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INTEGRATING TRANSLATION-BASED TEXT ANALYSIS STRATEGIES INTO THE METHODOLOGY OF TEACHING SLAVIC LANGUAGES SPEAKERS TO READ CHINESE TEXTS ALOUD

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SUMMARY

From the perspective of an interdisciplinary approach that combines foreign language teaching methodology and translation studies practices, the article addresses the problem of overcoming prosodic violations (unjustified pauses and repetitions) in the speech of Slavic-language learners when reading Chinese texts aloud. An attempt is made to prove that the root of the problem lies not only in phonetic interference but also in deep-seated differences in the mechanisms of meaning formation and grammatical structuring of information in Slavic and Chinese languages. This is supported by the analysis of typical errors and data from contrastive linguistics. As an innovative solution, the author proposes integrating strategies of translation-based text analysis into the teaching process: semantic segmentation, identification of cultural concepts, and syntactic restructuring. Based on the author's experience in translating culturally dense texts and methodological achievements, a system of exercises aimed at developing students' skills in holistic perception of Chinese utterances and their correct prosodic formatting is developed and described in detail. The practical significance of the study lies in specific recommendations for overcoming

the linguocultural barrier and reducing the cognitive load on students, which contributes to the development of reading speed aloud in Chinese.

Key words: methodology of teaching Chinese as a foreign language, reading aloud, prosodic interference, translation studies, translation strategies, text analysis, linguocultural barrier, Slavic-speaking students.

Introduction

Modern language pedagogy aims to develop not only linguistic but also communicative competence, a crucial component of which is the natural sound formatting of speech. For Slavic-speaking students learning Chinese, reading aloud remains one of the most challenging aspects, as it requires the simultaneous coordination of graphic, phonetic, lexical, and syntactic analysis under the influence of native language interference. Traditionally, the main focus has been on tone acquisition; however, some scholars and methodologies, such as Zhou Jinhuan and Zhuang Jiahua (周金焕, 庄佳华 2004), point to persistent and difficult-to-eliminate problems at the prosodic level, namely unjustified pausing and involuntary repetitions, which disrupt the fluency and semantic integrity of the utterance. Their assertion is confirmed by the practice of teaching Chinese in groups of Slavic-speaking students.

The problem of prosodic violations in a foreign language being studied is traditionally considered within the framework of phonetics teaching methodology. However, solving this problem requires going beyond these boundaries, as it has not only a phonetic but also a cognitive-linguistic nature. In our opinion, an effective tool for overcoming prosodic difficulties can be the use of translation-based text analysis strategies. Translation activity represents a deep process of text deconstruction and reconstruction, requiring, according to Jeremy Munday (Munday 2016), the conscious extraction of meaning units, identification of culturally marked units, and repackaging of syntactic structures. These same skills are critically important for the correct segmentation of Chinese sentences into syntagms when reading aloud.

Our purpose in this research is to develop and theoretically substantiate a methodological approach that integrates

translation strategies for working with text into the process of teaching Slavic-speaking learners to read Chinese texts aloud. To achieve this goal, firstly, typical prosodic errors of preparatory faculty students at Nanjing and Hunan Normal Universities with native Slavic languages (Ukrainian, Russian, Polish) were analyzed, and systematic linguistic causes of such errors were identified. Secondly, based on the analysis of translation practice (using texts of historical-cultural discourse as an example), key strategies for semantic and structural analysis applicable for didactic purposes were identified. Thirdly, a system of exercises adapting these strategies for developing skills in correct pausing and fluent reading was developed and described. Fourthly, a cycle of practical lessons demonstrating the implementation of this approach is proposed.

The methodological basis of the research includes the works of Shen Duannu (Duannu 2007) on contrastive linguistics, Wu Jiemin on Chinese prosody (吴洁敏 2001), Jeremy Munday on translation theory and practice (Munday 2016), as well as the author's personal experience in translating texts with cultural components from Chinese into a number of Slavic languages.

Results and discussions

1. Prosodic Violations in Reading Aloud: Symptoms and Root Causes

Fluency violations in Slavic-speaking students when reading Chinese texts are systematic and manifest with varying degrees of severity: from a superficial level, where the listener clearly understands the heard text and can guess the correct meaning, to cognitive breakdown and misunderstanding of the heard meaning. Analysis of audio recordings from HSK 3-4 level students allows us to identify the following types of disfluencies:

1) Unjustified pauses that break up a semantically unified Chinese sentence, for example: 我昨天跟朋友一起去咖啡馆 [wǒ zuó tiān gēn péng yǒu yī qǐ qù kā fēi guǎn] is read as 我昨天 || 跟朋友一起 || 去咖啡馆 [wǒ zuó tiān || gēn péng yǒu yī qǐ || qù kā fēi guǎn] This indicates an attempt to apply the Slavic model of syntagmatic segmentation, based on grammatical highlighting of syntagms, to Chinese speech, where syntagm boundaries are determined primarily by semantic integrity and rhythm.

