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THE IMPACT OF TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES ON DEVELOPING ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AMONG ENGINEERING STUDENTS

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Abstract

The growing importance of English as the international language of science, technology, and innovation has increased the demand for effective teaching methods in technical higher education. This article explores the impact of translation activities on the development of English language proficiency among engineering students. Translation is viewed as a pedagogical tool that enhances vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, writing skills, and professional communication. The paper discusses the benefits and challenges of using translation in English language classrooms and highlights its role in preparing future engineers for participation in international professional environments. The study concludes that translation-based instruction significantly contributes to language development and professional competence in technical education.

Keywords: Translation activities, English language teaching, engineering students, technical education, professional communication, language proficiency, technical vocabulary, higher education.

Introduction

English has become the dominant language of international communication, scientific research, and technological innovation. Engineers and technical

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specialists must frequently read scientific literature, analyze technical documentation, communicate with foreign partners, and participate in international projects. Therefore, the development of English language proficiency has become one of the major objectives of technical higher education. Traditional language teaching approaches often focus on grammar and general communication skills. However, engineering students require additional competencies related to professional communication and technical terminology. Translation activities provide an effective means of connecting language learning with professional knowledge.

For many years, translation was considered a traditional teaching method that limited direct communication in a foreign language. Modern educational research, however, recognizes translation as a valuable pedagogical tool that promotes deeper language awareness, critical thinking, and professional competence. In technical universities, translation activities help students understand complex texts and acquire specialized vocabulary necessary for their future careers.

Discussion and results

Translation as a learning tool. Translation is more than the replacement of words from one language with equivalent words in another language. It involves understanding meaning, context, structure, and communicative purpose. In educational settings, translation encourages students to compare linguistic systems, analyze grammatical structures, and identify semantic relationships between languages. Through this process, learners become more conscious of language use and develop a deeper understanding of both their native language and English. Translation activities may include:

- translating technical articles;
- working with engineering manuals;
- translating abstracts and reports;

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- terminology analysis;
- comparative language exercises;
- editing machine-translated texts.

These activities support the development of multiple language skills simultaneously.

Benefits of translation activities in technical education

Vocabulary development. Technical disciplines require mastery of a large number of specialized terms. Translation exposes students to authentic professional vocabulary and helps them understand its meaning in context. Engineering students encounter terminology related to mechanics, electronics, geology, petroleum engineering, information technology, and other technical fields. Regular translation practice improves vocabulary retention and enables students to use technical terminology accurately.

Reading comprehension enhancement. Engineering students often struggle with authentic scientific texts because of complex sentence structures and specialized terminology. Translation requires close reading and detailed analysis of textual information. As students translate technical documents, they learn to identify key concepts, recognize logical connections, and interpret information accurately. This process improves overall reading comprehension and supports independent learning.

Writing improvement. Translation contributes significantly to writing development. Students learn how technical information is organized and presented in professional texts. By translating reports, instructions, and research articles, learners become familiar with the conventions of technical writing. They improve their ability to construct clear and precise sentences while maintaining professional style and terminology consistency.

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Grammar awareness. Translation encourages students to examine grammatical structures carefully. They compare how ideas are expressed in different languages and develop greater awareness of grammatical rules. This analytical approach strengthens understanding of complex English structures such as passive voice, conditional sentences, participial constructions, and technical descriptions.

Translation and professional communication. Professional communication is an essential component of engineering practice. Engineers frequently collaborate with colleagues from different countries and cultural backgrounds. Translation activities prepare students for such communication by familiarizing them with professional discourse patterns and technical language conventions. Students learn how information is structured in international engineering documents and how communication standards vary across professional contexts. Furthermore, translation develops accuracy and attention to detail, qualities that are crucial in technical professions where misunderstandings can have serious consequences.

The role of technical terminology. One of the most important aspects of technical translation is terminology management. Technical fields continuously generate new concepts and innovations, leading to the creation of new terminology.

Students must learn to:

- identify technical terms;
- understand their meanings;
- find appropriate equivalents;
- use terminology consistently;
- create terminology databases and glossaries.

Terminological competence contributes directly to professional effectiveness and improves the quality of communication in specialized fields.

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Challenges in translation-based learning. Although translation offers numerous educational benefits, several challenges exist.

Lack of subject knowledge. Students sometimes struggle to translate technical texts because they do not fully understand the underlying engineering concepts. Successful translation requires both language competence and professional knowledge.

Linguistic complexity. Technical texts often contain complex syntax, long noun phrases, and highly specialized vocabulary. These features may create difficulties for learners with limited language proficiency.

Overreliance on machine translation. The widespread availability of machine translation tools has changed students' approaches to translation tasks. While such technologies can be useful, excessive dependence on automatic translation may hinder language development. Teachers should encourage students to critically evaluate machine-generated translations and develop independent translation skills.

Technology and translation education. Modern translation education increasingly incorporates digital tools. Engineering students can benefit from learning how to use:

- translation memory systems;
- electronic dictionaries;
- terminology management software;
- corpus analysis tools;
- artificial intelligence translation platforms.

The integration of technology into translation instruction reflects contemporary professional practice and prepares students for real-world communication tasks.

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Moreover, digital translation tools enable students to work more efficiently with large volumes of technical information.

Pedagogical strategies for translation-based instruction. To maximize the benefits of translation activities, instructors should adopt learner-centered approaches. Effective strategies include:

- project-based translation assignments;
- group translation workshops;
- technical terminology projects;
- peer review activities;
- translation portfolio development;

authentic document analysis.

These methods promote active learning and encourage students to apply language skills in realistic professional contexts. Teachers should also select materials relevant to students' academic specialties to increase motivation and practical relevance.

Conclusion

Translation activities represent a valuable component of English language teaching in technical universities. They contribute to vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, writing development, grammatical awareness, and professional communication skills. By integrating translation into engineering education, universities can better prepare students for participation in international scientific and technological communities. Translation not only supports language learning but also facilitates the acquisition of professional knowledge and intercultural competence. Therefore, translation-based instruction should be considered an effective and relevant approach to English language education for engineering students in modern technical higher education institutions.

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