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A METHODOLOGY FOR FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT: FEEDBACK TOOLS IN THE TRANSLATION CLASSROOM

Assessment in translator education can sometimes be regarded as a necessary evil, either by trainees who tend to dislike evaluations of their competence and performance or by trainers who are obliged to measure and judge these elusive qualities. This authoritative role imposed on the translation teacher by various institutional regulations interferes with the image of the teacher as a guide postulated by the idea of empowerment (Kiraly 2000, 2005), since it might affect the distribution of power and control in the translation classroom. Grades assigned to translation assessment can hardly reflect the actual quality of the trainee translator's work, let alone help them improve the necessary skills that translation competence entails. However, when accompanied by constructive feedback, the necessary evil cannot only be justified but also excused or even fostered.

The author advocates transforming training-based assessment into assessment-based training. Inasmuch as the translation teacher organises, controls and evaluates the students' performance, a premise of equal importance is that assessment can also have a measurable effect on student competence development. As Fowler (2007: 254) claims, "the competence development in translators mainly derives from formative assessment". With this presupposition in mind, the article will introduce the basic tenets of formative assessment with a close look given to its features and principles that should be observed with the aim of giving objective and effective feedback. Then, the roles of the trainer and the trainee will be discussed in relation to the distribution of power and control in the translation classroom and the position of the evaluator and the evaluee. The article will give an example of instrument that the evaluee needs in order to become the evaluator and, finally, it will demonstrate a methodology for formative assessment based on a few formative feedback techniques.

KEYWORDS: translator training, formative assessment, feedback, evaluator, evaluee

INTRODUCTION

In an educational context, the purpose of evaluation can be either summative or formative, which was first observed by Scriven (1967). The distinction can be applied not only to the curriculum but also to student learning (Bloom 1969) since summative assessment sums up the achievements of students or classes, while formative assessment is intended to provide feedback on performance to improve and accelerate learning (Sadler 1998: 77). As Bloom observes, formative assessment is not about grading in terms of "judging and classificatory function of evaluation" (1969: 48), but rather improving the whole process of learning.

Consequently, summative assessment is sometimes referred to as the assessment of learning, while formative assessment is the assessment for learning (Black/ Wiliam 2003; Taras 2005) and definitely for the student rather than the teacher.

In a translator training context, as Melis and Hurtado Albir (2001: 277) observe, the functions of evaluations are threefold: diagnostic (when it is used as a level-placement tool before a learning process begins), summative (when used to assess the knowledge acquired and the end results after the learning process) and formative (used during the learning process to obtain information for the purpose of training). Apparently, the purpose of formative assessment is to give the teacher necessary information to adjust the organisation of translation activities, but – what I want to emphasise – this seems to be only a side-effect of a greater good. The principal function of formative assessment lies in the very act of doing it. As the name suggests, it engages students and forms them into autonomous translators responsible for their own learning process. According to Colina (2015: 259), summative assessment is "used to determine whether the student has reached the level of proficiency required for the course/program" while formative assessment "uses descriptors and evaluation as formative feedback". This is formative feedback that is the ultimate goal of any comprehensive and student-oriented evaluation.

1. ASSESSMENT AS FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

Feedback is any information which provides a report on the result of behaviour and in educational settings these are "comments or information learners receive on the success of a learning task, either from the teacher or from other learners" (Richards 1992: 137). The idea of feedback proposed by the author of this article is derived from Wiliam's (2006: 284) definition of formative assessment, which states that "the evaluation is formative if the information generated is used to make changes to what would have happened in the absence of such information". Therefore, formative feedback is any piece of information which shapes the student and prevents the possible future mistakes. This kind of "preventive information" is what students particularly need for the purposes of better error recognition and mitigation, so it should not be limited to judgemental right or wrong, but possibly expressed in the form of an informative comment.