2) Pauses within *chengyu* (成语), that is, segmenting stable expressions: idioms, lexicalized phrases (e.g., 画蛇 || 添足 [huà shé || tiān zú]). This error shows that the student perceives the text as a sequence of individual graphic signs, not as a hierarchy of ready-made meaning units.

3) Hesitation pauses and repetitions, i.e., hesitations and repetitions of syllables/words, especially at the beginning of a phrase or before a syllable with a complex tone. For example: 这、这本书... [zhè, zhè běn shū...]; 我、我昨天... [wǒ, wǒ zuó tiān...]. Hesitation is a direct consequence of high cognitive load and the resulting lack of confidence: the student, unable to process the meaning of the upcoming segment in time, pauses speech.

Overall, the observed errors are external symptoms of an internal cognitive conflict between the information processing strategy formed by the native language and the demands posed by a Chinese text.

2. The Linguocultural Barrier as the Basis of Interference

The causes of the studied prosodic interference lie in the fundamental differences between the Slavic and Chinese language systems.

Firstly, interference is caused by differences between the Chinese and Slavic prosodic systems. As noted by Charles Li and Sandra Thompson (Li, Thompson 1989), Chinese languages are syllable-tone languages, where rhythm in Chinese speech is created by the alternation of tonal contours, while Slavic languages are stress-accent languages, where the rhythm of Slavic speech is determined by the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables. Native speakers of Slavic languages unconsciously seek “stress” in a Chinese phrase, leading to erroneous accents and pauses.

Secondly, the cause of interference errors can be differences in syntactic organization. As noted by Zhao Yuanren (赵元任, 2011), Chinese syntax is more oriented towards the “topic-comment” principle and allows so-called “run-on sentences” (流水句 [liú shuǐ jù]), where the connection between parts is ensured by semantics and logic, not by a complex system of conjunctions, prepositions, and case forms as in complex sentences of Slavic languages. From the perspective of functional grammar, this, as

asserted by Charles Li and Sandra Thompson (Li, Thompson 1989), makes Chinese a typical “topic-prominent” language, where utterance organization is often built around a topic relevant to communication, not around a formal-grammatical subject. For a learner accustomed to the clear hierarchy of main and subordinate clauses in Slavic complex sentences, it is not easy to extract natural syntactic-semantic blocks in a Chinese “run-on sentence.”

Thirdly, interference can be caused by the graphic and lexical specificity of the native and Chinese languages. The absence of spaces between Chinese words and the high density of cultural concepts (e.g., «君子» [jūn zǐ]; «中庸» [zhōng yōng]) require the learner to constantly perform segmentation and cultural decoding in real-time, which significantly slows down the reading process and provokes breakdowns.

In summary, it can be argued that the problem of pauses and repetitions is not merely a phonetic difficulty but a consequence of the clash of different linguistic worldviews and cognitive text processing mechanisms. Consequently, it must be addressed at the level of forming new, Chinese-appropriate cognitive strategies for working with text.

3. Translation Strategies as a Metacognitive Tool for the Learner

The process of artistic or philological translation of a text rich in culturemes represents a model of deep analysis and reconstruction of meaning. In this process, we propose using a number of strategies whose adaptation should become a powerful didactic tool for the learner.

3.1. Strategy of Semantic Segmentation and Identification of Cultural Concepts

When translating a number of culturemes, for example, Chinese culturemes 君子 [jūnzǐ] and 中庸 [zhōng yōng], the translator faces a lack of direct equivalents. Their task is first to recognize this unit as a holistic cultural concept and then find a way to convey it (e.g., “transliteration + definition”: “junzi” – a highly moral, ideal personality in Confucianism). In the process of translating stable expressions like 不卑不亢 [bù bēi bú kàng], it is necessary to abandon literal translation (“not arrogant and not servile”) in favor of conveying the invariant of meaning (“maintaining dignity and restraint”) [see analysis in the author’s translation report].

