

The Role of Background Knowledge in Building the Translating/Interpreting Competence of the Linguist

Elzara V. Gafiyatova^{1*} and Nadezhda P. Pomortseva²

¹Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russian Federation; rg-777@yandex.ru

²Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russian Federation; nadpom@rambler.ru

Abstract

Background/Objectives: The paper deals with the role of background knowledge in building the translating/interpreting competence of the students majoring in Linguistics. **Methods/Statistical Analysis:** The analysis is based on the research into the phenomenon of background knowledge acquisition in Russian and international linguistic theory and practice. The leading approach used by the authors is observation and classification of the investigated material as well as interviewing, collecting, analyzing and synthesizing the data, received via interview and survey. **Findings:** Based on the research and empirical findings, the authors mark two main problems: 1) The relationship of background knowledge of the linguist with the source language and culture of the author, written or oral information in understanding and interpretation of the text into the target language; 2) Lack of attention to background knowledge in teaching methodology of translation/interpretation in academic major of linguistics. To grant well-grounded conclusions the survey of background knowledge standard of 70 senior undergraduates is provided in the article. The authors come to the conclusion that background knowledge is crucial for will-be translators/interpreters and provide recommendations to improve the academic background knowledge acquisition process for the sake of better understanding between communication agents. **Application/Improvements:** The materials of the research may be applied worldwide by university staff, educators and researchers who are involved in professional linguistic research and training.

Keywords: Background Knowledge, Interpreting Competence, Linguistics, Translating

1. Introduction

Currently, the professional requirements for a linguist in terms of translation/interpretation are increasing significantly due to the steady development of various fields of science, technology, business, sports, household service market etc. In this regard, the translator, in addition to the high level of knowledge of the target language is required to demonstrate universality, which implies the acquisition of certain specialized knowledge, allowing to navigate the realities of the language. A part of this knowledge is taught directly at school and later at university. It is also accumulated in the process of training

and professional activities of the linguist and hence is called background knowledge or general intelligence.

It should be noted that secondary and higher education institutions do not cater much for general intelligence. Classical (traditional) school education is subject-based. In the field of Science, this approach is justified, but in the applied field of translation/interpretation based on communication in various spheres of human endeavor its effectiveness is doubtful. Gradually, the problem is becoming more acute and makes insufficiency of background knowledge a barrier which many translators/interpreters cannot overcome. To add, the translators can face a striking discrepancy caused by different language

* Author for correspondence

and cultural world views of the communication agents. In the case of communication via two or more “linguistic pictures of the world”, the challenge is compounded¹⁻⁴.

All this determines the relevance of the theme of this study. Based on research and empirical findings, we marked two research problems: 1) The relationship of background knowledge of the linguist and translator with the source language and culture of the author, written or oral information in understanding and interpretation of the text into the target language; 2) Lack of attention to background knowledge in teaching methodology of translation/interpretation in academic major of linguistics. A close study into the problem is to show the future linguists the importance and benefits of having the extensive background knowledge.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Background

Based on the idea that the cornerstone of background knowledge is cultural and social diversity, we try to define the concept of the background knowledge. In Russian literature, the nature and value of the background knowledge was first discussed by Kostomarov & Vereshchagin in Language and Culture where the linguists relate background knowledge to general knowledge of all participants of the communicative act. After some time, the definition has been changed, updated, but the essence remained the same.

According to the classification by Kostomarov & Vereshchagin there are three categories of background knowledge: universal, regional and cross-cultural. However, the authors themselves admit that their theory is not comprehensive. In particular, the classification lacks general professional background knowledge that guides people whose job is involved in constant human-human contact, such as, health service, law, environmental protection, public transport and others.

The main research topics of background knowledge are related to Country Study. Every single linguistic and ethnic community possesses this knowledge, in other words, the background knowledge define the popular culture of this community and is divided into relevant background knowledge, practiced here and now, and the cultural heritage. Gradually, the word cross-cultural has become out-dated, evolving the acute interest of those who studied a foreign language and noticed the apparent

discrepancies between the languages and cultures. This appears the reason for interpreting the background knowledge as a national and cultural uniqueness of communication agents⁵⁻⁶.

