execution, as well as specific principles of translation projects commissioned by the UAF. It is divided into the following stages:

- *Acquisition of the original text (OT) from the Client*. At this stage the initial communication takes place between the Client and Project Manager (PM), where the requirements are formulated, the terms are discussed, as well as other specifics, if applicable. The project details are indicated in the Translation Support Management System (TSMS), along with the preliminary provided access data.
- *Organization and planning*. During this stage, PM draws a plan, outlines the timeframes, distributes the tasks and the roles, and registers project details in the TSMS.
- *Preparation of the OT for translation*.

The Technical Editor (TE) converts the text according to the specifications, as well as performs formatting of the text according to the requirements of the CAT software, and then submits it to the PM.

- *Pre-translation analysis* (usually performed simultaneously with the preparation of the OT for translation). PM studies the text as for the subject specifics, develops translation strategy and tactics according to the Client's requirements, as well as reviews and selects the necessary terminology, uploading it into the Master Term Base (MTB) or Glossary for its use by the other participants.
- *Uploading the Project into the CAT software*. Using the CAT tools, PM creates Thematic Translation Memory (TTM) and Project Term Base (PTB) and distributes access to the program resources to various participants of the Translation Process.
- *Translation*. It is carried out according to the selected strategy and tactics of translation, TTM and other guidelines provided by PM. As a rule, it is executed by a Translator and, if applicable, by a Senior Translator (ST) and PM. During this stage, the Translator provides Quality Assurance (QA), with recommendations to the Lessons Learned Newsletter, inputs terms into the PTM, as well as supports the roles, defined by PM or ST.
- *Editing*. It is carried out, as a rule, by ST according to the selected strategy and tactics of translation, TTM and other guidelines provided by PM. During this stage, ST provides QA and Quality Control (QC) as for the terminological accuracy and consistency, grammar, lexico-semantic and stylistic adequacy of the translated text, submits recommendations to the Lessons Learned Newsletter, inputs and verifies the terms, provided by the Translator to the PTB and submits them to PM for approval and further building the MTB.
- *Proofreading*. It is performed, as a rule, by PM according to the selected strategy and tactics of translation, TTM and other

peculiarities. During this stage PM provides QC by reviewing and proofreading the text, making input to the Lessons Learned Newsletter, approves inputs and recommendations to other participants, and verifies the terms, provided by the Translator and ST to the PTB, approving the final version of the MTB. At this stage, the PM may function either independently or in partnership with ST, or Translator.

- *Finalizing*. PM or TE exports a ready text from the program environment, then TE makes final formatting of the text, with regard to the Client's requirements and other peculiarities, defined during the Pre-translation analysis and the previous stages, providing maximum quality of the text from the perspectives of readability, layout and format, considering illustrations, diagrams, tables, schemes, etc. Then PM or TE updates project status in TSMS, submits the product to the Client, and also provides the Lessons Learned Newsletter to all the project participants. During this stage, the participants discuss and approve all the terminological, lexical, stylistic, formal, technical and other aspects, which turned out to be challenging during the Project execution, in order to leverage the experience and improve the participants' qualification.

2) Roles and Functions in the framework of TPM

We define the following roles in the TPM:

Project Manager (PM)

Senior Translator

Translator

Technical Editor.

Project Manager is the leading agent for the translation projects, who has an ultimate responsibility for its quality and timely execution. The Project Manager is associated with the following functions:

- General management of the project execution;
- Communication with the Client and acquisition of his/her requirements
- Distribution of the tasks among the

Participants

- Planning and scheduling of the project execution stages
- Approval of the terms, submitted to the PTB
- MTB creation
- Final review/proofreading of the product.

Senior Translator has the following functions:

- Translation
- Editing the texts, submitted by PM
- Selection and verification of the terms, submitted to the PTB
- Agreement and synchronization of the MTB with PM
- Providing input and agreement of the Lessons Learned Newsletter
- Other functions as defined by the PM.

Translator has the following functions:

- Translation
- Submitting terms to the PTB
- Providing input to the Lessons Learned Newsletter

Technical Editor has the following functions:

- Preparation of the text for the upload into the CATT software
- Formatting of the text according to the PM guidelines
- Other functions as defined by PM.

2.2. The Instructional (Lessons Learned) component consists of the following elements:

1) Terminology

2) Translation Memories.

1) Terminology is collated, selected, verified and organized through the terminological bases (TB), managed by the Computer Aided Translation Tools (CATT). Using TBs (usually of “.tmx”, “.sdlb” and other formats) requires input and verification of the terms at the final stage of each project, thus creating the PTB. Each PTB after its review and verification by ST and PM creates MTB, the finalized term base, encompassing all selected units. Verified and approved terms of the current

project will be used as an official resource for a further terminological and translation work.

2) Translation Memory (TM) is a file of bilingual format (i.e. “.sdlb”, etc.) with synchronized, segmented original and translated texts. After creation of the project and uploading of the project files, the ready-for-use thematic TMs are selected for the current project, corresponding to the subject matter, lexicosemantic, stylistic and terminological specifics of the text under translation.

We have developed thematic categorization of the TMs on the basis of the functional and pragmatic characteristics, the aspects of subjects matter prevalent in the Armed forces and civilian entities of the North Atlantic Alliance.

The TM categorization is as follows:

J1 – Personnel and Education (cadre policy, research and scientific cooperation, internal auditing, risk management, etc.)

