

Double strategies for reproducing multimodal puns in interlinguistic translation: An experimental research

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Abstract. This research is dedicated to exposing the specifics of translating multimodal puns based on the retrospective experiment. A *multimodal pun* is defined as a creolized/ polycoded formation substantiated by a specific type of ambiguity consisting of two inhomogeneous semiotic modes. Verbal-visual puns functioning as separate texts served as the research material. Each multimodal pun results from intersemiotic translation when the signs of one semiotic system are transformed into the signs of another. For the vast majority of multimodal puns, verbal signs are interpreted into pictures, but the opposite cannot be excluded either. The role of the visual component is twofold. It can be creative when the picture is part of the ambiguity mechanism, or it can be amplifying when the picture accentuates the verbal wordplay, not participating directly in the creation of ambiguity. Hence, our first hypothesis is that multimodal puns with an amplifying visual component are a lesser challenge for translators than those with a creative one due to the absence of the necessity to coordinate verbal and visual modes in the target text. The research aims to identify the strategies of interlinguistic translation of multimodal puns and the factors that determine them, particularly the impact of the visual mode on the translator's decision-making. Hence, our second hypothesis is that multimodal puns require double strategies that would allow to correlate the reproduction of the elements of two different semiotic systems. The analysis of the subjects' translations, as well as their reports received in the course of the delayed retrospective experiment, confirmed both hypotheses.

Keywords: *interlinguistic translation, intersemiotic translation, multimodal pun, retrospective experiment, translation strategy, verbal mode, visual mode.*

Ребрій Олександр, Фролова Ірина, Ребрій Інна. Подвійні стратегії відтворення мультимодальних каламбурів в інтерлінгвальному перекладі: експериментальне дослідження.

Анотація. Дослідження присвячено визначенню особливостей перекладу мультимодальних каламбурів на основі ретроспективного експерименту. Мультимодальний каламбур визначено як креолізовану/полікодову формацію, що визначається неоднозначністю сприйняття та складається з двох негомогенних семіотичних модусів. Матеріалом дослідження виступили вербально-візуальні каламбури, що функціонують як самостійні тексти. Кожний мультимодальний каламбур є результатом інтерсеміотичного перекладу, в перебігу якого знаки однієї семіотичної системи трансформовано в знаки іншої семіотичної системи. Для переважної

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більшості мультимодальних каламбурів вербальні знаки перетворюються у візуальні, хоча й рух у протилежному напрямку не можна виключати. Візуальний компонент може виконувати дві різні функції. Першою є креативна, за якої зображення безпосередньо залучено до створення ефекту неоднозначності; другою є підсилююча, за якої картинка є ілюстрацією, що підсилює ефект вербальної мовної гри. Звідси наша перша гіпотеза, згідно з якою мультимодальні каламбури з підсилюючим візуальним модусом становлять меншу складність для інтерлінгвального перекладу порівняно з каламбурами з креативним візуальним модусом через відсутність необхідності узгодження двох модусів в цільовому тексті. Метою дослідження є визначення стратегій інтерлінгвального перекладу, так само як і чинників, які їх визначають і, зокрема, впливу візуального модуля на прийняття перекладацьких рішень. Звідси наша друга гіпотеза стосовно того, що інтерлінгвальний переклад мультимодальних каламбурів вимагає подвійних стратегій, які б дозволили гармонізувати відтворення елементів, що належать двом різним семіотичним системам. Вивчення перекладів учасників експерименту та їхніх звітів, отриманих в перебігу відкладеного ретроспективного експерименту, підтвердили обидві гіпотези.

Ключові слова: вербальний модус, візуальний модус, інтерлінгвальний переклад, інтерсеміотичний переклад, мультимодальний каламбур, перекладацька стратегія, ретроспективний експеримент.

Introduction

The concept of multimodality defined as “the transmission (and reception) of meaning through the composite deployment of different semiotic resources, or modes” (Palumbo, 2009, p. 77) has been gaining much popularity in Translation Studies ever since Jakobson (1959) in his pivotal work “On linguistic aspects of translation” outlined three kinds of a verbal sign translation: “We distinguish three ways of interpreting a verbal sign: it may be translated into other signs of the same language, into another language, or into another, nonverbal system of symbols” (p. 233). He labeled the third variety as “intersemiotic” translation or “transmutation” that is “an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems” (ibid.).