Among the features of effective formative feedback, there is not only informativeness but also specificity since it should state clearly what the problem is and what better solutions can be achieved in each and every case. Moreover, such detailed information is most valuable when provided in a timely manner, that is – as a general rule – after the translation assignment is submitted for evaluation and before another translation assignment is given. It is no use having students submit several translation assignments and then meeting them individually to give

an overall feedback on the collection of their translations. Less time consuming for the teacher and appropriate for a round-up to the course, such a method of feedbacking generates little benefit for the student as translation problems are left unattended and the same mistakes are probably repeated throughout the range of translation assignments. It is a useful feedback technique to have a teacher-run porftolio that is a collection of previous translations of one group of students or just the excerpts with problems or errors. Such a portfolio can be used for a number of supplementary purposes, including the aforementioned end-of-semester report on the overall student progress, but only if it is provided apart from – not instead of – a timely and specific feedback.

As for the manner of feedback provision, first and foremost it should be interpersonal. A formative purpose is not achieved if "the information is simply recorded, passed on to a third party who lacks either the knowledge or the power to change the outcome, or is too deeply coded (for example, as a summary grade given by the teacher) to lead to appropriate action" (Sadler 1989: 121). As regards some practical guidelines for effective implementation of formative assessment, the feedback is therefore not only interpersonal but also individualised and directed at a particular student with specific problems, which constitutes another feature of formative feedback. In order to simulate the real-life working conditions of a professional translator, the most effective feedback is not imposed by the teacher but negotiated with the student so that the whole conversation resembles negotiations with the client. Through such simulated negotiations they develop their interpersonal skills as well as the skill of communicating their knowledge and rationale behind it, which is demonstrated in the negotiations with the clients (Schäffner 2012: 41–42). Moreover, such communication is most valuable when it is "honest yet tactful" (Wiggins 2010), which implies that there is a need for direct response even if it implies being fastidious. However, when the need to criticize arises, the teacher would better refer precisely to the problems with the target text and avoid derogatory comments or personal remarks about the translator trainee because best formative feedback is phrased in non-evaluative language.

In educational settings, the information is – or at least can possibly be – so specific and individualised that at times it can only be provided by the evaluator – whether it is the teacher or the peer student. At this point, a distinction should be made between feedback given in an educational context and outside the Academia, for instance when students are involved in real-life collaborative translation projects (Kiraly 2000, 2005, 2012). In a business context the translator is assessed by quality assurance specialists and eventually also by the client. Although this kind of "outside/outer feedback" from the real world outside of the classroom is invaluable and constitutes one of the main advantages of situated translation teaching (Kiraly 2000: 66), it is by nature more summative than informative and thus formative. Most likely, the client's reaction is what students themselves would value most, but still they need a detailed formative assessment and feedback provided before

the whole project is completed and reaches further audience. Therefore, even when the students' translation is going to receive some other feedback than the teacher's comments, the teacher's role is to use every opportunity and ignore no material that can be commented on – especially in the cases when the target language is the translator's second language (which is a commonplace in a country like Poland where the official language is of relatively limited diffusion) since this direction of translation (from L1 into L2) is more fraught with potential linguistic and cultural problems and usually results in poorer quality (cf. Newmark 1981), which must be verified and commented on before the project reaches the real-life target audience.

To conclude the discussion focused around the features of successful formative feedback, which – as posited above – is interpersonal, specific, informative, preventive, timely, individualised, negotiable and non-evaluative, the vital role of feedback in the training process must be emphasised. Even in the most autonomous learning environments students should not be left without as comprehensive feedback as time and workload permits.

2. TRANSFORMING TRAINING-BASED ASSESSMENT INTO ASSESSMENT-BASED TRAINING

A common misconception about assessment is that it takes place when the translation task is finished and the learning process is over. With the aim of enriching the process of training, assessment can be placed in a more central position, which allows for more autonomous learning giving students opportunity for self-adjustment and with the course of time self-assessment. The advocated approach to assessment treats it as both a tool to assess the translation student and a teaching method. With extensive feedback, we give students tools for self-reflection and gradually develop greater translator competence. Training based on assessment uses the fact that students are assessed, summatively or formatively, and makes the best out of the time and effort spent on evaluation. The outcome of evaluation can serve as a valuable source of information about the translation problems that a student encountered. Mistakes mirror such problems, inform and guide the teacher and therefore no mistake should be ignored or treated as pure evil but rather as a hint on what to discuss and improve.