However, the issue of the only true definition of background knowledge remains open, offering different interpretations of the concept on the part of the Russian and international linguists. The latter, in particular, use the term *background knowledge* for reasoning and speaking activity, or the process of speech perception, or reading and literacy; the term is mostly referred to Education and Teaching Methods than to Culture Study. This situation is shown in Hirsch's Theories of Cultural Literacy, with an example of reading a newspaper. While looking through the headlines, the carrier of the culture, possessing a certain bundle of background knowledge, adequately perceives both explicit and implicit information. He/she relates the text to the background context. According to Hirsch, cultural literacy allows independent use of communication tools and knowledge, encourages acting as the receiver and transmitter of complex written and oral information in time and space. The background knowledge is generally regarded as belonging to a nation and must be granted with a certain literary language of this nation⁷.

While analyzing any background knowledge in the context of any written information linguists may refer to the concept of *presupposition*. This term was introduced by Valgina as a semantic component of the text, which is not explicitly expressed, however, implied. To determine it one requires prior knowledge through which the text is treated as fairly as possible. This prior knowledge is estimated by Valgina as background one. Presuppositions may be found both in the text and beyond it. In terms of written information background knowledge serves not only for the interpretation of letter and graphic units, but also for the bundle of culture and knowledge, or “communicative background”, which is the base of the construction of the text and its linguistic and cultural deciphering.

In the broadest interpretation of background knowledge by Tomakhin it is divided into:

- Universal (e.g. knowledge about the sun, moon, time, water, etc.);
- Regional knowledge (e.g. the inhabitants of tropical latitudes are not always aware of the concept of snow);
- Information shared only by the members of a certain nation or ethnic, linguistic community (e.g. children's fairy tales);

- Local knowledge inherent to the residents of some area: town, village, closed society, sect, etc. contributing to the emergence of geographically or socially-mediated dialect or manner of speech;
- Group knowledge shared by small groups like family, work-team-, groupmates, etc. (e.g. remembering each other's school nicknames or stories told around the campfire).

Back in 1960-s the author of the Dictionary of Linguistic Terms Akhmanova declared that “the mutual knowledge of the realities on the part of the speaker and the listener is the basis of linguistic communication”. Today linguistics describes this knowledge as background. Meanwhile, in Country Study it is described as insufficient in-sight into the word semantics. This theory was originally developed by Komlev, who put forward the concept of cultural and historical components and suggested that the background knowledge is a component of the word. The Komlev Background Knowledge Model showed that a certain word for an object or phenomenon in the framework of the existence of a particular society gives it not only value, but also the social background, as a necessary associative detail⁷⁻¹⁵. This explains the connection of semantics and the background knowledge. The reason is that semantics is characterized by a component that captures the socio-cultural background, allowing the existence of the word.

To catch up with the idea Vladimirova considers the background knowledge able to convey the semantics of words and implicit information that is expressed in the subtext, but is not perceived in the language.

To properly understand the importance and the role of background knowledge we should take into account the semantic content, because it makes not only for the general principles, but for the specific conditions of background knowledge application in communication in general and multicultural dialogue in translation, in particular.

To this end, it is necessary to distinguish between:

- Personal background knowledge acquired empirically (experience) and indirectly (all sources of information);
- Universal knowledge (shared by most people regardless of culture) and specific knowledge (professional knowledge and national);
- Conceptual background knowledge, accumulating various activities of society and different outlooks,

mentality and non-verbal communication, customs and traditions, social status and so on.

Since this article analyzes the role of background knowledge in communication, the definition provided by Tomakhin where background knowledge is virtually all the knowledge available to the communicants in communication appears the most justified one¹⁶⁻²⁶.

Thus, to provide the most accurate translation of the background information the linguist is supposed to know the hierarchy of background knowledge as a system. It is equally important to understand the semantic structure of the background knowledge of a particular language and culture. This will significantly increase the quality of the translation, as it will not take much to choose the right way to transfer the background information from the source into the target language.

2.2. Status of the Problem

One of the main characteristics of professional translation is the level of background knowledge acquisition in addition to knowledge of linguistics, psychology and writing abilities. From the technical point of view, the correct application of translation techniques for particular culture components of background knowledge (calquing, transcription, compensation, explication, etc.) is one of the key skills in the work of the translator.