The methodological interpretation of semantic segmentation and identification of cultural concepts allows one to see in the text not a sequence of words but a hierarchy of meaning blocks of different levels (cultural concept, idiom, stable phrase). The exercise “Semantic Archipelagos”: students mark all idioms (成语[chéng yǔ]), proper names, terms, and frequently used speech constructions (在...方面 [zài...fāng miàn]) in the text, then read the text, pausing only between the marked blocks, never inside them. This develops the skill of holistic perception and pronunciation of lexical units.

3.2. Strategy of Syntactic Restructuring and Logical Linking

Translating a Chinese "run-on" sentence into Slavic languages almost always requires its logical-syntactic transformation: combining simple predicative units into complex subordinate constructions using conjunctions, participles, and adverbial participles. To do this, the translator must conduct a deep semantic segmentation of the source text, identifying main and secondary actions, cause-and-effect relationships.

The methodological interpretation of the strategy of syntactic restructuring and logical linking aims to overcome the problem of “syntactically unjustified pauses”. “The exercise “From Flow to Hierarchy””: students are asked to translate a long Chinese sentence with several commas into their native Slavic language, consciously using complex syntactic constructions. For example, transform a chain of actions 我昨天跟朋友一起去了咖啡馆，喝了咖啡，聊了很久，然后回家 [wǒ zuó tiān gēn péng yǒu yī qǐ qù le kā fēi guǎn, hē le kā fēi, liáo le hěn jiǔ, rán hòu huí jiā] into a Russian sentence with adverbial phrases. The very process of searching for equivalents forces the learner to identify the logical relationships in the Chinese phrase. Then, based on this analysis, they return to the original and determine natural places for pauses, which often coincide with the boundaries of the identified meaning blocks.

3.3. Strategy of Working with Rhythm During Information Compression

When translating into Slavic languages, compression of a Chinese utterance is often required by using more capacious lexical units or grammatical forms. This requires the translator to have a sense of rhythm and style in both languages.

The methodological interpretation of the strategy of working with rhythm during information compression helps combat “fine” pausing. The exercise “Rhythmic Constructor”:

students work with rhythmically vivid segments (proverbs, slogans). First, they select a rhythmically proportionate equivalent in their native Slavic language for a Chinese phrase (for example, for the phrase 质量第一, 用户至上 [zhì liàng dì yī, yòng hù zhì shàng], one can use the equivalent in Ukrainian: «Перший – якість, вищий – клієнт»). Then, relying on the clear rhythm found in Ukrainian, they read the Chinese original, striving to give it a similar rhythmic organization. This develops a sense of phrasal stress and tempo in Chinese oral speech.

4. Practical Implementation: A System of Exercises Based on Translation Analysis

Based on the identified strategies, the following system of exercises is proposed, integrable into speech practice and home reading courses.

4.1. Pre-text Stage: Deconstruction of Meaning

Exercise “Translator-Analyst.” Before the first reading of the text aloud, students are given the task: 1) to highlight all cultural concepts (culturemes) and idioms in the text, give their brief interpretation in their native Slavic language (strategy 3.1); 2) to find the longest sentence and propose options for its logical segmentation in the manner of the target language, explaining the logic (strategy 3.2). This work shifts cognitive effort from the moment of vocalization to the stage of preparatory analysis, thereby relieving tension during reading.

4.2. Text Stage: Reading Based on Analysis

1) Exercise “Reading with Markers.” Based on the conducted analysis, students graphically mark in the text the places where a pause is mandatory (e.g., double slash (/)) and where it is unacceptable (bracketed together). Reading is done with reliance on this “pause map.”

2) Exercise “Synchronization with Oneself.” The learner records their first, “raw” reading of the text aloud on a voice recorder. Then, after performing the pre-text analysis and marking, they record a second version. Self-comparison of the two versions visually demonstrates progress and reinforces the correct pattern.

4.3. Post-text Stage: Creative Reconstruction

Exercise “Back Translation.” Students receive a translation into their native Slavic language of a short paragraph from the original Chinese text. Their task is to reconstruct the Chinese original, paying special attention to how Slavic complex sentences

“unfold” into Chinese sequential constructions, and how pauses should be placed accordingly. This exercise directly links grammatical transformations with prosody.

5. Example of a Teaching Module: “Cultural Concept in the Text: From Analysis to Expressive Reading”

The goal of the module is to learn to read a Chinese text containing cultural concepts fluently and expressively using translation analysis strategies.

Lesson 1: Analysis and Segmentation.

