

An Investigation on the Effect of Teaching Interpretation Skills in Tourism Field

Marziyeh Khalilizadeh Ganjalikhani¹

Anahita Amirshojai²

Abstract

This study aims at investigating the Effect of Teaching Interpretation Skills in Tourism Field in order to 1) find to what extent holding Interpretation course will influence general interpretation skills of translation students 2) To find to what extent holding Specialized Interpretation Course in Tourism field will influence translation students' performance. To achieve these objectives three major steps were taken 1) Holding a course for teaching general skills of interpretation using PRACTICING INTERPRETATION by Masoud Shrififar and Sima Ferdowsi 2) Holding a course for introducing the concepts and terminology of tourism field using ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL TOURISM by Peter Strutt 3) Holding a specialized interpretation course in tourism field. A pre-test is taken from all translation students to evaluate their knowledge and operation method at the beginning and one post-test at the end of holding the interpretation course and one at the end of the last course. The Terms of participating at this research is passing at least 30 basic units by translation students. The findings of the study indicated that there is %28 growth in the performance of the participants before the course and after the end of the course.

Key words: Interpretation, Specialized Tourism Concepts, Tourism, Translation

1. Introduction

¹ Lecturer, Higher Education Complex of Bam, Kerman (Marziyehkhalilizadeh@bam.ac.ir)

² Lecturer, Higher Education Complex of Bam, Kerman (amirshojai@bam.ac.ir)

According to the value of international communications and development of tourism which is combined with language fields, specially translation, and the necessity of information exchange and participating in international meetings, nowadays presence of interpretation skills at all circles is one of the basic needs of any language student. Through this course, the participants will increase their chances for signing or continuing education in Iran or abroad in specialized interpretation in tourism field by learning professional interpreting techniques in tourism area. Taking this course and gaining theoretical and practical experience, students can increase their vocabulary in tourism field and other related sections, also they will be able to get interpretation jobs in international seminars or conferences. The aims of this course are helping the students learn necessary abilities to meet their personal needs or other specialists of this field and introducing them with necessary skills in order to represent a precise yet fluent interpretation. Completing this course, in addition to the listening skills, speaking skills will also be improved however main focus is on the common oral English.

1.1. What is Interpretation?

There are several definitions for interpretation which are offered by the famous figures of this field. For example Gile (2004) defines it as non-written re-expression of a non-written source text. Its usefulness stems from the fact that a speaker's meaning is best expressed in his or her native tongue but is best understood in the languages of the listeners.

1.2. Role of Translation and Interpretation in Tourism

A growing number of developed and less developed countries are entering the international tourism market as one of the biggest and the most dynamic industries in the world, therefore, there is a growing demand for well qualified people in all aspects which have been under the influence of the industry. One aspect which has received a great deal of influence is language. To have a successful tourism industry, tourist communicative purposes should be fulfilled and this can be achieved through a good verbal communication. The common parties of communication process in tourism are tourism professionals, tourists and local population

“tourees” (Dann, 2012). The scholars from different countries (M.Gotti, 2006; M.G.Nigro, 2006; R.Mocini, 2005 to name but some) have carefully investigated and proved that the language of tourism can indeed be considered as the specialized discourse. Few researchers have addressed the issue of tourism terminology (N.Ivanova, O.Maslennikova, 2013). A number of studies have been published on the question of translating tourism terms (G. Denisova, A. Drozd, R. Romanovich, 2011). Peter Newmark (1993), Alan Duff (1981), Mary Snell-Hornby (1999) make rather negative comments regarding the quality of translation in the tourism sector of economy. Patrizia Pierini (2007) investigates the quality of translation of online tourist texts and makes some suggestions concerning approaches to translating tourist texts. However there have been few studies on interpretation and its role has been neglected. While the interpreter usually has a very good understanding of the language and culture of both parties, he/she can play a very important role of approaching cultures with mutual respect.

2. Methodology

In the present study, the researcher has used two books for the training sections. The first book PRACTICING INTERPRETATION by Masoud Shrififar and Sima Ferdowsi for teaching the interpretation skills in the first training course and the second book ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL TOURISM by Peter Strutt for teaching tourism terms, expressions and special vocabularies. The former book has been chosen because it is widely used to teach interpretation skills in credible universities of Iran such as Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman. The latter one has been chosen by consulting the tourism teachers of Higher Complex of Bam since they are experts in this field and consider this book to be a very practical book in the field of teaching tourism language which contains the newest concepts and vocabularies. The participants of this study consisted of 20 BA students of English Translation of Higher Education Complex of Bam.