Effective training based on assessment must be focused on the trainee, not only the trainee as the object of assessment but also the trainee as the subject of assessment; that is why the approach suggests a certain role reversal between the teacher as evaluator and students as evaluees. Students' involvement is an inextricable element of co-operative learning which is said to be less threatening for many students, increase the amount of student participation in the classroom, reduce the need for competitiveness and reduce the teacher's dominance in the classroom"

(Richards 1992: 87). Inviting translation trainees to take part in the whole process of assessment enables learners to assume some measure of the teacher's power and responsibility. Peer assessment and self-assessment has been advocated by Bowker (2000), Kelly (2005) or Klimkowski (2015: 213) who claims that effective training involves deschooling translator and interpreter education by "substituting voice monopolies with the policy of multiple voices". Indeed, students' involvement enhances their engagement in the whole process of learning and results in greater awareness of responsibility for their knowledge.

The author's ambition was to present a well-crafted methodology for the implementation of formative feedback, but in practice its implementation means a change in the whole long-run instructional and teaching approach. Prior to describing a few possible techniques of assessing and feedbacking students in a formative manner, it must be stressed that it requires a set of previously established principles and criteria so the assessment actually starts before students even start to translate. As Kelly (2014: 141) stresses when she compares norm-referenced assessment which establishes statistical distribution of grades with criterion-referenced assessment favoured by student-centred approaches, "in criterion-referenced assessment, criteria should be transparent and should be discussed with students". Only if students develop a clear understanding of the objectives can they purposefully and effectively participate in the training.

3. CRITERIA AND INSTRUMENT

In formative assessment, when translation students are expected to actively and consciously give, negotiate and receive feedback, they need to be provided with certain criteria to follow. Regrettably, there are no clear rules or systematic criteria which could be used universally in the assessment of translation. It needs to be emphasised, however, that the author's idea of assessment goes beyond any operationalized measuring systems or devices as there is no actual need to measure, mark errors and calculate a grade out of it when we approach assessment formatively as a part of the whole assessment-based training. As Albir (2001: 284) states, this is a scale that constitutes the key instrument in translation assessment. When we focus on summative assessment, we need a grading scale; however, when the focus is laid on formative assessment- what we need is a correcting scale which specifies types of errors. As for grading or marking scales, Gonzalez Davies (2004: 34) differentiates between (Pedagogical) numerical marking system where student get plus or minus 1 point for various kinds of errors or positive solutions and (Professional) holistic marking system with three symbols AT, ATI and UT which stand for Acceptable Translation, Acceptable Translation, but must be Improved and Unacceptable Translation. However, both systems leave students

with little idea of what they did wrong and what to improve. When formative feedback is given, the objective is to make students aware of the error, understand its type and a possible reason for its occurrence. That is why, for the purpose of the article, the author will focus solely on correcting scales, without assigning any values to the analysed error types. The question is which one to choose.

Translation teachers use a lot of different typologies and criteria for establishing the error type. Some of them are more complex, for instance Delisle's (1993) correcting scale comprising 46 symbols, other are more limited. What needs to be taken into account is that formative assessment aims at developing students' autonomy, self-adjustment and then self-assessment skills which can be practiced for instance by incorporating self-correction (see 6.2) or peer assessment (see 6.5). When the roles are reversed and these are students who assess and feedback each other, what must be observed is the fact that such a task is already a demanding challenge for them so the tool that they use cannot be too complex.

Gonzalez Davies suggests that students "use symbols to be found in professional editing" and adds that "these may vary, of course, and the students should be aware of this possibility" (2004: 199). Mossop (2001: vii), however, notices that, "it is all very well to have a list of error types, but if your procedure does not succeed in finding the errors, the list is not much use".

From a more general pedagogical perspective, Wiggins (2010) explains that:

> Our challenge as educators is to think of assessment as first and foremost educative, in other words. Our aim must therefore be to create assessments that provide better feedback by design, and not think of improvements in terms of more accurate evaluation. Indeed, without better feedback (and guidance based on the feedback) in student assessment, there is little point to precise scores and value judgments.

Asking students to adhere to a scale that consists of too many symbols and convoluted descriptions could easily discourage the student from assessing their peer, make him give up or give inaccurate assessing responses. Moreover, the whole process of peer feedbacking could be less effective and thus the intended effect of such translational practices could be spoilt.

