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"K L A D" IS A STUDENT JOURNAL FIRST PUBLISHED AT M. NARIKBAYEV KAZGUU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS. THIS JOURNAL IS AIMED AT ENHANCING STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT INTO SCIENCE AND RESEARCH.

"K L A D" JOURNAL ADMITS FOR PUBLICATION VARIOUS TYPES OF ARTICLES: ORIGINAL RESEARCH, REVIEW ARTICLES, SHORT REPORTS OR ESSAYS, REFLECTIONS, CASE STUDIES, METHODOLOGIES AND CASES IN ENGLISH; CONTAINING THE RESULTS OF FUNDAMENTAL AND APPLIED RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF PHILOSOPHY AND IDENTITY, HISTORY OF KAZAKHSTAN, PEDAGOGY, LINGUISTICS AND METHODS OF TEACHING LANGUAGES, TRANSLATION, AND TOURISM.

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Research Articles

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МРПТИ 16.31.41“TERMINOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR KAZAKH TRANSLATORS
IN THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY”

V. Sidorenko

Abstract

This article deals with the terminology challenges in the oil and gas translation and offers resources for overcoming these challenges. The oil and gas translator face the challenge of understanding the processes behind the terms that require accurate translation. Accurate translation is essential to the success of the customer's interactions with other parties. Therefore, it is important for the translator to learn how to overcome terminological challenges and understand all industry-specific processes. The research is based on the results of a survey conducted among practicing translators in the English-Russian language combination, who have noted certain terminological difficulties and shared their resources for finding an accurate translation of oil and gas terms. The proposed resources were analyzed for their reliability considering the specific attributes of the reliability.

Key words: *oil and gas industry, translation, terminology challenges, terminology solutions, reference materials, thematic dictionaries.*

Kazakhstan's economy is firmly tied to the oil and gas industry, given that oil production accounts for 17% of Kazakhstan's GDP. At the same time, in 2018, the 30 largest companies in Kazakhstan paid almost 60% of all taxes to the budget, 90% of these companies work in the oil production sector.¹ In this regard, the significance of oil and gas translation in the Kazakhstani translation services market is indisputable.

Oil and gas translation is one of the areas of technical translation that provides certain challenges for translators, particularly when dealing with terms. The industry is constantly evolving, which leads to the appearance of new terms. The operation of oil and gas companies, field development, production and processing, all these processes include constant cooperation with foreign partners, which entails huge volumes of materials that require high-quality translation. The quality of the translation has a direct impact on the success of this interaction.

The significance of specific terms was noted by Marek Łukasik. He presumes that the clarity and effectiveness of professional communication depend on the precision of the term, i.e. the quality of the link between the term and the respective concept it represents (Łukasik, 2012). This makes it important to accurately convey the meaning of the term in translation. Accurate translation implies the elimination of ambiguity, which can mislead the reader. M. Motin asserts that the formation of terms is not an invention, but an expression of the deep meanings of extralinguistic reality (Motin, 2011). In his publication, he emphasizes that since the terms denote exactly any fragment of extralinguistic reality, they are inevitably used in areas of knowledge where ambiguity is unacceptable — primarily in science and technology. He identifies and analyzes the problems of translation using the material of oil and gas terms, where the problem of ambiguity is especially acute.

On the way to accurate translation, another problem also arises such as the abundance of multi-component terms. I. N. Gushchina, A. D. Sidelnikova consider the specifics of text translation in the oil and gas industry from Chinese and English into Russian highlighting the basic challenges that arise during translation

¹ Skolko nefti dobyli v Kazakhstane v proshlom godu [How much oil was produced in Kazakhstan last year]. Accessed on April 5, 2021 at: <https://kursiv.kz/news/otraslevye-temy/2020-01/skolko-nefti-dobyli-v-kazakhstane-v-proshlom-godu>

(Gushchina & Sidelnikova, 2017). As they assert, basically, these challenges are associated with the translation of terms, that are single-component and multi-component.

Many other linguists speak about the necessity of creating and using term bases and dictionaries in their articles and textbooks, especially in the technical spheres of translation, in view of the ambiguity of terms, and the corresponding complexity of defining the connotation of a term (Pearson, 1998; Latysheva, 2019).

All these needs and problems necessitate the modern linguistics community to develop the direction of scientific and technical translation, which will contribute to the correct and adequate transmission of texts of a technical orientation with the emphasis on field-specific terminology. Many universities do not teach the basics of oil and gas translation, and as a result, graduating translators are in fear of dealing with the oil and gas translation without this basic knowledge and not knowing the resources to turn to for help.

These gaps in training and the challenges of dealing with oil and gas translation served as the starting point for this research, the main purpose of which was to form a list of useful terminology resources that will be of practical value to translators who are interested in oil and gas translation, based on experience exchange of practicing oil and gas translators. The research was based on the problems of translation of oil and gas terms and terminological solutions for such problems, taking into account the fact that oil and gas translation is a very extensive and complex direction of translation.

