

TRANSLATION OF EDUCATION-RELATED TERMINOLOGY FROM CZECH LANGUAGE TO ENGLISH

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Abstract

The article introduces the readers to selected terminological findings acquired in recent years while translating monographs and articles dealing with educational science. The purpose of this article is also to react on the trends, which are manifesting themselves in an intensive communication of Czech scientific and educational workers in the English language and also the demand put on students who have to submit their abstracts and key words together with their theses. In this connection, we deal with more or less frequent terms of educational science, didactics and other related fields.

Keywords : educational science, pedagogy, didactics, methodology, terminology, translation, Czech language, English language

Introduction

Terminology in humanities is a specific field which is different from the terminology of science since it more closely linked to the country-related concept of the field as well as the historical development of countries in which the terminology is used. This fact makes the translation of those terms difficult.

Based on this premise, the present article was composed while its aim is to introduce the terminology to the readers while those may be mainly students of education-based and related fields¹ since they may encounter difficulties when translating their texts from Czech to English or vice versa. This article is based on the text which was written in Czech dealing with the translation of Czech (educational-related, etc.) terminology to the English language. However, since the co-operation between the Czech Republic and the rest of the world is developing (even in the area of education due to mutual exchanges of both teachers/educators and students/learners), the article dealing with the translation of English terminology to the Czech language seems to be beneficial as well. Additionally, the possible translation between Czech and English might be beneficial for researches who has to take into account the foreign researches, i.e. those, who would be forced to read articles either in Czech or in *continental* English²

The author of this article³ is dealing with translation for a long time – his bachelor thesis (see Gregar, 2013) is devoted to the field of translation of humor while his diploma thesis deals with the employment of humor in the teaching itself (more concretely in English language teaching, see Gregar, 2016). He also deals with the translation of texts from the field

¹ Those might include even the students of teaching-based study branches (future teachers) – we will label them as *pedagogy teachers* in the course of this article. The reason of this is the fact that they have to pass the general pedagogic subjects during their pregradual studies.

² English of continental Europe, i.e. the English language of *non-native* speakers.

³ He himself is an alumnus of a study branch for future teachers while he now studies a doctoral study programme of pedagogy at Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc (in the Czech Republic).

of pedagogy⁴. This article is an extended version of his article (Gregar, 2015) which deals with the terminology contained in monograph Dostál (2015).

1. Translation of terminology

Every university student faces challenges – to write (at least one) thesis in which they has to prove that they are “worthy” of getting the degree. In some cases, it is valid to consider writing this thesis in English (since its possible application in the practice abroad or to get more attention from the possible readers). In the Czech Republic, the student is asked to compose the annotation of the thesis while it should be both in Czech and in English and it should be accompanied with a couple of key words to describe the thesis (its field, etc.). During the process of translation, they might get into a situation when they should translate a term which is ambiguous or even confusing, the worst case scenario might be the fact that there might not be a proper translation of the term at all. Therefore, the aim of this article is to present the terms from the field of education between the Czech and English language as well as their possible translation. Those were compared with Czech (Mareš & Gavora, 1999; Průcha, 2005) and foreign (English) pedagogical dictionaries (Wallace, 2009), Czech laws (see Act No. 563/2004 Coll.) and the author also discussed this issue with educational experts (see below).

2. Pedagogical terminology and its translation

In case of Czech pedagogy students, the first issue is the term **pedagogika** itself. This term is more typical for the continental English. Průcha (2005) admits that the term *pedagogika* might be translated as **pedagogy**, however he also admits (in a footnote) that it is more used in the field of continental English. Nevertheless, the term **pedagogy** starts to emerge even in the UK (see Wallace, 2009). The second possibility is to translate *pedagogika* as **educational science** which is also the option that is preferred by the author of the present article.

The closely related issue with the one mentioned before is the translation of the following terms: **vzdělávání**, **vzdělání** and **výchova**. The trouble of this term is that despite the meanings of the mentioned terms differ (and are presented below), they all are translated by the same English term – **education**⁵. Therefore, if the text deals with all of the terms mentioned above, it is necessary to anchor them properly and describe and delimit them, or to use alternative terms. Therefore, the term *vzdělání* might be described as *the final step of the process of acquiring the knowledge, skills, abilities... while those might be acquired not only, but mostly at schools*; for the term *výchova* might be described and delimited as e.g. *other elements of education, e.g. the sociological and behavioral aspects – e.g. the education towards the honesty, patience, coping with a real situation of a loss or a poor performance, etc.*; while the term *vzdělávání*, we provide the following definition *the process of acquiring the knowledge, skills, abilities... while those might be acquired not only, but mostly at schools*.

From the term *vzdělávání*, it is close to the term **vzdělávací proces** while it is possible to translate it as **educational process**. However, it is necessary to point out that the adjective *educational* might in the Czech language be connected to both *výchova* (see above),

⁴ Since 2015, he has translated more than twenty articles and monographs, e.g. Dostál (2015), Klement et al. (2016), etc.