The most detailed information in the background knowledge is transferred through explication. This allows the user to understand the peculiarities of foreign language ethnos, its traditions, national and other features. In the end, such background knowledge is gradually accumulated into the universal background knowledge of mankind.

Tomakhin, in his turn, says that the problem of background knowledge in the translation of the source text is crucial for the translator to properly percept the implicit extra-linguistic information. One of the perennial problems of translation lies in the difference in the scope and content of the background knowledge of the agents of cross cultural communication, as well as the accepted norms of the difference of speech etiquette. These factors build up the pragmatic side of the utterance.

Based on the theory of Kryukov, background knowledge is acquisition of both material and moral values of the society by an individual. Background knowledge is not always related to the language, but for a linguist it is of

great interest, first to trace how in one or another linguistic and cultural community background knowledge as the non-verbal component of verbal communication is woven into the text; second, to determine what is implicit in the language of communication, and what is only explicated.

Lack of background knowledge in translation practice is not rare and leads to a failure of a communication act in which certain speech patterns do not fulfill their purpose²⁷⁻²⁹.

In terms of the study represented in this paper there are two factors crucial for a successful translation:

- Background knowledge of the translator/interpreter as a recipient of the text should be at least comparable with the background knowledge of the intended recipient of the original. Ideally, the translator must be able to put him/herself in the place of the author, to assess what background knowledge the author has engaged in the act of communication⁹. “For the interpreter as the recipient it is crucial to achieve the level of knowledge and aesthetic sensitivity that would allow to perceive objectively the entire meaning and emotional content contained in the translated text”³⁰. Komissarov, in his turn, said that the translator has to understand the translated text more deeply than the general reader, for whom the original language is the mother tongue;
- The translator, being the author of the text in the target language, is to foresee the sufficiency or lack of background knowledge of the recipient, its structure and composition, bearing in mind that for some reason they can mismatch the background knowledge of the recipient’s original text to be translated.

Thus, among others, a task of the translator, appears the comparison of the background knowledge of the communicants. To this end, the translator is to meet the three types of translation challenges:

- The unpredictability of the semantics of language units;
- Mismatch of linguistic pictures of the world provided by languages to reflect the extra-linguistic reality;
- Differences in the reality itself, described in the text to be translated.

In the process of intercultural communication any professional translator faces a situation where he/she has to consider two or more linguistic pictures of the world. Also, in order to overcome the extra-linguistic difficulties the reader has to assemble ‘the jig-saw puzzle’ of divergent

categories of reality (the most widespread example - non-equivalent vocabulary for things and events, which are absent in the compared cultures), and the unique conceptual view of the world.

These challenges are objective because they are under the control of multidimensional phenomena, like the category of reality and culture, which cannot be guided. The influence made by factors specific to the culture and mentality on the translation process, as well as on the correct perception of the translation of the text produced within one culture by the representatives of other cultures is evident. It should also be noted that a number of linguistic and cultural translation problems are pre-determined, however, some socio-cultural and ethnographic translation problems can be settled only via linguistic means.

It becomes obvious that background knowledge of a translator/interpreter is a landmark of his/her professional competence and success. The translator/interpreter, in some cases is to match or exceed the intelligence standards of the average reader, counted on by the author of the original text, as well as be able to make inferences about the peculiarities and extension of background knowledge of the recipient.

3. Observations, Findings and Discussion

Research shows that one of the misconceptions of the students majoring Linguistics is that the preliminary advantage in their future profession is the knowledge of a foreign language. This results in graduates’ inability to tackle on majority of current topics due to lack of basic knowledge³¹⁻³⁴. Articles on weather changes and favorite books rarely require professional translation. Much more often the linguistic graduate is required to translate a manual on a new fire-extinguishing system or an article on coronary surgery, etc. Facing such a challenge for the first time, the translator is likely to experience cognitive dissonance. He/she may know the principle of the electronic cloud services for translation, but it happens that there is no meaning of the required term or a number of them are given. Attempts to find a consultant or to understand the topic independently often fail.