The research included a survey of practicing translators with varying experience in English-Russian language combination, from 1 to 10 and more years. The survey was conducted in an anonymous form regardless of gender or age categories. The total number of respondents accounted for 52 people. The survey questions focused on the challenges of working with oil and gas terms and the sources that translators used to overcome such challenges. The translators' responses allowed us to identify the most common difficulties in translating oil and gas terms, which will be described in more detail below.

Wide range of knowledge required. The oil and gas industry include many topics and areas of knowledge in which the translator must be able to navigate. For instance: geology, physics, cartography, chemistry, petrochemistry, etc. In order to properly translate the terms, the translator is required to have background knowledge not only in petrochemistry but also in related areas of knowledge, which means that the translator needs to know the basics and understand the processes expressed by such terms. For instance: rifting – рифтинг (Geology), well intervention – геолого-технологические мероприятия (Oilfield operations), towed streamer – буксируемая сейсмическая коса (Geophysics), etc.

Narrow-field terminology and complex production processes. While many subtopics and fields of knowledge are involved, the oil and gas industry is also characterized by the presence of highly specialized terms referring to complex production processes. When working with oil and gas materials it is not enough to simply know two languages, you also need to understand what is being said in order to accurately convey the meaning of the terms. You can find a translation of a term in a dictionary, but even so, describing the whole process is no easy task without understanding the process.

Abbreviations and acronyms. One of the difficulties of oil and gas, as well as any technical translation, is the abundance of abbreviations and acronyms, which are difficult to decipher and therefore to translate. For instance: CEPA (Canadian Energy Pipeline Association) – Канадская ассоциация трубопроводных компаний, SBP (Sub-Bottom Profiler) – профиломер, etc.

Jargonisms. In any industry, inevitably, certain specific expressions, jargon, appear that are not understandable to ordinary people. In the oil and gas industry, such jargon includes X-mas tree – фонтанная арматура, monkey – верховой рабочий, pig – скребок для очистки и инспекции трубопроводов, etc.

Idioms / figurative expressions. In addition to jargon, in oil and gas materials you can also find idioms that pose a certain challenge to translators. For instance, live pipeline – трубопровод под давлением, hot tapping – холодная (безостановочная) врезка.

Multiple attributive nouns. Respondents also noted a certain difficulty with multiple attributive nouns. These are the word combinations in which nouns serve as an adjective to describe another noun. Such phrases can consist of two or more nouns, and sometimes it is difficult to determine the main word and the defining one and unravel the chain of nouns by understanding the attributions. For instance, Shell Kazakhstan Development Country Security Manager – Региональный менеджер по вопросам безопасности Шелл Казахстан Девелопмент.

Differences in terminology among oil and gas companies. When working with different companies, the translator may encounter the problem of different translation options for the same terms. For instance, well intervention, well work, routine maintenance – all these terms mean geological and technological operations – геолого-технологические мероприятия.

These and many other peculiarities of oil and gas translation make it difficult for translators to find the accurate translation for terms and produce a high-quality translation that would satisfy the demanding customer. The research was based on the survey responses, with a further in-depth review of the suggested resources for reliability and applicability to terminology problems in oil and gas translation.

When processing the respondents' answers, the proposed resources were assessed with respect to their reliability. This was done taking into account the attributes of the reliability of the source, i.e. the availability of the following:

- 1) Resource authorship;
- 2) Authors' contact details;
- 3) Sources of information;
- 4) Purpose of creating a resource;
- 5) Neatness in providing information;
- 6) Data relevance.²

According to the obtained responses, resources for working with oil and gas terminology can be divided into two basic groups – reference materials and thematic dictionaries.

As for reference materials, the respondents suggested such resources as Indira Serikbay's textbooks *English in the Oil and Gas Industry* and *English for Oilmen*, A.O. Nosenko's *English for Oil and Gas Industry. Reader* (Serikbay, 2004 and 2009; Nosenko, 2018). These tutorials would be helpful to get started and get an idea of the industry. The textbooks provide information on a range of processes from exploration and production to refining, transportation and marketing, the so-called upstream and downstream processes. In addition to specialized terminology, the books contain extensive illustrative material, background information on the oil and gas industry of Kazakhstan, Russia and other oil-producing countries. These textbooks are recommended for all translators who are going to work in the field of oil and gas translation and who want to master the basic concepts and terms and get acquainted with the history of the issue. However, these textbooks would not provide information on more specific processes. These books can be found in both printed and electronic format. The reliability of these resources is determined by the availability of information about the authors (contact details included), editors, reviewers and publishers, the availability of references (in Russian and English). Using this information, anyone can verify the accuracy and relevance of the data presented.