J2 – Intelligence (Human Intelligence, Communication Intelligence, OPINT, etc.)

J3 – Operations (tactical and operational level, planning, force protection, informational operations, STRATCOM, PSYOPS, topography, mapping, etc.)

J4 – Logistics (material support and supply, combat service support, armament and equipment, medicine, food technologies, etc.)

J5 – Planning (strategic, defence, mobilization planning; strategic documents, standardization, codification, etc.)

J6 – Communication (communication security, C2, C3, C4 systems, informational technologies, programming, cyber defence, etc.)

J7 – Training (joint and other types of military exercises for troops (forces), courses, etc.)

J8 – Finances and Law, International Cooperation (regulation of armed conflict, Geneva Convention, Red Cross, etc.)

J9 – Civil-Military Cooperation, Moral and Psychological Support (chaplain services, psychological and recreational activities, etc.).

The described Translation Project

Management Process, as has been already mentioned, is an integral part of the Translation Support Model for the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF), and proved to be comprehensively efficient in the hybrid warfare context, which is evidenced by tens of thousands of translated pages by the Linguistic Research and Development Department.

3. Specific features of the Interpretation Component of the Translation Support Model (TSM) in the UAF

After the tangible effects of the hybrid Russian aggression witnessed by Ukraine in 2014, the military cooperation in the fields of training, standardization, armament and equipment etc. was called upon, and its implementation required a comprehensive high-quality interpretation support.

Drawing upon our own translation practice, we may suggest that one of the special and persuasive characteristics of military translation in the hybrid warfare context is the risk mitigation strategy (Pym, Matsushita, 2018)

As far as the mitigation strategy is concerned, the key notion of risk mitigation is interlaced with other risk management tools in translation. According to a brilliant analysis presented in the Anthony Pym's and Kayo Matsushita's article, there are the following risk management "dispositions" in translation: risk taking, risk avoidance, risk transfer and risk mitigation [4].

We consider it necessary to clarify which types of risks are managed (taken, mitigated, transferred or avoided) in the military interpreting and what exactly is implied by "risk", i.e. what is "to be impaired, lost or damaged" in terms of our translation model.

The basic understanding of risk lies in the actual lexico-semantic aspect, to wit the translator or interpreter sees the danger of impaired sense or connotation in the OT, arising out of the linguistic aspects of the OT or the different target audience

perceptions.

The second explanation has an extralinguistic character and lies in the possibility of impaired communication, which thus expands to the broader context of compromised diplomatic or political relations.

The risk-taking party is generally associated with an interpreter, but it is not always he/she, the "one who risks" in the situation of interpretation, – sometimes the risk is not with the interpreter; he/she is rather to address it.

One of the examples from our own interpretation practice supports the above-mentioned claim. During the talks between the Chief of the Lithuanian Training Mission to Ukraine, who at that time was Lieutenant Colonel, and the Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Defence, the former uttered [the style and wording is preserved]: "Lithuania is not as big country as Ukraine, both geographically and demographically, so we cannot afford that great losses. That is why we drastically need your combat experience of fighting the Russians."

From a military-tactical standpoint, this phrase is full of sense and logic, while from a military-diplomatic one, it is quite close to a disaster, as the Ukrainian side might legitimately perceive it as an insult: "*They think that we are so inferior to the Lithuanians, that we can die first to gain the combat experience they need?!'*"

The interpreter, knowing that the originator of the phrase was not a native English speaker, made a risk mitigation decision to render the utterance as follows: "*Ми усвідомлюємо, що загроза зі сторони Росії для нас є неминучою і насувається все ближче, тому ваш бойовий досвід у протистоянні з росіянами є вкрай необхідний для литовців [We understand that the Russian threat is quite close and imminent for us, that is why we drastically need your experience].'*"

Taking into account the hybrid warfare context and the described situation of

translation, the sensitivity of the addressee's perception is augmented to an acute extent, which the interpreter was clearly aware of.

The case study demonstrates that the interpreter made a risk mitigation decision, which, however, was not related to the actual lexico-semantic or any other purely linguistic difficulties of the original message, – yet addressed the overall extralinguistic risk of a disrupted or impaired communication, caused by the uncouth/inarticulate speaker.

4. Conclusions

The Translation Support Model used by the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) within the frameworks of counteracting the hybrid Russian aggression and described herein, is designed to provide an effective and practically ascertained basis for further translation and interpretation services as well as military translators training both in the Ukrainian and other countries' military settings. We have only broached the professional and scientific discussion on the topic, which requires further elaboration, research and attention.

Figure 1: Translation Project Management Workflow

References List

- [1] Nevmerzhytskyi, I. (2021). Model of Translation Support in the Armed Forces of Ukraine: Problematics and Construction. 15th Annual Doctoral Conference Proceedings on the Topic "New Approaches to State Security Assurance," 163-169. <https://aktivny.unob.cz/dk/Documents/2021/15th%20Annual%20Doctoral%20Conference%20proceedings.pdf>
- [2] Nord, C. (1991). Text Analysis in Translation. Theory, Methodology and Didactic Applications of a Model of Translation-Oriented Text Analysis. Amsterdam – Atlanta: Rodopi, p. 250.

- [3] Lederer, M. (1994). *La traduction aujourd'hui*, Paris : Hachette, p. 224.
- [4] Pym, A., & Matsushita, K. (2018). Risk mitigation in translator decisions. *Across Languages and Cultures*, 19(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1556/084.2018.19.1.1>