Majoring linguistics the student develops a set of specific translation skills to make the translation process automated and mostly intuitive operation. However, we

should take into account several factors of the learning process, which will affect building the translating/interpreting competence of the linguist:

- Professional translation is possible only based on the complete multi-faced training of the linguist. In practice, this is limited to theoretical courses of lectures and seminars on Theory of Translation and different branches of Linguistics;
- General professional training of the future translator/interpreter building his/her communicative, linguistic, analytical, didactical competences provided on the basis of a set of Applied Sciences taken at university;
- Specific translator/interpreter competence gained in Translation Studies of different translation methods and techniques, stylistic translation, building skills of consecutive and simultaneous translation. This translation training should above all develop public speaking skills in terms of respiratory system, voice acquisition, delivery, manner of speech, etc.;
- Improving general intelligence and enhancing students' background knowledge. This means introducing undergraduates to sciences, not related directly to linguistics (a course in Philosophy, Natural Science, IT, History, Country Study, Culture Study, local languages and culture).

In the context of background knowledge for the future translator/interpreter, a certain theoretical and analytical framework could cater for by providing different types of texts to help holistic extensive education of the translator/interpreter in Science, Technology and Arts. A four-year bachelor course of Linguistics gains the main purpose of providing students with the most accurate skills to adequately understand and express the contents of written text and oral utterance, to observe one or other linguistic phenomena, as well as to determine the issues raised in the text, and the main idea of the author.

There are two options in which students learn how to correctly interpret all the information contained in the text, without entering into conflict with the views of the author:

- Technically-mediated method of explication. It is possible, provided that the source code, in the perception of the translator, is semantically equivalent to the text, which is interpreted correctly by native speakers. Explication requires the explanation of the

information implied in the text. This method works only granted the highest linguistic competence of the translator.

- Building linguistic and cultural competence of undergraduates so that it could be approximate to that of native speakers. It should be mentioned that it is impossible to talk about specific figures and categories of background knowledge sufficient for a translator because the realities of life suggest that the growth of background knowledge is ever lasting. We can only assert that there is abstract "average" native speaker. The second option seems the best, but much more difficult to meet the training standard of professional personnel⁴.

Unfortunately, working with a large number of translators/interpreters complicates the thorough training of each of them. Conventionally, the teaching staff often limits to offering students individual texts of different thematic focus. This allows us to speak only about the short-term understanding of a subject based on a single text. This type of activity is unlikely to contribute much to building students' background knowledge.

If we talk about linguistic and country-study competence, as part of the background knowledge, there are a few factors to be considered in the process of formation of this type of competence:

- Multicultural dialogue, a fundamental factor, is based on the improving of culture standard of a translator so that he/she could adequately percept the modern multicultural society: the principles of respect and tolerance for other cultures and religions; the positive perception of the cultural values of other ethnic groups¹¹. In higher educational institutions of the Russian Federation, this principle should be assimilated in the study of subjects such as Theory of Cross-Cultural Communication, Foreign Literature, Culture Study and others.
- The factor of national and cultural self-determination which gives the translator/interpreter the opportunity to identify themselves as a unique party of a particular linguistic and cultural group, the carrier of native language and culture;
- The method of cognitive practices to improve the quality of reasoning. This principle is based on an integrated approach to the development of the cognitive awareness of the linguist, the creation of the

bi-lingual cultural identity of the person. This is one of the most challenging approaches in training, as it requires individual approach in group sessions. This factor can also be called learning study of all “foreign” in close connection with all “native”.

Deep and profound knowledge of the non-native culture is gained only if the learner of foreign languages “is encouraged by the need to look for differences between samples of their own and other cultures and find out the nature of these differences. This approach is the most important, as opposed to frequently used technique, when a would-be-translator/interpreter expects to learn the culture by wrapping up in the foreign environment, and pulling away from their native culture. Thus in training the professional translator the bond of native and foreign language must be strengthened which is naturally a challenge;

- Factor based on the application of knowledge in the translation practice. The newly acquired knowledge does not automatically establish itself in the mind as there are certain obstacles when applying new knowledge of a foreign language and its culture, to their native culture. The process of implementation becomes even more problematic if the conceptual and terminological system of a would-be-translator/interpreter is only rudimental.