Many translators who took part in the survey noted *Wikipedia*, as a useful tool since it is constantly updated and may contain relevant information about new developments and processes. As far as credibility is concerned, the well-known *Wikipedia* encyclopedia is replenished by the materials of different people willing to participate in this process. It may contain some mistakes, but not more than reputable encyclopedias since it has a group of moderators that constantly monitors its replenishment. *Wikipedia* is not the most reliable source

² Compiled by the author using the article of Yakushina E. (2013). *Mediaobrazovanie: kak proverit dostovernost informatsii v Internetе* [Media education: how to check the accuracy of information on the Internet] Digital Education journal, 3 issue.

of data, because the articles in it may differ in more or less deep rationale. When searching for information in *Wikipedia*, one should pay special attention to the sources of the data provided. Sometimes it is more useful to find the original sources and study the issue in more detail. Thus, *Wikipedia* represents the accumulation of references on the topic in question.

Many respondents mentioned oil and gas companies' websites as a resource for dealing with terminology problems. Such resources contain the information that has been approved by the customer to be published on the company's website. This means that the terminology used in it meets the expectations of the customer. This is an indispensable resource when you work on documents for a particular company. In addition to the website of the client company, useful information can also be found on websites of other oil and gas companies, competitors, and partners in joint projects. Through the websites of other companies working in this area, you can find references to the same processes that are mentioned in the customer's documents. The websites of foreign companies are usually better filled and offer more information. Many companies also create websites in multiple languages. For instance, KazMunayGas offers information on its website in Russian, English and Kazakh.

According to the respondents, it is helpful to refer to industry-specific standards when dealing with oil and gas materials. For the oil and gas industry, these are standards by *International Organization for Standardization (ISO)* and *American Petroleum Institute (API)*. On the websites of these organizations, you can find not only the standards, but also related information in several languages. Standards are the most reliable sources of information, as they are compiled by industry experts, reviewed, revised and adopted on an international level. Industry companies use approved standards directly in practice to ensure the quality and conformity of their products for safety purposes, increase the efficiency of their processes and meet the expectations of customers.

Some respondents also responded that they turned to forums and industry experts in the process of translation. Both are examples of seeking for advice through networking. However, advice from forums is less reliable than other sources of information listed above, as users usually register under pseudonyms, without providing contact information, and this is a bad sign for reliability purposes since you cannot verify the source. Anyway, forums may be a useful tool for translators. Therefore, several forum options have been considered that may be useful for oil and gas translators. In addition to the forum from everyone's favorite Multitran, there is the *Petroleum Engineers* forum which is not primary for translators but can be useful for them as it unites the industry workers who can share their experience and some reference materials. It is active and includes over 6,000 registered users and contains over 8,000 open topics. Another one is the *City of Translators* forum, which unites translators from different fields and provides a platform for an exchange of experience and opinions, as well as contains lots of useful materials for translators/interpreters. These platforms serve not only to find answers and help but also to network and find work.

As for dictionaries, respondents identified their favorite and effective dictionaries, the list of which is presented below.

Multitran – the well-known online dictionary, providing the translation of terms by category.

Imagetranslation – an online illustrated dictionary that provides translation of terms in Russian and English using pictures, drawings, photographs, diagrams and other images.

Schlumberger's online glossary – a glossary of oil and gas terms in English and Spanish with clear definitions, some even with support graphical information.

Oil and Gas Commission in British Columbia's glossary – monolingual glossary of oil and gas terms in PDF format, which can be found at the BCOGC's website, and which provides terms on LNG and other facilities, oil and gas measurements, pipelines, regulations and legislation, and acronyms.

TMK's glossary – a glossary from the website of TMK (Russian manufacturer and supplier of steel pipes), presented in English and Russian separately.

Oil and Gas Illustrated Glossary by V.S Belousov – a hardcover print edition dictionary.

New Comprehensive English-Russian Dictionary of Oil and Gas by Publishing House Zhivoi yazyk – another hardcover print edition dictionary.

All of the above dictionaries, except for the last two hardcover print edition dictionaries, can be found online. The last two were issued in 2010 and were not found in online stores as well. That is why it was not possible to consider them in detail. Given the time of their release, the information in these dictionaries may have lost some relevance.

Of all the presented online dictionaries, only *Multitran* raises questions about reliability, as it is the result of the work of a huge number of translators and other contributors who offer their options, and it is not always possible to check the accuracy. Some contributors provide information about the source they used, which is a very rare case, but hardly anyone provides personal contact information. That is why this information is difficult to check and rely on. Other dictionaries are presented with the references, authors' personal and contact information, which allows anyone to verify the reliability of the information provided.

This list of resources provided in this article is not exhaustive but represents a particular fraction of the resources available to translators in the era of global knowledge sharing. And this research was aimed to conduct knowledge exchange between practicing translators through a survey. As a result, resources that can be useful in solving terminological problems in oil and gas translation, defined above, were selected, taking into account their reliability and relevance.

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