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Developing intercultural competence through pre-translation analysis of Ukrainian tourist guides into English

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Abstract

This paper explores the development of cultural translation skills and, ultimately, students' intercultural competence during the pre-translation analysis of Ukrainian travel guide texts. Though intercultural competence have been studied by a considerable number of authors it still needs clarification and modification due to new challenges emerging in the contemporary globalizing translation landscape that call for cultural mediators who could ensure effective communication between different ethnic groups and different cultural worldviews. The purpose of the study is to examine how the pre-translation analysis could foster cultural awareness by encouraging trainees to recognize diverse ways of communicating similar situations across cultures. We argue that pre-translation analysis plays a crucial role in shifting students' perceptual stance, prompting a cognitive transition into a different cultural perspective. This stage broadens their understanding of new communication patterns rather than merely focusing on handling culture-bound units. The approach adopted in the study is student-centered, encouraging learners to engage in discussions, express their opinions on cultural translation strategies, and reflect on their decision-making process. Findings suggest that pre-translation analysis serves as a foundational step in shaping cultural translation skills and, consequently, developing students' intercultural competence. The proposed instructional strategies aim to create a cognitive shift that facilitates risk-taking. Instead of providing definitive translations, instructors encourage group collaboration, allowing students to explore various possibilities and select the most appropriate solutions. The study highlights the effectiveness of discussion-based learning in empowering students to make translation decisions regarding cultural elements. Developing intercultural competence in translation trainees requires activities such as analyzing differences in the communication styles of promotional texts in the source and target cultures, adapting cultural references for better reception, and balancing the representation of both cultures in translation output. These activities engage students in strategic translation planning while considering the purpose of the travel guide and the expectations of the target audience. Furthermore, they help maintain cultural awareness and sensitivity, equipping trainees with the skills to navigate cultural challenges. In summary, this study underscores the importance of a student-centered approach in modern translation education. It advocates for authentic translation tasks, problem-solving activities, and collaborative learning methods to enhance students' intercultural competence and overall translation skills. A natural progression of this work is to analyze teaching strategies of cultivating trainees' intercultural competence that could be adopted during the other procedural stages of translation process, that is translation proper and post-translation editing.

Keywords: intercultural competence, pre-translation analysis, travel guide texts, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, culture-bound units

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Розвиток міжкультурної компетентності в процесі доперекладацького аналізу українських туристичних путівників англійською мовою

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Анотація

Статтю присвячено дослідженню стратегічних підходів до розвитку навичок культурологічного перекладу та міжкультурної компетентності студентів під час доперекладацького аналізу текстів українських туристичних путівників англійською мовою. Попри те що питання міжкультурної компетентності активно вивчають, воно все ще потребує уточнення та модифікації через нові виклики, що виникають у сучасному глобалізованому перекладацькому ландшафті та вимагають культурних посередників, які могли б забезпечити ефективну комунікацію між різними етнічними групами та різними культурними світоглядами. Мета дослідження – з'ясувати, як доперекладацький аналіз може сприяти підвищенню культурної обізнаності студентів, заохочувати їх розпізнавати різноманітні способи передачі схожих ситуацій у різних культурах. Ключовим завданням цього процедурного етапу є поглибити розуміння студентами нових комунікативних моделей. Підхід, застосований у дослідженні, покликаний заохотити їх брати участь у дискусіях та висловлювати свої думки щодо стратегій культурного перекладу. У статті запропоновано автентичні перекладацькі завдання, що передбачають групову співпрацю й прийняття нестандартних ризикованих рішень. Зокрема, визначено такі види доперекладацької діяльності, як аналіз відмінностей у стилях комунікації рекламних текстів у вихідній та цільовій культурах, адаптація культурних референцій для кращого сприйняття та збалансування представлення обох культур у кінцевому результаті перекладу. Ці вправи залучають студентів до стратегічного планування перекладу з урахуванням мети путівника та очікування цільової аудиторії. Крім того, вони допомагають підтримувати культурну обізнаність і чутливість, удосконалювати навички орієнтування у викликах міжкультурної комунікації. Результати дослідження засвідчують, що доперекладацький аналіз слугує дієвим інструментом розвитку навичок культурологічного перекладу, а отже й формування міжкультурної компетентності студентів. У висновках статті відзначено ефективність навчання, заснованого на дискусіях, у розширенні можливостей студентів приймати перекладацькі рішення щодо культурних елементів та важливість студентоцентрованого підходу в сучасній перекладацькій освіті.