Consequently, at an advanced level where the language is no longer the main target but the dominant means of acquiring knowledge the goals of linguistic training is to evaluate the system of background knowledge as a basic component, which should be become a base for classroom and independent work of students on a detailed understanding of written and spoken information with different stylistic treatment.

Boasting a high command of language the students have to understand that the language, cultural organization, linguistic characteristics, the formal properties of texts are secondary to the development of intellectual speech and reasoning system in translation. The system is detected during the inception of communication, then the consistent interpretation and translation of information. Bakhtin provides the rationale of linguistic resources and the role of their use, which without conscious (intentional) understanding the external linguistic features can be misunderstood and are not fixed. The role of knowledge is defined in the context of prior experience

in the understanding and comprehension of textual information. In other words, the greater the knowledge base is while acquiring the new information, the closer and more intense their bonds are, hence, the deeper is understanding¹.

4. Materials and Methods

4.1. Participants

The current research interpreted the answers of 70 fourth-year students, both males and females, majoring in Linguistics and specializing in Translation/Interpretation Studies.

By age the participants could be divided into three categories: aged 20-21-62.8%; aged 22-25-27. 1%; over 25 years old – 10.1 %. Most participants - 44 respondents - were students born in 1993-1994. The second category is the age group of 19 subjects aged 22-25 years old, 11 of them had already obtained a college or technical school diploma. There was also a third category of 7 persons older than 25 years old, also with some college or technical school background. The majority of the respondents were females (59 people – 85%). There were no males among the participants of the second and third age groups.

4.2. Instrument

The participants were asked to do a Multiple Choice Test of 20 questions with 4 options to choose from. Purposefully, the test was not an online survey as practice showed that on-line test result validity tend to be quites low. Successful completion of the test did not depend on the skills of translation competence and theoretical training. The procedure of the test aimed at meeting the requirements of the respondents. If the respondent was unsure about a question or questioned the correctness of the options provided, he/she was free to clarify the unclear information. Before the testing the participants were provided with the instruction on answer-marking and timing, namely, they were to perform the test within 30 minutes, provided it is done independently. The successful completion of the test did not depend on the skills of translation competence. The 20 questions of the test covered topical issues from various fields of science normally included in the comprehensive school curriculum, such as Geography, History, Geography, Mathematics, Natural Science, Arts as well as, films,

music, sports. The test did not include deeply specialized terminology normally provided at higher education institutions.

The test was crowned with the survey question asking the participants to point out their spheres of excellence, i.e. the field of knowledge where they are likely to demonstrate the highest general knowledge.

5. Results

Having made an insight into the theoretical aspects of the problem of lack of background knowledge to properly build the translating/interpreting competence of the linguist as well as translation process and teaching methods we have to justify our argument from the practical point of view. Defining strong and weak points in background knowledge of students using calculations and accurate count percentage may serve granting our methodology.

Here are some examples of test questions and answer options and the number of correct and incorrect answers [Table 1 - Table 12].

Table 1. Question № 2

Options	Question № 2. Where are the white blood cells formed?	
	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. Bone marrow		
B. Lymphatic vessels	31,24%	68,76%
B. Spleen		
G. Lymph nodes		

The correct answer is (lymphatic vessels) gave 22 students out of 70.

Table 2. Question № 3

Options	Question № 3. What is the capacity unit in Physics?	
	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. Watt		
B. Amps	29,82%	70,18%
B. Volt		
G. Pascal		

The correct answer is (Watts) gave 21 students out of 70.

Table 3. Question № 4

Options	Question № 4. When did the so-called <i>August Putsch</i> break out in Moscow?	
	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. 1988		
B. 1990	66,74%	33,26%
B. 1991		
G. 1993		

The correct answer is (1991) gave 47 students out of 70.

Table 4. Question № 5

Options	Question № 5. Which of these countries has never made up Yugoslavia?	
	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. Slovakia		
B. Serbia	45,44%	54,56%
B. Croatia		
G. Slovenia		

The correct answer is (Slovakia) gave 32 students out of 70.

Table 5. Question № 7

Options	Question №7. Which of the following films did James Cameron not make?	
	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A Avatar		
B.Titanik	55,38%	44,62%
V.Terminator		
G. Gladiator		

The correct answer is (Gladiator) gave 39 out of 70.