Material: A text about the Confucian virtue "仁" [rén] (humaneness/benevolence).

Procedure:

Translation task (in groups): How to convey the concept "仁" [rén] in the native Slavic language within one sentence? Discussion of options: (for Ukrainian) «гуманність», «любов до людини», «чеснота людяності»; (for Polish) „ludzkość”, „filantropia”, „snota człowieczeństwa”; (for Russian) «гуманность», «человеколюбие», «добродетель человечности».

Semantic Marking: In the text, all contexts where "仁" [rén] appears and is explained are highlighted, as well as accompanying stable expressions.

Initial Reading: Reading the text aloud with a focus on the fluent pronunciation of the highlighted blocks.

Lesson 2: Syntactic Restructuring.

Material: Continuation of the text with reasoning about the manifestations of "仁" [rén].

Procedure:

“Translation Laboratory”: The teacher provides an example of a long Chinese sentence from the text and shows how it could be logically transformed into a Slavic complex sentence.

Identifying Logical Accents: Based on this transformation, students jointly determine which parts of the Chinese sentence carry the main and which carry additional information. The place of logical transition is marked as a point of mandatory pause.

Intonation Practice: Practicing reading with a rising tone on key information and a falling tone on secondary information.

Lesson 3: Presentation and Assessment.

Task: Prepare an expressive reading of a new short text on a similar topic, using all mastered strategies (preliminary analysis, marking, working with logic).

Assessment Criteria: Not only phonetic accuracy but also meaningfulness of pausing, integrity of pronouncing meaning blocks, overall fluency and expressiveness.

Conclusions

Integrating translation-based text analysis strategies into the methodology of teaching reading aloud offers a qualitatively new approach to solving the old problem of prosodic interference. By shifting the focus from mechanical pronunciation practice to conscious work with the semantic and syntactic structure of the text, we attack the root cause of errors – an inadequate cognitive strategy for processing Chinese speech.

The proposed exercises and module serve several important functions: they develop metalinguistic awareness, form the skill of preliminary semantic analysis, reduce anxiety due to having a clear action plan, and ultimately contribute to the automation of correct pausing. The learner ceases to be a passive “decoder” of characters, becoming an active interpreter of the text, which is the ultimate goal of foreign language teaching.

This approach aligns with modern trends in language pedagogy, focused on the formation of professional competencies, and can be adapted for teaching translation students or foreign sinologists with native Slavic languages. Further research could be directed towards a quantitative assessment of the effectiveness of this method using controlled experiments, as well as the development of digital simulators modeling the process of translation analysis to practice the skill of semantic segmentation.

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ІНТЕГРАЦІЯ ПЕРЕКЛАДАЦЬКИХ СТРАТЕГІЙ АНАЛІЗУ ТЕКСТУ В МЕТОДИКУ НАВЧАННЯ СЛОВ'ЯНОМОВНИХ СТУДЕНТІВ ЧИТАННЮ КИТАЙСЬКИХ ТЕКСТІВ УГОЛОС

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АНОТАЦІЯ

У статті з позицій міждисциплінарного підходу, що поєднує методику викладання іноземних мов та перекладознавчі практики, розглянуто проблему подолання просодичних порушень (необґрунтованих пауз та повторів) у мовленні слов'яномовних учнів під час читання китайських текстів уголос. Зроблено спробу довести, що коріння проблеми полягає не лише у фонетичній інтерференції, а й у глибоких відмінностях механізмів смислоутворення і граматичного оформлення інформації у слов'янських і китайській мовах. Це підтверджено аналізом типових помилок і даними зіставної лінгвістики. Як інноваційне рішення автор пропонує інтеграцію в навчальний процес стратегій перекладацького аналізу тексту: смислової сегментації, ідентифікації культурних концептів і синтаксичної реструктуризації. На ґрунті авторського досвіду перекладу культурно насиченого тексту та досягнень методики розроблено й детально описано систему вправ, спрямованих на формування у студентів навичок цілісного сприйняття китайського висловлювання та його правильного просодичного оформлення. Практична значимість дослідження полягає

у конкретних рекомендаціях щодо подолання лінгвокультурного бар'єру та зниження когнітивного навантаження учнів, що сприяє розвитку швидкості читання уголос по-китайськи.

Ключові слова: методика викладання китайської мови як іноземної, читання вголос, просодична інтерференція, перекладознавство, стратегії перекладу, аналіз тексту, лінгвокультурний бар'єр, слов'яномовні студенти.

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