That is why, since there is no need for assigning values to the analysed error types, I suggest a limited scale of four main fields to focus on:

1. Meaning – meaning transfer – accuracy, completeness (Mossop 2001), shifts from the source text (e.g. omission, addition)
2. Language – language and style – register and word combinations, grammar, syntax
3. Culture – culture and convention (Nord 2005)
4. Form – text and form – textual cohesion, punctuation, spelling, layout (formal aspects, as Kelly (2014: 83) calls it).

Over-simplistic as it may seem, for the purpose of the implementation of formative assessment, including self-assessment, peer assessment and peer feedback,

I suggest a correcting scale limited to the four broad categories presented above. A more detailed presentation of how this scale is implemented in the process of assessment is demonstrated in section 4.3.

In order to avoid focusing solely on students' errors, it is advisable that translator teachers also refer to other areas of equal importance, for instance strengths, concerns and suggestions for improvement. Basic instructions for evaluators can be listed as follows:
1. Comment on the strengths
2. Express concerns
3. Correct mistakes
4. Make suggestions.

It is worth beginning with a discussion of strengths of the analysed translation assignments, which can then be followed by some weaknesses (cf. Dollerup 1994). What is more, both strengths and concerns can be further used to make suggestions for the future. Thus, mistakes constitute a great source of information about the evaluatee's problems and must be corrected and analysed provided that they represent a component of a more holistic approach to translation assignment.

4. WAYS OF IMPLEMENTING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT INTO THE TRANSLATION CLASSROOM

The following sections of the article (4.1–4.3) demonstrate three types of translator training activities which combine to constitute one of the possible methodologies for implementing formative assessment during a translation course. They can be done at various stages of the translation course, but are interconnected and all constitute an attempt to answer the nagging question of what to do with students' translations? Giving a text to translate and then feedbacking its translation is a crucial component of translator training (section 2). We ask students to translate a text, because – however boring it may seem or whatever form it takes (either a printed page or an online group project) – it is still the best way to have them practice translation skills, which above all requires feedback. Therefore, the following activities (4.1–4.3) are examples of three formative feedback techniques that can be used to react to students' translations.

4.1. ONE-ON-ONE TUTORIALS FORMATIVELY

The first feedback tool demonstrated here is a variation on a common individual meeting with the teacher to discuss the translation and get a pass; in formative assessment, it should follow a few basic principles as regards the organization,

content and management of such tutorials. When it comes to organizing one-on-one tutorials, they can be scheduled as individual appointments during the teacher's office hours. It may seem a bit time-consuming but results in much better performance and less corrections on the part of the teacher later when the student grows to benefit from such tutorials and makes progress. Alternatively, one-on-one tutorials can be managed in the form of a separate class devoted only to individual meetings.

As for the content, such tutorials involve a discussion which constitutes formative feedback and shares its features so the premise is that the message given to the student is specific and informative. The commentary must refer to the four main areas mentioned in the section covering the criteria and instrument (section 3), that is strengths, concerns, mistakes and suggestions.

As far as management is concerned, even on such occasions as feedbacking, the translation classroom can be treated as "a space for shared, negotiated student-teacher interactions and relations" (Klimkowski 2015: 148). An autonomous trainee should be encouraged to react when the teacher gives feedback. Trainees who take part in the whole process of assessment-based training are empowered to justify their translational decisions and negotiate with the teacher. As Klimkowski so aptly details:

> Apart from the teacher's feedback on the student's task realization, classroom communication must allow for the student's reaction to that feedback (asking for more details, questioning feedback, etc.) that will, in turn, help the student develop the ability of self-feedback (cf. internal feedback in Moser-Mercer 2008: 15) for building up the his/her own skills of realistic self-assessment, which is a prerequisite for self-regulated translation/interpreting performance. (Klimkowski 2015: 213)

Thanks to such negotiations, translation trainees actively participate in the creation of the final version of their translation and have a chance to see their role and control in the whole process of translation. As a result, they not only practice such psychosocial skills as negotiating with prospective clients and communicating assertively, but also gradually learn to take responsibility for their own learning process.