Table 6. Question № 8

Options	Question №8. Who is the painter of "The Last Day of Pompeii"?	
	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. Ivan Aivazovsky		
B. Ilya Repin	69,58%	30,42%
B. Karl Bryullov		
G. Auguste Rodin		

The correct answer is (next picture) gave 49 students out of 70.

Table 7. Question № 9

Question № 9. What is the sulfuric acid formula?		
Options	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. HBr		
B. H ₂ SO ₃		
C. H ₂ SO ₄	89,46%	10,54%
D. H ₂ S		

The correct answer is (H₂ SO₄) gave 63 students out of 70.

Table 8. Question № 14

Question №14. Name the Secretaries-General of NATO and the UN?		
Options	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. Javier Solana and Ban Ki-moon		
B. Hoop Scheffer and Kofi Annan		
C. Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Ban Ki-moon	78,10%	21,90%
D. Jose Manuel Barroso, and Kofi Annan		

The correct answer is (Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Ban Ki-moon) gave 55 students out of 70.

Table 9. Question № 17

Question № 17. Who of the following is a fictional character?		
Options	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. Hannibal		
B. Spartak		
C. Achilles	78,10%	21,90%
D. Macedonian		

The correct answer is (Achilles) gave 55 students out of 70.

Table 10. Question № 18

Question №18. What kind of sports hosts the Grand Slam tournaments?		
Options	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. Soccer		
B. Fencing		
C. Hockey	28,40%	71,60%
B. Tennis		

The correct answer is (Tennis) gave 20 students out of 70.

Table 11. Question № 19

Question №19. In what city was “the Beatles” started?		
Options	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. London	75,26%	24,74%
B. Liverpool		
C. Manchester		
D. Birmingham		

Correct answer: (Liverpool) gave 53 students out of 70.

Table 12. Question № 20

Question № 20. x ² = -4; X = ?		
Options	Answers (%)	
	Correct	Incorrect
A. 0	63,90%	36,10%
B. -2		
C. 2		
D. no root		

The correct answer is (no root) gave 45 students from 70.

Having received the percentage of the correct and incorrect answers, we had to do a comparative description of areas of students’ background knowledge acquisition. Thus, we could obtain conclusions in what scope undergraduate translators can demonstrate more profound background knowledge.

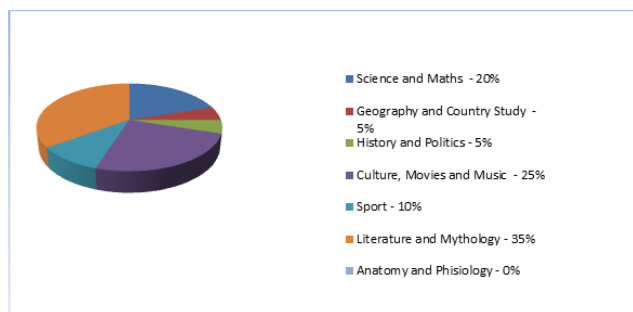
The information was arranged in the table provided below [Table 13]. To process the responses the spreadsheet Microsoft Excel program was applied.

Table 13. The background knowledge acquisition by senior students (the major of Linguistics)

Field of Knowledge	Correct Answers (%)
Maths	61%
Geography and Country Study	57%
History (including, Russian History) and Politics	47%
Arts, Cinema, Music	75 %
Sports	31%
Literature and Mythology	78%
Natural Sciences	38%

Surveying the results of the test, done by 70 graduates of linguists, we can conclude that there are areas of knowledge that are really challengeable for students. Being good at Maths and Science, the would-be-graduates appeared quite weak at history and politics, sports. Naturally, the students majoring in Linguistics demonstrated excellence in Arts and Culture Study.

Taking into account the overall performance level of the respondents, we were to subject to further analysis some of individual parameters, namely the favorite field of human activity where respondents could show the highest background knowledge. The results could be seen the pie-chart below [Figure 1].

**Figure 1.** Excellence in background knowledge.

As expected, the leading position in the areas of excellence of the student-translators was taken by literature and mythology (35% of votes). The second place was allocated to culture with 25% of the vote, the third in the list was Science and Maths (20% of the respondents selected it as their strong side).