This study contains seven stages:

Stage 1- In this stage the researcher conducted a pre-test for the 20 participants. The researcher asked the participants to write down the translation of what they are listening to. The listening part contained 2 major fields of tourism: Heritage and Hotel Branding.

Stage 2- In this stage the researcher held the Interpretation Training Course within which she taught the interpretation types and skills using the PRACTICING INTERPRETATION book. She also used INTERPRETATION: TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES book by James Nolan. The subjects of discussions in this section were Memory, 2- Preparation/Anticipating the speaker, 3- Concentrated listening, 4- Speaking, 5- Complex Syntax/Compression, 6- Word order/cluster, 7- General Adverbial clauses, 8- Untranslatability, 9- Figures of Speech, 10- Argumentation, 11- Diction/Register, 12- Formal style, 13- A policy address , 14- Quotations, 15- Latinisms, 16- Numbers, 17- Note-taking. It should be mentioned that the specialized tourism concepts were left untaught in this section in order to compare the result of stage 3 test with stage 7.

Stage 3- In this stage the researcher conducted a post-test for the 20 participants and she used the very same material she had used in the pre-test for evaluating students' performance

Stage 4- In this stage the researcher held the Tourism Language Training Course within which she taught the tourism concepts, terms and special vocabularies using the ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL TOURISM book.

Stage 5- In this stage the researcher held the Specialized Interpretation of Tourism Language Course within which she used the tourism listening texts and materials which were in the ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL TOURISM book.

Stage 6- In this stage the researcher conducted a post-test for the 20 participants and she used the very same material she had used in the pre-test for an accurate evaluation.

Stage 7- In this stage the researcher compared and contrasted the result of the pre-test and the two post-tests of the 20 participants.

3. Data Analysis and Discussion

Since the focus of this study is on Interpretation, it is worth mentioning that interpretation cannot be learned from a book alone, but only through a combination of study and steady

practice. This study tries to focus on reinforcing students' interpretation skill while they are working on one particular subject which is tourism here. The results of this study have been presented in both qualitative and quantitative style. Data have been analyzed and graded by the researcher and charts and tables are used to show the results.

This study includes 4 major sections. In the first section the researcher will provide the original texts used in pre-test and the two post-tests. It should be mentioned that the pre-test and the two post-tests are exactly the same in order to have an accurate analysis. The test contains several texts in tourism field within which there are 40 specialized vocabularies and concepts. In the second section the researcher will analyze the pre-test translations in order to evaluate students' performance before the beginning of any course. She will grade the students' overall performance in translation from 1-10 then she will detect the translation of the tourism specialized tourism concepts and counts the number of translated ones in both translations. In the third section the researcher will analyze the first post-test translations in order to evaluate students' performance after holding the first course which was teaching general skills of interpretation and she will grade the students' overall performance in translation from 1-10 then she will detect the translation of the specialized tourism concepts and counts the number of translated ones in both translations. In the fourth section again she will follow the same procedure she used in the previous sections. She will grade students and will detect the number of translated tourism concepts in both translations

3.1. SECTION ONE

3.1.1. Sample Text

People now book their vacations online and personalize their itineraries. This means that, although the High Street travel agent hasn't disappear yet, the retail agent is disappearing fast. There is a trend towards more sustainable tourism and governments in a lot of emerging countries are attracting inward investment.

3.1.2. Pre-test Translation:

مردم این روزها برای تعطیلات خود به صورت آنلاین هتل رزرو میکنند. یعنی اژانسهای مسافرتی بزرگ هنوز به صورت کلی هستند ولی اژانسهای کوچک به سرعت ناپدید میشوند. در حال حاضر روندی در کشورهای کوچک به سمت توریسم ثابت وجود دارد.

3.1.3. The first post-test translation:

امروزه مردم تمام کارهای تعطیلات خود را به صورت اینترنتی انجام میدهند. این بدان معناست که توریسم در سطح کلی پابرجاست ولی نماینده های واسطه و کوچک به سرعت در حال ناپدید شدن می باشند. در حال حاضر روندی در دولت کشورهای در حال توسعه به سمت سرمایه گذاری توریسم ثابت وجود دارد.