Ключові слова: міжкультурна компетентність, доперекладацький аналіз, тексти путівників, культурна обізнаність, культурна чутливість, культурно зумовлені одиниці

Introduction. Developing intercultural competence in the university students who are engaged in professional translators' training is crucial for facilitating cultural cooperation and boosting intercultural dialogue. The culture turn in translation studies introduced the idea that translation, besides the linguistic aspect, also involves the cultural one and, thus positioning translation as intercultural communication. This perspective entails the need for an emphasis on building up cultural awareness and cultural knowledge in future translators' training. The challenges of globalization of economic, political, commercial, cultural, etc. fields throughout the world call for smooth and cooperative intercultural communication and, that consequently, necessitates new types of translators / interpreters who are not only fluent in the languages involved but also are sensitive of cultural differences. This challenge makes the translators' training teachers reconsider their habitual classroom language practices so that the intercultural or cultural aspect of translation could be paid the due attention to. In other words, the bilingual training should also include the bicultural considerations.

Though intercultural competence have been studied by a considerable number of authors it still needs clarification and modification due to new challenges emerging in the contemporary globalizing translation landscape that call for cultural mediators who could ensure effective communication between different ethnic groups and different cultural worldviews.

Specifically, cultivating intercultural competence can be the focus of different stages of translation process, such as pre-translation analysis, translation proper and post-translation editing.

This study explores the ways of building up cultural translation skills and, eventually, intercultural competence in students during the pre-translation analysis of Ukrainian travel guide (destination promotional / tourist) texts to be translated into English and suggests a set of activities to foster trainees' cultural awareness by acknowledging diverse ways of communicating about similar situations in different cultures. We hold the view that it is the pre-translation analysis stage where students are initially empowered to shift their perceptual stance, necessitating a mental transition into a different cultural perspective and to

broaden their understanding of new communication patterns rather than solely focusing on handling culture-bound units. The educational approach taken in the study is student-oriented when the students are encouraged to take part in a discussion, voice their opinions concerning cultural translation options and reflect on their decision-making.

Literature Review. Recently, a considerable literature has grown up around the theme of intercultural competence training. Scholars engaged in the cultural translation studies highlight the importance of building up the intercultural translation skills by explicit formulation of the principles, goals and outcomes of intercultural competence training. A researcher in this field, D. Katan defines the concept of intercultural competence as the ability to perceive and handle differences and suggests a number of classroom activities to guide the trainees through their learning (Katan, 2008).

According to D. Kelly, intercultural competence is an integral part of translators' training, along with other competences, such as communicative, textual, professional, instrumental, strategic competences and competence in a particular field of knowledge (Kelly, 2007, 161-162). Scholars believe that a translator's intercultural competence refers to their ability to bridge cultural differences during the process of translation. It encompasses a range of skills and knowledge beyond mere linguistic proficiency, including understanding the socio-cultural contexts of both the source and target languages, recognizing cultural nuances and connotation in the text, and adopting communication strategies to ensure accurate and culturally suitable translation (Yajima, Toyosaki, 2015; Tomozeiu et al., 2016). Ch. Schäffner holds the view that a key aspect of translation competence involves the capacity to interrelate and compare two cultures, facilitating a purposeful and contextually appropriate information exchange between individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds (Schäffner, 2004, 488-489).

Another integral component of intercultural competence, according to David Katan is the ability to continually acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge. This entails consistently updating and enriching translators' encyclopedic understanding of both cultures, allowing for a deeper comprehension and appreciation of their nuances

and intricacies (Katan, 2009). R. Cranmer, for one, claims that specifying the components of intercultural competence will offer the additional advantage of rendering this concept more explicit and, consequently, more amenable to instructions in educational setting (Cranmer, 2015, 157). The scholars, such as M. Maria, J. M. Gonzalez, D. Deardorff suggest splitting the intercultural competence education into building blocks, each of them consisting of a range of components. The authors emphasize that formulation of intended intercultural competence learning outcomes as an action plan for students to implement is crucial at the initial stage (Yarosh et al., 2017, 255). One of the researchers who advocate a holistic approach to cultural translation, M. Tymoczko believes that this method ensures that cultural differences are conveyed strategically or adjusted to enhance the translation's reception. She suggests the ways of how intercultural competence should be taught highlighting the importance of translators' empowerment that is when translators are aware of the implications of the various levels of choice to be exercised in translation (Tymoczko, 2014, 211-219).