Thus, graduates-future translators should actively work to improve the level of background knowledge, since the activity of the overwhelming number of interpreters takes place outside the particular thematic field and,

therefore, it must be universal. Empirical observation and analysis of the survey results showed that at the moment the background knowledge of students is far from optimal.

6. Conclusion

Obviously, bachelor graduates in translation should put maximum emphasis on their further education, not limiting themselves to certain fields of activity to be fully demanded in the labor market. Throughout their career linguists have to demonstrate universality where extensive background knowledge is required but currently is very far from the norm.

By aligning the list of competencies that are required in a particular field of translation, the education system will be optimized for mass production of specialists, meeting the requirements of the labor market. Thus, a carefully worked out list of translation competences should involve a comprehensive approach to various spheres of life in modern society. The study of competences is challenged by the need to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers. On this basis, it is the translation training that allows bypassing the cultural barriers in communication. Academic major of Linguistics in terms of its universal cross-discipline approach is the benchmark of humanities knowledge of the society in general.

We believe that if we talk about the courses to encourage of students' self-development and building the necessary background knowledge pack, it is advisable to lay more emphasis on such disciplines as Country Study, Culture Study, Cross-cultural Communication and alike. The teaching staff should also shift their attention from mostly theoretical survey of the problems in these courses to building students' skills. This will facilitate communication with carriers of the language and culture to be translated. Even assuming that the translator/interpreter is not competent enough verbally, it will avoid cultural conflict, which has much more negative impact on the translation competence.

No less important are the courses to do with history of the foreign and target language. While studying history of the language the students can track the main developmental trends in linguistic policy over time, with changes in the language as well as cultural, ideological, political and religious attitudes. But it is also evident that the basic linguistic models remain unchanged. In this

regard, History of the English language can help a student understand the origins of grammar structures, syntax and punctuation, learn the factors catalyzing the occurrence of certain rules in the language.

For the linguist, planning to connect his/her career with translation of poetry and prose, courses in Literary Editing come in handy, which is learning about literary styles, journalism, peculiarities of translating some particular authors considering their own writing style. In Literary Editing special attention should be paid to learning historicisms and archaisms, cultural and historical realities of particular periods of time. For enthusiasts in translating juridical texts an introduction to International Law Study, Copyright and record management is recommended. Regardless of the specialization all students would benefit from classes in International Etiquette and Communication Culture and Rhetoric.

In conclusion, to determine a well-granted system of improving students' background knowledge, a set of measures should be introduced into the current academic Degree course scheme:

- Selecting a systematized body of background knowledge fundamental for the success of cross-cultural communication and a way to avoid communication failures in translation;
- Selecting culture-marked linguistic agents that contain components of ethno-cultural and cultural behavioral background knowledge;
- Developing extended highly specialized background knowledge body that will allow students to make an adequate assessment of the cultural and situational background (cultural and situational component);
- Developing a system of evaluation of students' background knowledge and collecting training materials to form a basis for learning background knowledge;
- Selecting universal and authentic materials to promote exploring the selected body of background knowledge (text files, audio, video);
- Setting a system of exercises to build the perception of individual components of background knowledge, such as precedent-setting information;
- Building a system of exercises to form the skills to carry out operational selection of ethnic and cultural and cultural-behavioral background knowledge, which are essential in the implementation of intercultural communication;
- Developing a system of exercises to build the ability to apply cultural and historical background knowledge, which is essential in the implementation of intercultural communication, taking into account cultural and situational background.

It stands to reason that the implementation of these measures is completely under the control of the academic teaching staff.

