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**ON TRANSCRIBING, SUBTITLING AND THE BY-PRODUCT
OF LANGUAGE LEARNING IN TRAINING TRANSLATORS**

Рассматривается роль транскрибирования и перевода коротких рекламных роликов в формировании лингвистической компетенции студептов-переводчиков. Анализируются ошибки, допускаемые при записи звучащего текста для последующего создания субтитров. Описываются формируемие в учебном процессе язиковие и профессиональние умения и навыки. Несмотря на небольшое количество участников проведенного исследования, полученные результаты представляют интерес для дальнейшего изучения. Анализ ошибок в переводах студентов позволяет сделать ряд важныф выводов, в частности о необходимости уделять внимание владению родныши языком.

Ключевьге слова: перевод, транскрибирование, субтитры, обучение иностранныш языкам.

 Introduction

Films in foreign language teaching have long been used. Teachers have always looked for additional stimuli for motivating and diversifying the process of language teaching. Additionally, they aim to optimize the learning of grammar and vocabulary. This paper discusses the use of short films with a double aim — on the one hand the development of translation skills, and on the other, language skills and competence development in training translators.

It may be practical to briefly examine some of the features of visual media. Along with the typical features found in listening texts, video provides a richer source of content. Speakers can be seen, their body movements and facial expressions give hints to meaning, and their clothes, location etc. help the learner 'fill in the gaps' with cross-cultural clues [1].

Films as authentic text

Thornbury [2, p. 21] states that 'a *classroom text is authentic if it was originally written for a non-classroom audience'*. In this respect, films are authentic text in that they are not meant for classroom use. Additionally, video has a range of authenticity (including authentic-based, scripted and 'real life' listening modes), and a variety of different genres familiar to learners. The integrity of the film, which includes the plot, the characters, and the director's skills, influences the emotions of the recipients and in this way it increases their motivation for learning the target language.

Subtitling as Translation-mediated Communication (TMC)

Nida and Taber [3] highlighted the role played by the translator on the basis of Shannon's [4] model and this is relevant to illustrate Translation-mediated Communication (TMC).

O'Hagan [5], on the basis of Shannon's communication model, examined TMC in terms of the Sender of the Message in the Source Language (SL) and its Receiver in the Target Language (TL) communicating via Translator (either translator or interpreter) who converts the Message from SL to TL. Translated subtitles are therefore the converted Message from the Sender (the filmmakers) to the Receiver (the audience).

Transcribing and creating the subtitles

First, transcribing from the video is a very intensive and active kind of listening activity. Second listening as a typically receptive skill turns into a productive skill. This approach can help learners in the development of listening skills in general and listening skills for translation in terms of authentic speech.

The study

Research questions

The case study analyzed the role of transcribing audio from short commercials in the development of linguistic and practical translation and subtitling skills. In particular, the study aimed to find:

l) what impact transcribing and translating audio text has on the development of linguistic competence by the students;

2) what errors students make in translating transcribed audio for subtitles.

Participants

The study was conducted in the Department of English Studies at New Bulgarian University. The programme equips students with practical skills through hands-on experience in translation of various types.

Ten graduate students from one class of Translation in Localization participated in this study. The participants' English language competence is C1-C2.

They met for 90 min once weekly. Their average age was 35.8 (age range 24-56 years). Everyone had used a computer before with an average of 15.8 years of usage experience.

Design and procedure

The present study is based on analyzing the linguistic output produced by students in the class tasks of transcribing 5-min commercials for a cosmetics product. (The brand name is not disclosed in this paper for ethical and copyright reasons). The source text contains 605 words (2949 characters without spaces) and the translated text contains on average 550 words (on average 2800 characters without spaces). The software used for subtitling is DivXMedia Subtitler version 2.1.0 which is freeware (http://www.divxland.org/en/media-subtitler/).

Data from students' translations of the audio transcripts have been collected and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The results from the analysis are presented in the following section.

Results and discussion

The first research question was what impact transcribing and translating has on the development of linguistic competence by the students. The following implications can be drawn from this case study.

Implications for Foreign Language Teaching

The following issues with connected speech and pronunciation have to be ad-dressed-even at higher levels:

1. Elision. Comprehension is difficult when sounds are omitted.

2. Assimilation. Students have problems when speech sounds change to become more like the sounds that follow or precede them.

3. Word/sentence stress. Stress in a phrase or a sentence can change emphasis or meaning and students learn to take this into account when translating.

4. Intonation and meaning. Intonation can affect meaning and students learn to decode meaning from the context, the visual support provided by the video, or the situation which is depicted in the film

5. Accents. Learners learn to deal with accents different from those they are used to, such as American, Scottish, and Irish etc.

Transcribing and subtitling video allows learners to develop knowledge of the language, to understand the vocabulary that is used. Such an approach makes the students capable of producing language, to rephrase, to synthesize, and to summarize.

The students learn to transfer that knowledge in similar situations, i.e. a situation is analyzed, grammatical and lexical components are worked on followed by transfer to similar situations.

Implications for development of translation skills

The analysis in the present case study showed that transcribing, translating and subtitling films boosts learners' motivation for learning the target language in addition to the development of professional skills for translation and subtitling. In particular it can be claimed that:

1. The students develop better productive skills.

2. They become better at rephrasing, summarizing and synthesizing.

3. Students learn to better analyze the tone and register.

4. They learn to differentiate between the various kinds of message for the target audience.

5. They learn to recognize the function of the visual message (descriptive, narrative, explanatory).

6. They learn to express feelings in written form.

7. They learn to look for and recognize the reasons for a particular situation and more importantly to predict the development of the situation.

8. Learners focus simultaneously on image and sound thus taking into account that the image supports the viewers' comprehension. On the other hand, visual support when the learners observe the lip movement of the actors aids the comprehension of the verbal message.

The second research question was what errors the students make when translating the transcribed audio. The most common types of errors in the mother tongue are listed below.

- errors with articles;

- spelling of commonly confused words;

- unfamiliarity with certain realia (words and expressions for culture-specific material things) connected with certain thematic fields;

- errors with personal names;

- errors with terminology pertaining to a specific thematic field in the storyline;

- influences of non-standard forms from regional dialects in the mother tongue.

On the whole, the above makes it reasonable to emphasize better command of the mother tongue. This case study corroborated similar findings reported by M. Shipchanov[6]. A major conclusion from the analysis is that when training translators, emphasis must be placed on the typical errors made by student-translators in their native language (in this case Bulgarian). Such an approach could raise their awareness so they learn to avoid those errors.

Conclusions

Films have a great impact on learners, especially young ones. Shorter films, in this case commercials, as a source for training translators could provide excellent opportunities for practicing both translator skills and gives learners chances to develop their foreign language competence. Particularly useful could be sessions where students transcribe the audio of the film for subsequent subtitling so they can latter create the translated subtitles. When translating the transcripts, the students attend to both the visual content and the audio text and use their skills and knowledge thus developing their procedural and declarative knowledge of the foreign language. We must not forget that when subtitling, the translator

very often needs to summarize, which also requires the development of skills for language production both in the source and the target language.

This case study examined the impact that transcribing and translating the audio text from short commercials has on the development of linguistic competence by the students and what errors students make in translating transcribed audio for subtitles. It posits that a range of linguistic and professional skills and sub-skills could be addressed in the process of training translators. The findings, although they could not be generalized due to the small number of the research participants, point at a direction for further investigation. The error analysis of the students' translations revealed an important issue, namely that mother tongue competence needs to be addressed as well.

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