Initially, intersemiotic translation was limited to interactions between verbal and non-verbal signs, but later on it was admitted that the act of translation may involve signs of two (or more) non-verbal systems. Eco, who is probably one of the most distinguished proponents of such an approach, proceeded from the fact that “semiotics was dominated by a dangerous verbocentric dogmatism whereby the dignity of language was only conferred on systems ruled by a double articulation” (Eco, 1976, p. 228). However, if we accept the claim that “non-verbal signs have structure and they are carriers of meaning, just like language, then it seems that there is no reason for us not to acknowledge that they can be translated just like verbal signs” (Kourdis, 2020, p. 80). Semiotician Kristeva made her contribution through the notion of *transposition* that denotes “the signifying process’ ability to pass from one sign system to another, to exchange and permute them” (1984, p. 60). Transposition “implies the abandonment of a former sign system, the passage to a second via an instinctual intermediary common to the two systems, and the articulation of the new system with its new representability” (ibid.)

As a result, the notion of translation has broadened impressively to include “any process or product thereof, in which a text is replaced by another text, reflecting or inspired by, the original entity” (Gottlieb, 2018, p. 50). If we apply the postmodern interpretation of a text in the spirit of Derrida to this definition, it will easily cover Jakobsonian transmutation as well. Following this logic, we must also acknowledge that any multimodal formation coined of verbal and non-verbal components is in fact a result of intersemiotic translation of one into the other. Our attention in this article is drawn to the collaboration between verbal and visual modes in a stylistic device known as a multimodal pun, which serves as an *object* of our research. Consequently, we set the *aim* not to just identify the strategies of reproducing multimodal puns in interlinguistic translation per se but rather to single out and analyze the factors of impact on the translators’ decisions as to implementing particular strategies. In order to achieve this aim we designed and carried out the psycholinguistic retrospective experiment that was adapted to our own tasks and conditions.

Method

Materials and Methods

Multimodal Pun as a Result of Intersemiotic Translation

In the Anglophone philological tradition, pun has turned into an umbrella term incorporating all the imaginable cases of wordplay, which in its turn is associated with language games as conceived by Wittgenstein (1986) and Huizinga (1980). Take, for instance, the definition of a pun by Delabastita (1996) as “the general name for the various textual phenomena in which structural features of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a communicatively significant confrontation of two (or more) linguistic structures with more or less similar forms and more or less different meanings” (p. 128). At the same time, it would be fair to say that some Anglophone researchers navigate towards a more classical and much narrower definition of a pun as a stylistic device. See, for instance, Leech (1969) who describes pun as “a foregrounding lexical ambiguity, which may have its origin in homonymy or polysemy” (p. 209) but at the same time emphasizes that pun also has some other “related forms of word-play” (ibid., p. 210).

In his thorough review, Catalan scholar Llado (2002) comes to the conclusion that “the *pun* is just one form [of wordplay – *O.R.*, *I.F.*, *I.R.*] among many that could be considered and belongs to a particular national tradition” (p. 47). His “underlying argument is clear, at any rate – there is more to wordplay than just the pun” (Marco, 2010, p. 266). Following this stance, we similarly conclude that Leech’s definition of a pun is closer to the Ukrainian linguistic tradition where it is characterized as a stylistic device that is built upon the use of polysemy, homonymy or paronymy and is employed on the different levels of a language system; it is implemented with the help of both existing and newly-coined (nonce) linguistic units (Literaturoznavchyi Slovnyk–

Dovidnyk, 2007, p. 322; Zahnitko, 2020, p. 277). It is this definition of a pun that was used for selecting linguistic material for our research.

Multimodal pun is the one that employs the signs of two different sign systems for creating its humorous effect, in our case – linguistic and visual (pictorial). Thus, multimodal pun, in terms of Kharkiv linguists Yeyger and Yukht is in fact a polycoded text, that is a “combination of a natural linguistic code with a code of some other semiotic system (image, music, etc.)” (Zavadska, 2016, p. 164). The view of a multimodal pun not just as a stylistic device but as a text is principal for this research where we use as a *material* multimodal puns that are not incorporated into larger textual formations but function on their own as an online collection of jokes (Funny Science Jokes: laughs for Scientists). Such formations are also dubbed “creolized texts” because they are composed of (at least) two inhomogeneous parts whose correlation itself provides for attracting a potential recipient’s attention to both the speaker and information as well as making them interested in this information.

The role of an image in a creolized/polycoded text is seldom primary but always very important cognition-wise since delivering information simultaneously through two channels – verbal and visual – makes it easier for the reader to perceive it. Thus, a pictorial mode always brings in some additional information that can alter the perception of a verbal mode by the recipient. Similarly, Ketola (2018) describes word–image interaction as “the process by which words and images affect and/or change the way in which the other is perceived in the cognitive system of the reader (translator) of an illustrated text” (p. 32).

