AL-FARABI KAZAKH NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Department of International Relations

Chair of Diplomatic Translation

**Translation business in the field of international and legal relations**

**“Translation of Scientific and Technical Documents”**

2024-2025 academic year, fall semester

Lecture 2

**Module 1: Introduction to scientific and technical translation**

**Lecture 2** Material, language and structure of scientific and technical texts

The coursebook focuses on scientific and technical genres for which translations are likely to be commissioned. There are two main areas of focus, mapping onto technical and scientific translation domains respectively. The first area pertains to the design, delivery and use of technical products. Here, you learn about technical material aimed at end users, that is, instruction manuals, product data sheets and technical brochures (Chapter 4), as well as technical documenta- tion written by specialists for specialists, in the genre of patent speci- fications. The second area of focus is the communication of scientific knowledge. Here, you learn about specialized scientific research (Chapter 6) and popular science reporting.

The book also provides guidance on some of the resources that can help you in yourwork, with a particular focus on corpora. Throughout the book examples give you insights into professional translation practices, to help prepare you for aspects of professional life.

In many cases English-language examples are used as a basis for discussion in the book, but you are encouraged to use similar analytical approaches to deal with texts in other languages, making the course- book language-independent and of use for translator training and education in any language pair. Examples from other languages are integrated where practicable. Exercises at the end of each chapter aim to extend your experience further by encouraging you to find and work with additional examples for analysis and translation. They also prompt you to engage in discussions about your own linguistic and cultural contexts and your own translation work. Depending on organizational factors and the time and resources available, the exer- cises can be used for self-study or classroom activities. Many of them lend themselves well to group work, thus encouraging you to develop your team-working, collaborative and interpersonal skills too.

In many countries entry barriers to the translation profession are low, that is to say, anyone can say they are a translator and can offer their services as a translator. In the past translators often entered the profes- sion with degree-level language competence but little formal education in translation. Their effectiveness as translators was developed on the job; over time they developed their own approaches to translation and their own personal theories of translation, perhaps without knowledge of existing formal theories. Now in the UK and in many other coun- tries there is a proliferation of translator-training programmes that formalize the acquisition of knowledge and skills for translation, and it is increasingly expected by employers that their translators will have undergone some postgraduate training in translation. Without replac- ing the on-the-job experiences and learning, academic training pro- grammes can offer you theoretical and conceptual tools to help you to develop your knowledge and skills more efficiently than if you had to discover everything through trial and error on the job, as your predecessors often had to do. Academic programmes also develop your analytical and reflective abilities. These form an important part of professionalism and allow you to have a rational and analytical understanding of your translation activities, so that you will be able to respond to previously unencountered situations and will be able adapt to new practices as they emerge. This is particularly pertinent in the case of the increasing technologization of translation activities. Therefore, these higher-level thinking skills will be a tremendous asset to you in the professional workplace. Those are the benefits of targeted training in scientific and technical translation that underlie this book and inform its approach.

**References**

Krathwohl, David R. (2002) ‘A Revision of Bloom’s Taxonomy: An Over- view’, *Theory into Practice* 41(4): 212–18.

Snow, Charles P. (1959) *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—— (1963) *The Two Cultures: And a Second Look*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.