EXAMINING THE TRANSLATION PROCESS THROUGH PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract - The study aimed to examine the psycholinguistic process of translation students during the translation process. TAP (thinking-aloud method)has been applied to data collected through self-reports protocols. The four phases of creativity known as preparation, incubation, illumination and evaluation have been observed during English-Arabic and Arabic-English translation process. The translation majors performed quite well in English-Arabic translation than in Arabic-English translation. Translation grades varied according to the translation tasks and translation classes in the university. As far as translation techniques were concerned, mostly they were applied by the participants during incubation and illumination phases. But rarely, the participants applied translation techniques during the preparation and evaluation phases. Significant differences were found regarding strategy usage of the participants during the incubation and the evaluation phases.

Keywords - Psycholinguistic Process, Thinking-Aloud Method, Self-Reports Protocols, Preparation, Incubation, Illumination, Evaluation

I. INTRODUCTION

The discipline Translation Studies flourished independently during the last three to four decades and it has tried to bring together other disciplines like cultural studies, cognitive science, linguistics, philosophy and information science. In this discipline, adequate research has been conducted regarding the theory of equivalence, faithfulness, free translation and translation techniques. But now the discipline is making progress and importance is being given to the psycholinguistic perspective in the translation process. However, think-aloud-method based upon psycholinguistics is emerging against perspective model of equivalence. It studies translation process on the basis of self-report protocols.

II. OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH

Poincare[1]introduced the idea of differentiating these phases(preparation, incubation, illumination and evaluation). These phases occur without any sequenceandfewofthemare observedover andover again.This study will refer to these phases toexamine the mental processes which occur in translator's brain during the translation process.Translation teachers and trainers can benefit from this study.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

In 1964 translator was considered as a communicator engaged in writing communication[2].Holmes[3] introduced the translation model of Two-map two-plane text-rank. His model, based on linguistic approach, goes one step ahead neglecting the mental processing. In 1983, the first research on the process of translation was published by Transfer and Translation in Language Learning and Teaching. Bell[4] took another step towards the process of translation which takes place in human brain. He introduced a model based upon cognitive science. This psycholinguistic model, consisting of ten sub processes of translation, is a perfect example.

Wolfgang[5]started to work on the project to revive translation tachniques that lying beneath translation behavior, work within the translation process. First of all Wilss [6]identified the connection between cognitive psychology and translation.He recognized a sequence of operations in human brain in which reciprocal intergration is found betweeninterpretation,analogy,comparison,interferenc e, weighing of possibilities,planning, combining and processes of analysis [6].

Since the mid-1980s, efforts have been made to understand the translator's brain through think-aloud-protocols to investigate the translation process [7]-[8]-[9]. Useful works and end products of trainees and trained translators have been analyzed. Efforts have been made to know about the psycholinguistic perspective of translation process. Study regarding translation process has little in common and shows very distinguishablefeatures of the translation process [10].A group of scientists haveconcentrated on thetrained translators' problems regarding TAP's utilization, cognitive abilities, decision making during the translation process [11]-[14].

ConcurrentorretrospectiveTAPs are still controversial topics of discussion in translation process.As in [15]He supportstheconcurrentTAPs while[16] and[17]considerthe retrospectiveTAPsbetter than theconcurrentTAPs. [18]examined important languageunderstanding, usingthe stratagytodiscovertranslators' process of constructinghis/herdiscourse. Studies have

beencontinued to watchkeenlythe translators' performance online while utilizing technology[19]-[20].Electronic treatment of translationproduct has also been observed [21]-[22].

Alves [23] has suggested many other ways to collect data so that the relation between translation product and process may be found out.Hansen[24] and Jakobsen[15] have also approved this method.

IV. METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS

The undergraduate students of translation studies from a Pakistani university wereselectedforthe presentprotocols to do the in-depth study of the translation process.The subjects had achieved satisfatory level of translation proficiency, but they were facing various problems during training.

EXPERIMENTALMATERIALS:

Students and teachers, both assessed the texts to find out translation problems so that problem-solving techniques may be revealed. Undergraduate students were taken forthe translatingtaskofallthesetexts based onthink-aloud. One hour was devoted to assess eachtext.

EXPERIMENTALTOOLS

Recording was done through anaudio-recorder to record the each word of subjects eitherinEnglishor in Arabic. Cameras were used to record whole theprocess to keep record for detailed analysis. Keenattention was giventoall the paricipantsandobservationnotes were written downtoremoveambiguitieswiththesubjects.

Two types of post-translationquestionnaires were used;one questionniare was related to English-Arabictranslation;theotherwas related toArabic-Englishtranslation.The interviews had been helpfultoexaminethetranslatinghabitsofthe translators.Transcription was done after the recordingsoftheinterview.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

The subjects were given training regarding think-aloudprotocols. Then they were requestedtowrite down theirthoughtswhichcame in their mind during the translation process. Interviewswere conducted and thequestionnaires were distributed after the translation taskto getthoroughdiscussion ofthefindings.This experimental research categorized data into two categories. One category consisted of translationproducts while another category consisted of data collected through application ofTAPs.Translationproductswere assessedbyexperienced evaluators. Average score of the two evaluators was considered the final score. These recordswereused for analysis.

Words uttered by the subjects during think-aloud protocol process, were transcribed. Duration of the pauses and phases of the translation process were marked.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected through the twenty subjects proved that the think-aloud-method could not hamper the translation process of the subjects.Mostof the participants finished the translationt ask of eachtextwithinonehour.Allparticipantsremainedquietlessthan 18%ofthewholetranslating time,andtheaveragepercentage oftheirpauseis 8 .5%oftheirtranslatingtask(justforonetext).95%ofthep articipants'thoughtscouldberecordedand analyzedduringthisstudy.

At the end,the subjects produced a suitableproduct and completed thetranslationtasks witinthe limited time.Pausesconsumed 19%ofthetotaltranslatingtimeandeachpauseconsisted ofnineteenseconds approximately.Themajorityoftheparticipantsdid not feel that think-aloudmethod has anystrong impactontheir translation abilities ortranslationprocess during translation. Resultantly, it can be said that TAP(think-aloudprotocol)canbeused fordataanalysis.

CONCLUSION

MAJOR FINDINGS

Responses to the post-translation questionnaires by the undergraduate translation majors and analysis of think-aloud-protocols were the basis of the present study to reach its findings.

English-Arabic and Arabic-English translation processes had to pass through preparation, incubation, illumination and evaluation phases.Maximum strategies were applied by theparticipantsinincubationandillumination phases.In the preparation phase, the participants faced a littleproblemto understand the source text.But they didn't know to asess their translationproductsinthe evaluation phase.As far as usage of translation techniques were concerned, noticeable differences were found between the translation majors of sixth semester and fourth semester in incubation and evaluation phases.

The subjects of sixth semester showed better performance than the subjects of fourth semester regarding the testing materials of T1 and T2 but no significant difference could be identified in testing materials of T3 and T4. Though students of sixth semester performed better than the students of the fourth semester, but this difference is negligible and has no importance statistically.

All the subjects faced. performedbetter in E-A translation than in A-E translation.The strategy application increasedwhen the participants had achieved enoughbilingual proficiency,experience and training.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS

Psycholinguistic perspective and translation study have been presented together in this study to bring out the connection between both the fields.

Though thepresent study is insufficient to give us complete understanding of the translation process but we come to know about the processes which take place in the brain of translators during the translation process from Arabic into English or from English into Arabic. Area of research can be extended to other pairs like Urdu and Arabic, Persian and Arabic,Dutch and English, etc.

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