3.1.4. The second post-test translation:

امروزه مردم تمام کارهای مربوط به برنامه سفر خود را به صورت اینترنتی انجام میدهند. به این معنا که گردشگری در سطح کلان هنوز پابرجاست ولی نماینده های خرده پا به سرعت از بین میروند. در حال حاضر گرایش به سمت توریسم پایدار وجود دارد و دولتها در کشورهای در حال توسعه سرمایه گذاری داخلی انجام میدهند.

3.2. SECTION TWO

3.2.1. The Results of Data Analysis for Pre-test

Table 1. Students' Total Performance in the Pre-test

Student	Students grade	Percentage
1	5.5	%55
2	3	%30
3	2.7	%27
4	4.1	%41
5	5.2	%52
6	3.9	%39
7	4.5	%45
8	4.7	%47
9	5.4	%54
10	6	%60
11	4.8	%48
12	5.4	%54
13	4.8	%48
14	5.2	%52
15	3	%30
16	3.3	%33
17	3.5	%35
18	4	%40
19	4	%40
20	5	%50
The average of the total performance	4/4	%44

In table 1 the overall performance of all 20 students who participated in this project is presented. The researcher analyzed all the 20 translations of the pre-test and graded the students' performance from 1-10 based on the correctness of the translated texts. As the table shows the average grade is 4.4 and the average percentage is %44.

Table 2. Students' Performance in Translating Tourism Concepts in the Pre-test

Student	Total Number of translated concepts	Percentage
1	14	%35
2	8	%20
3	7	%17.5
4	10	%25
5	14	%35
6	12	%30
7	11	%27.5
8	9	%22.5
9	15	%37.5
10	19	%47.5
11	10	%25
12	10	%25
13	10	%25
14	13	%32.5
15	7	%17.5
16	7	%17.5
17	8	%20
18	11	%27.5
19	12	%30
20	13	%32.5
The average grade of the total performance	11	%27.5

In table 2 the overall performance of all 20 students in Translating Tourism Concepts which were 40 items is presented. The researcher analyzed all the 20 translations of the pre-test and detected the number of translated items for each students separately. As the table shows the average number of translated concepts is 11 out of 40 and the average percentage is %27.

3.3. SECTION THREE:

3.3.1. The Results of Data Analysis for the first Post-test

Table 3. Students' Total Performance in the 1st Post-test

Student	Students grade	Percentage
1	7	%70
2	5.8	%58
3	4.8	%48
4	6.4	%64
5	6.7	%67
6	5.8	%58
7	5.9	%59
8	4	%40
9	6	%60
10	7	%70
11	6.5	%65
12	7	%70
13	4.9	%49
14	7.5	%75
15	5.9	%59
16	5.6	%56
17	4.8	%48
18	5.5	%55
19	7.5	%75
20	5.5	%55
The average grade of the total performance	6	%60

In table 3 the overall performance of all 20 students participated in this project is presented. The researcher analyzed all the 20 translations of the first post-test and graded the students' performance from 1-10 based on the correctness of the translated texts. As the table shows the average grade is 6 and the average percentage is %60.

Table 6. Students' Performance in Translating Tourism Concepts in the 1st Post-test

Student	Total Number of translated concepts	Percentage
1	17	%42.5
2	10	%25
3	9	%22.5
4	12	%30
5	14	%35
6	13	%32.5
7	15	%37.5
8	9	%22.5
9	13	%32.5
10	21	%52.5
11	11	%27.5
12	12	%30
13	10	%25
14	14	%35
15	8	%20
16	10	%25
17	10	%25
18	11	%27.5
19	14	%35
20	15	%37.5
The average of the total performance	12.4	%31

In table 6 the overall performance of all 20 students in Translating Tourism Concepts which were 40 items is presented. The researcher analyzed all the 20 translations of the first post-test and detected the number of translated items for each students separately. As the table shows the average number of translated concepts is 12.4 out of 40 and the average percentage is %31.

3.4. SECTION FOUR

3.4.1. The Results of Data Analysis for the second Post-test

Table 4. Students' Total Performance in the 2nd Post-test

Student	Students grade	Percentage
1	9	%90
2	7	%70
3	7	%70
4	8	%80
5	6	%60
6	6.5	%65
7	6.3	%63
8	5.5	%55
9	7.5	%75
10	8.9	%89
11	7.7	%77
12	8	%80
13	6.6	%66
14	8.7	%87
15	6.8	%68
16	6.9	%69
17	5.9	%59
18	6.8	%68
19	8	%80
20	7	%70
The average grade of the total performance	7.2	%72

In table 4 the overall performance of all 20 students participated in this project is presented. The researcher analyzed all the 20 translations of the second post-test and graded the students' performance from 1-10 based on the correctness of the translated texts. As the table shows the average grade is 7.2 and the average percentage is %72.