The question arises whether discussions and negotiations suffice to make such one-on-one feedback provision effective? The abovementioned rules of formative assessment ensure feedback offering thoughtful comments and room for autonomy, but there is also an additional important aspect. Wiliam (2014) states, "ultimately, when you know your students and your students trust you, you can ignore all the 'rules' of feedback. Without that relationship, all the research in the world won't matter". Controversial as the statement is as regards ignoring all the rules, the quality of teacher-student relation is the fundamental vehicle for a successful feedback practice in the translation classroom.

The main advantage of 'one-on-one tutorials' is definitely the fact that they probably offer a chance for the most extensive feedback. Moreover, students who

can have not only a separate discussion but also negotiations over their own translation feel individualized. Consequently, student-teacher relationships become stronger thanks to the fact that students get the teacher's undivided attention, which potentially yields better communication and contributes to better student development.

4.2. PEER ASSESSMENT IN THE FORM OF ROLE-PLAYING

Despite many attempts at designing systems or patterns of evaluation (see section 2), assessing written translation as a final product follows no strict regulations, since there is no one way of reading or writing a text. House (1981: 64) observes that, "it seems unlikely that translation quality assessment can ever be objectified in the manner of natural science." To make it less subjective or opinion-centered and when the teacher wants to avoid transmissive behaviour of a know-it-all, the position of the evaluator and the evaluatee should be re-established, peer assessment should also be introduced. As Kelly (2014: 142) defines, "peer assessment is that which is carried out by other students from the same group or level". It is worth introducing since, as already mentioned (section 3), students' involvement in assessment enhances their engagement and helps develop greater awareness of responsibility for their knowledge. It needs to be stressed, however, that it is not about peer grading.

A basic methodological model for an activity in peer assessment in the process of assessment-based training will include the following stages:

1. **pre-translation stage –** each student translates a text and brings it to the class
2. **warm-up –** students get engaged in the assessment task, e.g. group or peer discussion, e.g.
   – brainstorming the characteristics of a particular text type,
   – analysing the differences between similar texts written in L1 and L2,
   – discussing the correcting scale if students don't know it yet,
   – predicting potential translation problems, etc.
3. **setting the task –** students sit in pairs, exchange their translations and assess them (giving feedback, not grades)
4. **monitoring the task –** the teacher is exempt from the obligation to evaluate and instead focuses on supervising or, if necessary, giving hints
5. **peer review –** students check their partner's translation to identify, classify and then correct defects or ambiguities
6. **peer feedback –** students are asked to discuss the mistakes, their classification and corrections, e.g.
   Students are asked to role play "authors and editors", discuss the mistakes and the way they were classified by the editor. Drawing on what Gonzalez Davies

suggests in one of her activities (2004: 187), authors are asked to act as if it were hard to believe that their choices are incorrect "so that the editor has to give as many reasons as possible (consulting any source available) to persuade the author to correct the mistake". In this way trainee translators learn to justify their choices, which is a skill important not only to discuss their decisions with future clients when they are required to do so, but also cooperate with fellow translators. Additionally, it somehow releases the tension when translation students are allowed or even encouraged to disagree since they generally do not like to be criticised and without an assumption that in this task editors are supposed to correct and authors are to disagree with editors' explanations some students could easily get offended; while some students would naturally disagree and discuss the corrections, others could become discouraged.

As regards the advantages of such a peer assessment practice, they are as numerous as the advantages of any collaborative work in the classroom. In the case of this particular activity, students assume professional roles, learn to give and receive a sensible critique as well as practice justifying their translation choices. The fact that they are allowed or even encouraged to disagree releases the tension and encourages them to actively participate in the assessment procedures. It is beneficial for the students to receive feedback from fellow students, discuss it, and in turn give their own comments on other students' work (Kelly 2014: 142). Significantly, students receive a response in a pair discussion, i.e. during their learning process, which offers an opportunity to process it and feedback the feedbacking evaluator. Lastly, students place a high value on peer opinion so chances are that they retain peer comments fixed in the mind, which can benefit their own future translational performance.