⁵ It should be noted that due to the internalization sentiments of the Czech scientific society, the efforts to use term *edukace* in the Czech language environment are emerging. This term includes both *výchova* and *vzdělávání*; however, those efforts are still quite minority (cf. e.g. Průcha, 2009)

vzdělávání (see above) or even both; therefore, it is also possible to encounter the term *výchovně-vzdělávací proces* while it emphasizes the duality of the term itself⁶; however, the author denies claims that the educational process performed by a teacher at school might be strictly dealing with the development of knowledge, skills and abilities (i.e. *vzdělávání* in Czech, see above) and not with the sociological and behavioral aspects of the education (i.e. *výchova* in Czech, see above). Therefore, it is also appropriate to define and delimit (anchor, justify, base) the choice of translation of the text to a footnote.

The translation of the general term **učení** requires the knowledge of a context since the term is ambiguous in the Czech language. If we are only aware of this specific word, we do not know if we are asked to describe the activity of a pupil/student (*žák se učí* – a pupil is learning) or of a teacher (*učitel učí* – teacher is teaching). This has to be properly stated within the text; after that, the translation is easy – the activity of a pupil/student is **learning**, the activity of a teacher is **teaching**.

The translation of the Czech term **žák** is also problematic – its equivalent is the English term **pupil** while it means an individual who attends the basic school; in terms of secondary school, the English term **student** is used. In the Czech environment, however, the individual attending the secondary school is (in Czech) called *student* as well but this term is not anchored in a governing document, i.e. the Czech School Act (Act No. 563/2004 Coll.) – this document uses the term *žák* solely even in the fourth part of the Act which is devoted to the field of secondary education. Therefore, in order to avoid misunderstandings, it is beneficial to translate both Czech terms *žák* and *student* as **learner** in English (since they are playing mainly the role of recipients of teacher's teaching, hence they are learning).

The problem subsequent to the problem of term *výchova* (see above) is the problem of terms **vychovatel** and **vychováváný** (*jedinec*). It is necessary that the *vychovatel* is a person who provides the education (other elements of education, e.g. the sociological and behavioral aspects – e.g. the education towards the honesty, patience, coping with a real situation of a loss or a poor performance, etc.; see above) to *vychováváný* (who is the recipient of the activity of *vychovatel*). Therefore, it is reasonable to use the word **educator** for the former and **educate** for the latter.

With the last term from this section, we penetrate to the field of pedagogical (educational) practice. This term is **pedagogický pracovník** – its literal translation⁷ to English is the term **pedagogical worker**. However, this term is often considered to be a representative of continental English as well, therefore, the author recommends the following term which is unambiguous – **member of a pedagogical staff** (while it is anchored in Act No. 563/2004 Coll. as well).

3. Terminology from the field of didactics and methodology

The following part is devoted to terminology related to the Czech pedagogical term **didaktika**. This term is difficult to grasp since the English term **methodology** is often (cf. Mares, J., & Gavora, P., 1999; Průcha, J., 2005) presented as its translation. However, *methodology* and *didaktika* are not describing the same field of education-related terminology. When translating *didaktika*, it is definitely better to use the English term **didactics** despite its rather continental-english-like nature. However, it is, again, better to include a similar delimitation of the term, e.g. *a theory of education which deals with forms, approaches and aims of the (school) education. It also deals with additional areas which are connected to the*

⁶ Nevertheless, it is also possible to observe the rare tendencies to employ the term *edukační proces* (cf. e.g. Průcha, 2009)

⁷ For the brief overview of types of translation, see e.g. Gregar (2013).

school education: the content and extent of educational process, the content and extent of the results of educational process, methods, principles and forms of education, and interactions between the teacher and a learner. Subsequently, the translator has to consider the type of didactics which is described within the article.

The author also (cf. Gregar, 2015) examines the Czech term **výuka** since its translation may be difficult as well – there are two possible translations – English terms **teaching** and **instruction**. While the former covers only the activity of the teacher (e.g. during the frontal teaching) and the learner (pupil, student) is in this concept a rather passive recipient of the teacher's activity (pedeutocentric model), the term *instruction* is seen as the activity of the teacher in pedocentric models (in which the lead role is played by the learner and the teacher plays rather the role of a guide, a facilitator, etc.). In this case, the author also recommends to delimit the particular understanding of the term in the text itself or in the footnote.

4. Terminology dealing with the types of school

The following part of the present article deals with various representatives of Czech school system. In order to avoid confusion, the Czech term is accompanied with ISCED level. The Czech term **mateřská škola**⁸ is used for ISCED level 0, i.e. the schools dealing with pre-primary education. Therefore, two translations are possible – either **kindergarten** or **pre-primary school**⁹.

According to the author of this article, the next term is causing the most difficulties is the term **základní škola**. The reason for this difficulties is that in the Czech environment, the term *základní škola* is describing a school of the ISCED level 1 and ISCED level 2. Therefore, it is beneficial to use the term **basic school** since it is not necessary to distinguish between the first (ISCED 1) and second stage (ISCED 2) of the basic education. However, if it is necessary to distinguish between them, it is possible to use the term **primary school**¹⁰ for the **first stage of basic school** (ISCED 1) and, therefore, **second stage of basic school** (for ISCED 2).