Thus, the brief literature overview speaks to the importance of building up the cultural translation trainees' skills explicitly and systematically. Together, these studies provide significant insights into the strategies and methods of intercultural education of would-be translators..

The purpose of the study is to specify the role of intercultural competence and indicate the ways of how this skill set could be developed during the stage of pre-translation analysis while translating Ukrainian tourist texts into English.

Results and Discussion. Intercultural competence is crucial for translators of travel guides as these texts are not only about conveying words, but also about capturing the essence and cultural subtleties of a tourist site. The abundance of cultural references in these texts calls for observing the norms of cultural translation which deals with the practice of acceptance of other cultures and interacting with others who are «different» (Kroneman, 2019, 35). Thus, translators have to be aware of the similarities and differences of the tourist context of both the source and target cultures and be familiar with the techniques to be applied in cultural translation. Moreover, many tourist texts and travel guides

include promotional content aimed at attracting visitors. Translators need to understand the culturally specific features of marketing and advertising in both languages to effectively convey the intended promotional message. Therefore, it seems obvious that a well-developed intercultural competence could enable a travel guide translators to negotiate the cultural differences skillfully, ensuring that the travelers receive faithful, culturally sensitive, and engaging information about the destination they plan to visit.

The procedural model of translation process described by S. Cragie and A. Pattison comprises a series of sequential moves categorized into three main stages: pre-translation analysis, translation proper and post-translation analysis (editing) (Cragie, Pattison, 2018). The pre-translation analysis serves as the cornerstone of subsequent translation endeavors, offering a critical opportunity to mitigate potential translation mistakes and effectively address anticipated challenges. It is during this preparatory stage that translators equip themselves with requisite knowledge and resources essential for the successful execution of a translation project.

At the stage of pre-translation analysis students are encourage to voice their options, comment on their colleagues' observations, compare and contrast the source and target texts linguistic and cultural features and variables that could be relevant to the translation process. The pre-translation analysis discussion is designed in a manner to facilitate acquisition of in-depth linguistic and cultural knowledge. Specifically, during the pre-translation analysis students are encouraged to make a decision which cultural differences should be presented in the target text and which may be generalized or even suppressed. M. Tymoczko holds the view that arranging such a discussion «gives a basis for establishing a hierarchy of values that determines the elements to transport from the source text and the elements to construct in the target text» (Tymoczko, 2007, 250). The expecting learning outcome of the activities during the pre-translation analysis is to adopt suitable translation macro and micro-strategies with regard to text message and cultural setting (Cragie, Pattison, 2018).

Specifically, pre-translation analysis of travel guide texts plays a crucial role in developing intercultural competence in translation trainees.

Since these texts include information about historical landmarks, local cuisine, customs, traditions and social norms that are culture-bound pre-translation analysis allows trainees to identify potentially sensitive or ambiguous content and helps them make informed decisions during the translation process. Consequently, a meticulously conducted pre-translation analysis of a tourist text facilitates cultivating cultural awareness, language skills and sensitivity to effectively manage the stage of translation proper, ultimately enhancing students' intercultural competence as translation mediators.

In this study we follow the framework suggested by S. Cragie and A. Pattison, where they set out the criteria and features of the pre-translation analysis, such as subject matter, purpose, genre (text type), format, language (grammar and syntax), register, organization and logic, meaning, viewpoint, culture and context. They emphasize that «the analytical process is considered as a holistic assessment of the text's features, which are inter-dependent» (Cragie, Pattison, 2018, 8).