4.3. SELF-ASSESSMENT IN THE FORM OF CATEGORISING

Although an unquestionable challenge for translation trainees, empowering the author to assess their own translation appears indispensable in translator training (Kelly 2005; Piotrowska 2007). Through their involvement in the assessment process, students get prepared for their future responsibilities of translators who are in charge of the translation as a product. In purely market-oriented terms, they need to practice not only the production stage, that is translating, but also post-production stage, that is revising and editing to consciously launch a high quality product. Taking into account numerous difficulties that self-assessment can cause, the author would like to emphasize that any activity involving self-assessment must be preceded with appropriate instruction and practice.

The first precondition to practice self-assessment is that, as already discussed in section 3, both evaluators and evaluees who change roles in formative assessment need specific criteria and a clear instrument to assess and use the assessment

for further educational purposes. That is why, it is advisable that students are ready to spot and name a translational problem occurring in an analysed text. The question arises how to make them spot problems and ambiguities that they were not able to see when they translated the text. As a way of starting, the author suggests an activity called 'categorising', in which the teacher only highlights or underlines problematic fragments of a student's translation just to give a hint that there is an issue to improve. Students are asked to correct the highlighted translation problems, mistakes or ambiguities and then categorise the problems in accordance with a chosen typology.

Such practice is a form of preparation which students need in order to work together with the teacher on the implementation of formative feedback in the form of self-assessment. If students are not yet familiar with the tools that they are going to use during self-assessment practice, the scale that the teacher decides to use (for example the scale demonstrated in section 3) can be presented to translation trainees in the form of a separate exercise in the pre-translation stage when the teacher returns their translation assignments and the time comes when they should be given feedback. The idea is that, in order to practice the use of the chosen instrument in categorising the problematic parts of an assessed translation, the same scale is used consistently.

To exemplify a self-assessment practice which follows the two abovementioned preconditions (familiarizing students with the tools with which to assess and providing them with the hints as to what to assess and categorise), the author will now demonstrate a few excerpts from an activity done with a group of second year MA students from the University of Łódź, Poland. All the members of the group were asked to translate two medical texts and submit them to the teacher. They had their translation problems underlined and were then asked to correct each problem individually in their own translations and categorise it in accordance with the four main labels in the scale presented in section 3 (Meaning, Language, Culture, Form) that they, as a group, knew and practised before. The following excerpts were first provided with hints from the teacher and then duly categorised by students:

> MEANING
> [ST 1]: The paranoid patient believed that <u>someone</u> was trying to prowl in the hospital ground, <u>concoct a false charge</u> against him <u>whilst being in league with the police</u>, castigate him for old misdemeanours and gang up on him with his old enemies.
> [TT 1]: <u>Pacjent</u> z zaburzeniami urojenia uważał, że <u>ktoś</u> grasuje na terenie szpitala, <u>wymyślał fałszywe oskarżenia</u> przeciwko niemu <u>podczas rozmowy z policją</u>, ganił za wykroczenia z przeszłości oraz zmawiał się z jego starymi wrogami.
> [The paranoid patient believed that someone was trying to prowl in the hospital ground, <u>concocted</u> a false charge against him <u>in a conversation with the police</u>, castigate him for old misdemeanours and gang up on him with his old enemies.]

In the target text, the verb concoct is expressed in the past tense, which changes the meaning of the sentence through linking the verb *concocted* to the subject *patient*. The next example that can be classified as a meaning-related problem is the phrase *whilst being in league with the police*. It has been translated into *podczas rozmowy z policją* [in a conversation with the police] which is definitely too neutral and results in undertranslation.

LANGUAGE
[ST 2]: LS: Several bruises down right flank. Right lower limb is externally rotated.
[TT 2]: System ruchu: Kilka siniaków wzdłuż prawej połowy ciała. Prawa kończyna dolna wykręcona na zewnątrz.
[Locomotive system: Several bruises down right flank. Right lower limb externally rotated.]

The underlined ambiguity classified as a language-related problem is the abbreviation LS which has been correctly understood by the translator as locomotive system, but the Polish equivalent chosen for this term is wrong. *System ruchu* is a calque and, similarly to digestive or nervous system, in Polish the term *system* should be translated into *układ*. However, because the Polish language also has the term *system* and there is a partial overlap in meaning, this linguistic interference caused such a translation problem and resulted in a wrong equivalent.