It is possible to translate the term **střední škola**, which is connected to upper secondary education (i.e. ISCED level 3) in the Czech environment, with a term **secondary school**. However, it is necessary to be aware of the fact that the *secondary school* is divided into *lower secondary school* (for learners who are coming from primary schools) and *upper secondary school*; it should be noted that in the Czech context, the vast majority of schools of *střední škola* type are of ISCED 3 level; therefore, they should be called **upper secondary schools** when dealing within the Czech context. Additionally, the translation of a particular type of upper secondary school which deals with general education – called **gymnasium** in the Czech context – should not be done literally¹¹. The author also does not find the term **grammar school** as a proper and suitable translation while he prefers the term **general upper secondary school**¹².

In order to cause additional misunderstanding, the author recommends to state not only the type of school (according to the translations presented in the previous text) but also the ISCED level (for Czech version – see *Nová klasifikace ISCED 2011, 2015*; for English

⁸ Czech *škola* means *school*.

⁹ The second term is used more due to a fact that the term *pre-primary pedagogy* is being used gradually more.

¹⁰ In the Czech language, the tendencies to employ the term *primární škola* (primary school) are growing.

¹¹ Since gymnasium (gym) means something completely different in English language.

¹² The author claims that despite the fact that some secondary schools in the UK are called *grammar schools*, when we look to the US, *grammar schools* there are a type of basic schools; therefore, the term *grammar school* is ambiguous as well.

version – see UNESCO, 2012). Additional types of schools could also be found in (Angličtina v (odborném) vzdělávání (nedat.)).

5. Additional terms

In the last part of this article, the author briefly presents other terminological issues of e.g. abstracts¹³ translations. Their translation is based on terminology presented in the Czech governing curricular document¹⁴ for basic education which is published by Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport – Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání¹⁵ (Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education¹⁶, 2007). It is alarming that despite the fact that this document has a proper and official translation, there are still many translations that do not correspond to the official terminology based in the documents mentioned above. Therefore, they are presented also in this article.

The translation of the term **vzdělávací oblast** is presented in the form **educational area**, however, it is also possible to encounter another translation – *educational sphere* (např. Kratochvílová, 2013)¹⁷. The *educational areas* are the following ones¹⁸:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • <i>Jazyk a jazyková komunikace</i> | - Language and Language Communication |
| • <i>Matematika a její aplikace</i> | - Mathematics and Its Application |
| • <i>Informační a komunikační technologie</i> | - Information and Communication Technologies |
| • <i>Člověk a jeho svět</i> | - Man and His World |
| • <i>Člověk a společnost</i> | - Man and Society |
| • <i>Člověk a příroda</i> | - Man and Nature |
| • <i>Umění a kultura</i> | - Arts and Culture |
| • <i>Člověk a zdraví</i> | - Man and Health |
| • <i>Člověk a svět práce</i> | - Man and the World of Work |

The last terms to be presented are the terms: **vzdělávací obor** while it is translated as **educational field** in FEP EE, and the next term – **tematický okruh** – is there presented as **thematic area**. At the end, it is also important to present the translation of terms linked to the (key) **competencies** (klíčové) **kompetence** – there are six of them in FEP EE:

¹³ While this was the initial motivation of this text.

¹⁴ It should be pointed out that the purpose of this article is not to introduce or to present this document itself or its structure and aim; this article should only present the terms which are crucial and might be necessary for (future) researchers and teachers, educators.

¹⁵ Henceforth as RVP ZV.

¹⁶ Henceforth as FEP EE.

¹⁷ This fact proves the thought presented in footnote no. 16. This state might be caused by the fact that there are two translations of Czech RVP ZV: Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (FEP BE, 2007) and Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education (FEP EE, 2007) while they differ in some parts. Nevertheless, this issue was discussed with Dr. Michaela Prášilová (of Institute of Pedagogy and Social Studies, Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic) and Dr. Olga Kofroňová from the Department for Conception of Curricula, Quality and Evaluation in Education of National Institute for Education, Education Counselling Centre and Centre for Continuing Education of Teachers. Based on these consultations, the author was advised to consider the FEP EE (2007) official. The author thanks both of mentioned experts for the consultations.

¹⁸ In this part of the article, a term from RVP ZV (2007) and its translation from FEP EE (2007) are presented. RVP ZV from 2007 is used despite the fact that the new RVP ZV was published in 2016, however, there is no official translation of this document yet.

- *Kompetence k učení*
 - *Kompetence k řešení problémů*
 - *Kompetence komunikativní*
 - *Kompetence sociální a personální*
 - *Kompetence občanské*
 - *Kompetence pracovní*
- **Learning Competency**
 - **Problem-solving Competency**
 - **Communication Competency**
 - **Social and Personal Competency**
 - **Civic Competency**
 - **Professional Competency**

Conclusion

The article strived to base some of the ambiguous translations of education-related terminology based on author's experience gained while translating Czech texts dealing with educational science – pedagogy. Nevertheless, there are even more terminological issues from various sub-field of pedagogy and education (e.g. terms *technika* and *technologie* – from the field of technical education), but since the extent of the article is limited, only the most important terms were presented.

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