We believe that to manage successfully the procedure of pre-translation analysis students have to focus on a three-step process. First, they should develop the ability to recognize cultural differences and nuances through reflection and self-analysis. Second, they need to formulate strategies to effectively navigate these differences. Third, they must anticipate and manage the potential consequences of their translation choices. To succeed, students should cultivate professional awareness, curiosity about different cultures, and a professional mindset, enabling them to act as skilled mediators who can support their clients when needed. It seems obvious that building the intercultural competence in would-be translators is not limited with instilling respect to the cultural diversity or teaching cultural equivalence, it also involves developing students' awareness of communicating difference, that is how the situation could be described in the source and target cultures.

Data from several studies suggest that when translating into a foreign language (L2), trainees often encounter the challenge of language interference, wherein they may inadvertently impose the value system of the source language culture onto the target language culture. This bias can lead to the automatic transfer of internal

elements of the source culture's value system onto the target culture. It is essential to familiarize students with the concept of cultural grammar, which refers to the subconscious rules that influence how people think, feel, speak, and interact within a particular culture (Bassnett, 2014).

We believe that developing intercultural competence in the students should be aimed at opening up their minds to new patterns of communication rather than teaching them how to deal with culture-bound units only (Katan, 2009). Scholars lay the emphasis on the importance of training students to be able to recognize differences in communication style. One method to cultivate this skill is by encouraging trainees to analyze tourist texts prevalent in the target culture. This involves tasks such as identifying common attention-getting verbal patterns, comparing them with preferred communication patterns in the source texts, and highlighting disparities in the presentation of tourist sites between the source and target cultures.

Task 1. Indicate the communicating patterns in English tourist guides whose function is to gain attention and arouse interest:

1) *Hargeisa is a **rapidly evolving and vibrant city just waiting to be discovered**.* 2) *Venture here and **delve headfirst into** Greece's northern jewel.* 3) ***Discover** a city that **captivates and allures**.* 4) ***You'll never be short of entertainment** in Egypt's second largest city.* 5) *This **thriving capital boasts** superb food, excellent shopping, and striking colonial buildings.* 6) *If you're short on time or don't know what to see, **we've selected 3 must-see attractions that you simply cannot miss** whilst in the Czech capital.* 7) *Take a look at our complete guide of things to do or **explore** our London Attractions Map **to make sure you don't miss out on a single thing**.*

Discussion. Which pattern would you use in translation of a Ukrainian promotional text into English to engage potential visitors? What other language units could be used to align your translation with the style of English travel guides? Why are the cultural nuances of marketing and advertising in both the source and target languages to effectively convey the intended message crucial in translation?

The aim of these activities is to foster cultural awareness by acknowledging diverse ways of communicating about similar situations. Ultimately,

when translating, students should possess the ability to shift their perceptual stance, necessitating a mental transition into a different cultural worldview.

The next step in the pre-translation analysis involves consideration of the amount of culture-bound units in Ukrainian travel guides. These are proper and common names related to history,

religion, social life, cuisine, etc. Undoubtedly, when translating the texts with culture-bound elements the translator is faced with the problem of how to deliver the message to the multicultural audience in the most target recipient-oriented manner so that the described destination would look attractive to them and, thus worth visiting.

Task 2. Choose the translation equivalent of the culture-related units that could potentially be used in translation of a travel guide

Table 1. Approaches to translation of culture-bound units

Culture-bound unit	Direct translation (Literal translation / Loan Translation)	Generalization / neutralization	Descriptive translation
Городище	horodyshche	<i>ancient settlement, hillfort</i>	
Князівство	knyazivstvo	<i>principality, duchy, principedom</i>	
Отаман	otaman	<i>chieftain</i>	<i>a Cossack leader</i>
Галицько-Волинське князівство		<i>Galicia-Volhyn principality</i>	<i>a state that united the western and southern branches of East Slavs and consolidated their identity</i>
Order of the Vasilians	Order of the Vasilians	<i>The Congregation of St. Basil</i>	<i>a Roman Catholic clerical religious congregation of Pontifical Right for men</i>
Паляниця	palyanytsya		<i>a loaf of homemade bread</i>
Вареник	varenyk	<i>a dumpling</i>	
Квас	kvass		<i>a fermented cereal-based low-alcohol beverage</i>
Горілка	horilka	<i>a Ukrainian alcoholic beverage</i>	

Discussion. Which words may foreign readers be familiar with? Which equivalents should be favored in order to achieve cultural adaptation? Which options are aimed at an international readership? Which of them could be prioritized to promote the local culture?