7. References

1. Bakhtin MM. Moscow: Aesthetics of verbal creativity. 1979.
2. Boldyrev NN. Tambov: TSU: Prototypes in the language representation of knowledge. Types of knowledge and its representation in the language. 2007.
3. Bracaj M. Procedures of translating culture-specific concepts. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. 2015 Jan; 6(1):476-80.
4. Breus EV. Moscow: URAO: [Introduction to theory and practice of translation from Russian into English] (2nd ed). 2000.
5. Bryant S. The five habits: building cross-cultural competence in lawyers. *Clinical L. Rev.* 2001; 33:8.
6. Cozma M. Perceptions of cultural competence: The trainees perspective. *Professional Communication and Translation Studies*. 2012 Jun; 5(1-2):67-74.
7. Hirsch ED Jr. N.Y.: Vintage books: Cultural literacy: What every American needs to know. 1988.
8. Hubscher-Davidson S. Personal diversity and diverse personalities in translation: a study of individual differences. *Perspectives-Studies in Translatology*. 2009 Oct; 17(3):175-92.
9. Ignat'eva IG. Moscow: Verbal representation of background knowledge in media texts and methods of transmission of the translation. (Unpublished master's thesis). 2010.
10. Karasik O, Pomortseva N. Multicultural challenges: teaching contemporary American literature for Russian philological students. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Antalya - Turkey: Proceedings of GlobELT-2015: An International Conference on Teaching and Learning English as an Additional Language. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 2015; p. 684-88.
11. Khabutdinova M, Bayanova L. Norms and values characteristics of students in a foreign cultural environment. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*. 2013 Oct; 16(11):1527-31.
12. Khajrullin VI. Moscow, Russia: Cognitive and cultural aspects of translation. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). 1995.
13. Khaleeva II. Moscow: Vysshaya shkola: Introduction to theory of learning foreign speech understanding: training of translators. 1989.
14. Komissarov VN. Moscow: Vysshaya shkola: Theory of translation (linguistic aspects). 1990.

15. Komlev NG. Moscow: Nauka: Components of the content structure of words. 1969.
16. Krjukov AN. Moscow: Ethnopsycholinguistics: Background knowledge and language communication. 1988.
17. Nord C. Training functional translators. In *Training for the New Millennium*, 463 M. Tennent (Ed.). 2005; p. 209-23.
18. Olvera-Lobo MD, Castro-Prieto MR, Quero-Gervilla E. Translator training and modern market demands. *Perspectives-Studies in Translatology*. 2005; 13(2):132-42.
19. Oparina EO. Moscow: INION RAN: Language, Text - culture. Discourse, speech, speech activity: functional and structural aspects. 2000.
20. Safonova VV. Cultural studies in the language education. *Foreign languages at school*. 2001; p. 7-24.
21. Scott-Tennent C, Gonzalez Davies M. Effects of specific training on the ability to deal with cultural references in translation. *META*. 2008 Nov; 53(4):782-97.
22. Ahmanova OS. Moscow: Sovetskaja enciklopedija: Dictionary of linguistic terms. 1966.
23. Solnyshkina M, Gafiyatova E. Modern forestry English: macro and microstructure of low register dictionary. *Journal of Language and Literature*. 2014 Jan; 5(4):220-24.
24. Solnyshkina M, Harkova E, Kiselnikov A. Comparative coh-matrix analysis of reading comprehension texts: Unified (Russian) State exam in English vs. Cambridge First Certificate in English. *English Language Teaching*. 2014 Jan; 7(12):65-76.
25. Tarasov EF. Moscow: Nauka: Language as a means of broadcasting culture. 2000.
26. Tomakhin GD. Background knowledge and behavioral aspect of the situation in linguistic and cultural aspect. *Foreign languages at school*. 1980.
27. Tomakhin GD. Moscow: IYa RAN: Translation as intercultural communication. 1997.
28. Valgina NS. Moscow: Logos: The theory of the text. The text and its perception. 2003.
29. Vereshchagin EM. Moscow: Indrik: Language and culture. 2005.
30. Vinogradov VS. Moscow: KDU: Translation: general and linguistic issues. 2006.
31. Vladimirova EV. Moscow: Background knowledge as a semantic category in communicative-pragmatic aspect. (Unpublished master's thesis). 2003 May.
32. Zekavati F, Amoli F. The role of medical background knowledge on improving the translation quality among medical and translation students. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 2013 Apr; 2(2):240-47.
33. Jang Eun Hee, Park Dahye, Lee Dong Hoon, Lee Duk Hee, Choi Yoon Hee. A Validation Study on the Translated Korea Version of Emotional Labor Scale (ELS) in Hospitality Organizations. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*. 2015 Mar; 8(S5):129-34.
34. Mend Hassan Shojaee, Amiri Mostafa. Example based Machine Translation from English to Farsi with the help of Word Net Ontology. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*. 2015 Jun; 8(11):1-6.