CULTURE/CONVENTION
[ST 3]: She also states that she has biopsy proven cirrhosis. She also states that she has had a heart murmur that she has known about for several years.
[TT 3]: Pacjentka wyznała że ma martwicę wątroby potwierdzoną biopsją. Pacjentka twierdzi też że od 7 lat ma szmery w sercu.
[The patient also stated that she has biopsy proven cirrhosis. The patient also states that for several years she has had a heart murmur that she has known about.]

Although the target text is semantically correct, such a sentence would not sound natural in a Polish medical document and the reason is not its repetitiveness. Polish health records are more formal and less descriptive than parallel English texts. A relatively high degree of impersonality can be observed in Polish documentation which states and describes the condition with little direct reference to the patient (Pietrzak 2015). Therefore, the subject of similar sentences in a medical presentation diagnosis or a case report of this kind would most often be a medical condition or the bodily part affected by the disease. Such medical information [ST 3] would probably be provided with the use of verbless sentences and noun phrases, e.g. *Martwica wątroby potwierdzona w biopsji* [Biopsy-proven cirrhosis] and *Szmery w sercu stwierdzone kilka lat temu* [Heart murmur for several years]. The problematic issue here is therefore culturally-driven as the target text [TT 3] does not make allowances for textual conventionality and typical sentence structure in Polish medical documentation.

FORM
[ST 4]: Right lower limb is shorter than the left by 2.5 cm.
[TT 4]: Prawa kończyna dolna krótsza od lewej o 2.5 cm.
[Right lower limb is shorter than the left by 2.5 cm.]

In the above example, the underlined problematic part is the number of centimetres; the translator automatically chose the same form and did not mind the difference between English and Polish punctuation of measurements. In the Polish language, a comma is the punctuation mark that is used in measurements of length and weight so the target text [TT 4] cannot be punctuated with the full stop. This violation of the rules of punctuation is classified as a form-related problem as it involves formal aspects related to the graphic presentation of the translation as a final product.

The presented self-assessment in the form of categorising practice follows the principles of formative assessment since students are first given clear instruction and instrument and then expected to perform a task. The task involves assessing their own translations but what they learn is not only the skill of self-assessment but also self-awareness since, when they are asked to correct their own mistakes, they become more aware of what they are doing or at least of what they have done. The advantages of 'categorising' practice is that students can see that there are clear standards and whoever is the evaluator of their translation – the teacher, their peer or themselves – the scale remains the same and is used consistently. Consequently, students get used to the scale and, ideally, they will automatically predict translation problems and categorize them whenever they translate. Moreover, thanks to such additional practice students learn to make decisions and are actively involved in the whole process of training, which increases their sense of responsibility. Additionally, thanks to delimiting the scope of attention to a range of problematic issues highlighted by the teacher, students' can focus entirely on their individual problems, which adds to the effectiveness of this type of assessment.

5. CONCLUSION

Whatever typology and scale we decide to use, it should be used consistently so that students get accustomed to it and use it also when they revise their own translations. The aim of the presented formative feedback techniques is therefore not only to practice assessing but also to familiarize students with the agreed criteria and instrument for formative assessment. When they are equipped with such an instrument they can practise its use further in similar activities, e.g. predicting problems, a separate exercise done in the pre-translation stage before students are asked to do a translation. In such an exercise students work with the source

text and try not only to predict problems and ambiguities but also categorise the predicted problems in accordance with the four main labels in the presented scale. When they get enough practice, assumingly they start to predict problems whenever they translate and thanks to the extensive feedback that all the presented techniques offer, students can get ready to assess their own translations.

The implementation of formative assessment in the translation classroom engages students and makes them responsible for their own learning process through which it forms them into autonomous translators. Moreover, it can be a means to something more because students' involvement in assessment makes the whole process interactive, which gives the teacher opportunity to learn a lot about the students. The author would venture an opinion that this is the reason why "formative assessment is at the heart of effective teaching" (Black and Wiliam 1998: 143). Thanks to student involvement, the teacher also receives feedback through students' opinions, comments, problems and their justifications, which is what makes feedback formative since, by the way of conclusion, effective feedback is reciprocal.

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