Table 5. Students' Performance in Translating Tourism Concepts in the 2nd post-test

Student	Total Number of translated concepts	Percentage
1	22	%55
2	14	%35
3	14	%35
4	16	%40
5	21	%52,5
6	13	%32.5
7	17	%42.5
8	15	%37.5
9	15	%37.5
10	25	%62.5
11	15	%37.5
12	15	%37.5
13	15	%37.5
14	15	%37.5
15	11	%27.5
16	13	%32.5
17	15	%37.5
18	15	%37.5
19	18	%45
20	16	%40
The average of the total performance	16	%40

In table 5 the overall performance of all 20 students in Translating Tourism Concepts which were 40 items is presented. The researcher analyzed all the 20 translations of the second post-test and detected the number of translated items for each students separately. As the table shows the average number of translated concepts is 16 out of 40 and the average percentage is %40.

3.4.2. Comparing Students' Performance in the Three Tests

Table 6. Students' Total Performance in all Tests

Test	Average grade	Percentage
Pre-test	4.4	%44
1st post-test	6	%60
2nd post test	7.2	%72

In table 6 the overall performance of students in the three tests is shown. The students' performance in the pre-test is 44%, in the first post-test is %60 and in the second post-test is %72. As the table shows there is an increase in students' performance. In the first post-test the students performed %16 better in comparison with the pre-test and in the second post-test the students performed %28 better in comparison with the pre-test. There is also %12 increase by comparing the students' performance in first post-test and second post-test.

Table 7. Students' Total Performance in Translating Tourism Concepts in all Tests

Test	Average Number of translated words	Percentage
Pre-test	11	%27.5
1st post-test	12.4	%31
2nd post test	16	%40

In table 7 the overall performance of students in translating tourism concepts in the three tests is shown. The students' performance in the pre-test is %27.5 which means translating the average of 11 words out of 40. The students' performance in the first post-test is %31 which means translating the average of 12.4 words out of 40 and in the second post-test the students' performance is 40 percent which means translating the average of 16 words out of 40. As the table shows there is an increase in students' performance. In the first post-test there is a slight increase in students' performance in comparison with the pre-test but in the second post-test the students performed %12.5 better in comparison with the pre-test. There is also %9 increase by comparing the students' performance in first post-test and second post-test.

4. Conclusions

As it was previously mentioned interpretation is of great importance nowadays. To have skillful and reliable interpreters to ease the act of communication, interpreters should possess both the communication general skills and special knowledge in one field. According to this research interpretation is a far more difficult task than translation and an interpreter needs to improve so many skills simultaneously and use them consciously and properly just on the right time and in the right place. The Analysis of the data in this study entailed conclusions as follows:

1-The findings of this study entail this fact that most participants performing interpretation task are generalist, in other words they have general knowledge of English language and as far as the texts included general concepts the participants they had an acceptable performance. This study was carried out to show that to what extent teaching both interpretation skills and specialized vocabulary will influence participants' performance in the act of interpretation.

2-The results of the pre-test and the two post-tests revealed that there is %28 growth in the performance of the participants before the course and after the end of the course. However it should be mentioned that the participants' performance after the end of the first course, teaching interpretation skills, was %14 better in comparison with the pre-test results, which means by teaching interpretation skills only regardless of teaching specialized vocabularies, participants could enhance their interpretation performance. At end of the third course, specialized interpretation course in tourism field, there was %12 increase in comparison with the first post-test, this growth shows that learning specialized vocabulary has been also effective in the participants' performance. The proof to this claim is shown in table 14. This table shows, there is only %3.5 improvement in participants' performance in interpreting specialized course after the first course which did not contain teaching specialized vocabularies but there is %12.5 increase after the end of the third course which included specialized vocabularies. By Comparing table 13 and 14 one can say that the improvement of participants' performance after the first post-test is in other areas of interpretation such as interpreting numbers, names, long sentence, etc. rather

than interpreting specialized words. Therefore it can be concluded that teaching interpretation skills is not enough for training interpreters in one special field and acquiring specialized expressions is also necessary for enhancing interpreter's performance.

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