Analyzing translation options in terms of cultural accuracy, sensitivity to cultural nuances, and appropriateness of cultural adaptations can offer insights into students' intercultural competence. This may involve comparing their equivalent choices to identify instances of cultural insensitivity and discussing the ways of facilitating communication with the target receptor.

Task 3. Read the source travel guide text and its possible translations.

The source text. Сьогодні це об'єкти історико-культурного заповідника «Старий Луцьк» та основні пам'ятки Луцька: замок Любарта, Петропавлівський костел, Хресто-воздвиженська церква, Троїцький собор, Покровська церква, монастир Брідіток, Лютеранська кірха та ін.

Translation option 1. Today, these are the objects of the Old Lutsk Historical and Cultural Reserve and the main sights of Lutsk: Lubart's Castle, St. Peter and Paul Church, Holy Cross

Church, Trinity Cathedral, Intercession Church, Brigitte Monastery, Lutheran Church, etc.

Translation option 2. *Discover the jewels of Lutsk's historical heritage by exploring Lubart's Castle, a majestic fortress with tales of the past echoing through its walls. Immerse yourself in the spiritual ambiance of St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Holy Cross Church, Trinity Cathedral, Intercession Church, Brigitte Monastery, and the Lutheran Church.*

Discussion. Indicate potential translation challenges in the source text. Comment on how they are solved in the translation options. What expressions in the translated texts make them engaging yet informative? Which option serves the style and function of the promotional text better?

The suggested instructional strategies can create a cognitive shift in students that fosters risk-taking. Rather than offering a definitive translation, the teacher encourages students to collaborate in groups, exploring various possibilities and selecting their preferred alternatives. Over time, the teacher's role should become more subtle, offering discreet guidance – such as suggesting they verify their choices using a translation tool. Encouraging discussions and dialogues during the pre-translation analysis seems to be an effective educational strategy to empower the trainees in decision-making on how to translate culture.

Developing intercultural competence in translation trainees during the pre-translation analysis includes a range of activities, such as considering cultural subtleties, identifying cultural differences, making decisions that shape how cultural elements are presented, adapting cultural references for better reception in the target culture. These activities are designed to engage the learners into strategic planning of their translation while taking into account the purpose of the travel guide and the expectations of the target receptor. Moreover, their goal is to maintain cultural sensitivity in the trainees that involves their ability to deal with cultural challenges. It is worth noting that shaping translators' intercultural competence, like modern translation education in general adopts a student-centered approach, emphasizing student

responsibility and aiming to enhance their skills through authentic translation tasks, problem-solving activities, and collaborative learning methods.

Summing up, the pre-translation analysis of Ukrainian travel guides focuses on the translator's choices in representing cultural aspects rather than aiming for perfect accuracy. This way, cultural differences can be presented in a thoughtful way or adapted to make the translation more effective. By being aware of their decisions, translators can shape cultural meanings to fit their purpose.

Conclusions. The current study examines educational approaches to shaping future translators' intercultural competence. The study demonstrates that this type of skill set can be cultivated during pre-translation analysis by encouraging the trainees to delve deeply into the cultural context embedded within the source text. This involves researching cultural nuances, social norms, and historical backgrounds relevant to the text's context. The study offers a set of classroom activities aimed at engaging students in comparative cultural studies that can broaden their understanding of cultural differences and similarities between the source and target languages, fostering sensitivity to cultural subtleties. Encouraging reflection on how cultural factors influence language use and interpretation can further enhance students' intercultural competence, enabling them to produce translations that resonate with the target audience on both linguistic and cultural levels. Achieving this proficiency necessitates students becoming as bicultural as possible and being able to empathize with both the original and target culture readers.

A natural progression of this work is to analyze teaching strategies of cultivating trainees' intercultural competence that could be adopted during the other procedural stages of translation process, that is translation proper and post-translation editing. Obviously, further research in this area needs to examine the effectiveness of a wider range of classroom activities with focus on instilling cultural awareness and encouraging self-reflexivity in student-translators that could foster shaping their intercultural competence.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest