



Review of the study program "6Bo2301 – Translation Studies"

On the basis of my general experience as a professor of Knowledge Communication and Translation at Aarhus University, Denmark (30 years of teaching experience, a broad network of international contacts in the field) and my time as a Visiting Professor at the Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, with a special emphasis on teaching in the programs of translation and foreign philology, I present a brief review of the study program of the translator education (written as well as oral translation). The empirical basis of my review consists of the official study program and my experience with teaching students of the BA program.

The BA program has a professional orientation towards enabling students to work as translators and interpreters in the professional reality of Kazakhstan, based on state-of-the-art perceptions of the tasks that such work consists of. Students specialize in working from English into Kazakh or Russian, and they specialize in either written translation or oral interpreting. The basis of developing the study program is a set of competences established from studies of translators' work. These competences are divided into four groups:

- Profession-oriented (focusing on pre-processing of translation),
- Profession-based competences (focusing on the central translation process),
- Systematic competences (focusing on assessment and post-reflection of the translation process), and
- Intercultural and communicative competences (focusing on the macro-context of the practice of doing professional translation).

The competences and their description are in accordance with contemporary theoretical insights from translation studies. Hence, students working towards these competences will achieve a state-of-the-art qualification enabling them to work not only in a Kazakh context but also to be part of translational work teams at an international level, due to their general insights in and conceptualization of the processes and conditions of professional translation.

Based on the competences and with an exemplary consistence in the realization, all modules are related to the competences, so that it is in all cases clear how they contribute to achieving them. I think there is a good balance between brief introductions to linguistic theory, translation theory, and digitalization, on the one hand, and more elaborate work on achieving language competences (general and specific) and translational competence, including internship. Thus, the balance is as is to be expected of a BA program oriented towards educating academic practitioners, again in accordance with the state of the art in the field of translation programs at world level: focus is upon learning to solve known problems on the basis of theory-based insights through practical training. This is also reflected in the suggested diploma projects, viz., building specialized glossaries and dictionaries.

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Additional to the core program on developing qualifications in translation, students also are offered minors in fields like business communication and economics or media communication. The idea here is to allow the students to specialize in translating in such fields, but also to introduce them to the disciplinary culture of fields adjacent to the core discipline of translation. In this way, the possibilities of professional development of the students in the course of their practice is supported in a very sensible way.

Hence, the program lives up to all quality standards of contemporary translation programs. As all such programs, however, recent developments in the technical side of translation and translation tools (especially new AI and neural network-based tools) constitutes a challenge that will have to be met in the previous developments of the program. Without changing the content of the program, it could be relevant to gradually shift the balance of the study program away from a focus upon learning to master specific LSPs and their vocabulary (especially relevant for manually creating target texts) towards aspects of understanding source texts as well as analyzing and specifying source and target text situations (especially relevant for post-editing outputs from translation tools). This would mean shifting the balance away from a focus upon the translated text and its 'objective' quality towards the actual knowledge- and interpretation-based creative operations of the translators when carrying out the translation. It is important for me to say that already in the present format of the program both types of aspects are present, and having worked with the students and the teachers in the program it is also obvious that all are aware of both foci in their work with translations. One way of expressing a re-balancing could consist in suggesting other types of diploma theses than to build dictionaries and glossaries and instead also allow works with an emphasis on investigating decision-making processes and other more procedural and cognitive aspects of translation.



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