An important question is: which comes first – words or images? The answer to this question (that is not always to be found) determines albeit hypothetically the “source” and the “target” modes of a multimodal pun. It is believed that in the vast majority of formations the author proceeds from words to images and thus the visual mode is the result of intersemiotic translation. According to Pereira (2008), “the text can be regarded as the primary source because it is usually the first work to be created, the pictures being derived from it. It is true that in some cases the opposite can happen” (p. 105). She also points out that pictorial elements in a multimodal text “can especially be seen as translations because the methodologies employed by illustrators are in the majority of cases the same as those adopted by translators to translate a text; and as products, illustrations play a very significant part in the reception of the literary work, so that the visual creation of the drawings is very similar to the verbal creation of the text during translation” (ibid., p. 105–106).

Either way, the reciprocation between words and images within a text creates a synergy described by O’Halloren as “intersemiosis” that “takes place within and across Mini-Genres, Items and Components and on the expression stratum with regards to the materialization of the text” (2008, p. 455) and “gives rise to genuinely new meaning” (Lemke, 2002, p. 303) since “presented together, the two meanings of two modes may enhance and complement each other, offering specificity and precision beyond the capacity of either one alone” (ibid.).

Multimodal Pun Reproduction in Interlinguistic Translation

Speaking specifically about a multimodal pun, we determined that the function of its pictorial mode in regard to the verbal one is twofold. Firstly, it can be *creative*, i.e. when a visual component is directly involved in producing the pun's ambiguous effect by provoking in the reader's mind the second (clashing) meaning in addition to the first one provided by the verbal component. Secondly, it can be *amplifying*, i.e. when a visual component serves as a mere illustration to words by making their humorous effect more salient (Rebrii et al., 2022). Hence, our first hypothesis presupposes that interlinguistic translation of multimodal puns with a creative visual mode presents more difficulties due to the necessity to coordinate two sources of meaning in a target text as compared to the translation of puns with an amplifying visual mode.

The absence of ready-made equivalents for multimodal puns as ad hoc formations refers them to the category of translation difficulties in the sense found in the definition by Rebrii (2012): "Translation difficulties are linguistic/discourse formations of different levels that set up barriers on the way of interlinguistic communication as a result of objective differences in the structures and functioning of source and target languages (interlinguistic asymmetry) as well as of subjective perception of these differences by the translator who is expected to exert considerable creative effort for their elimination" (p. 106). Popular in Ukraine, the notion of "translation difficulties" correlates with that of translation problems "seen as items, features or aspects of a given ST [source text – *authors*] that pose some kind of difficulty for the translator or require the translator to provide TL [target language – *authors*] solutions that are not retrieved through automatic or routine processes" (Palumbo, 2009, p. 128–129).

As translation difficulties/problems, multimodal puns require specific strategies for their interlinguistic reproduction. Strategy that has been a popular term in Translation Studies since its inception is understood here as a potentially conscious mental plan of the translator's actions involving different types of coordinated operations. Strategies for translating puns as well as other varieties of wordplay have been described by a plethora of scholars most of whom follow (directly or indirectly) Delabastita's list including the following: "PUN → PUN; PUN → NON-PUN; PUN → RELATED RHETORICAL DEVICE; PUN → ZERO; PUN ST = PUN TT; NON-PUN → PUN; ZERO → PUN; EDITORIAL TECHNIQUES" (1996, p. 134).

On the one hand, this set of strategies may be considered to some extent universal as they can be applied (with some modifications) to basically all types of translation difficulties/problems. On the other hand, combining verbal elements with visual ones in a multimodal pun will inevitably require another set of strategies taking heed of the specifics of this sophisticated semiotic ensemble. Hence, our second hypothesis presupposes the existence of specific strategies for interlinguistic reproduction of multimodal puns as intersemiotic translations. For verifying these two hypotheses we designed and conducted a retrospective experiment.

Design of the Experiment

Translation Studies have “borrowed” two main experimental methods – introspection and retrospection – from Psychology and successfully adapted them for their own purposes mainly connected with researching translation as a process. For quite a long period of time, retrospection that means providing the translator’s comments after completing the act of translation was considered inferior to introspection since the subjects “easily forget what they have done, tend to distort their observations... and also infer previously acquired knowledge or explanations” (Hansen, 2005, p. 518). According to the pioneers in introspective and retrospective methodology, Ericsson and Simon (1980), the most efficient is immediate retrospection, when the report is given by the subject immediately after the task is completed because “in a matter of a few seconds, the contents of STM (short-term memory – *authors*) can be destroyed or made inaccessible by requiring subjects” (p. 238).

Nevertheless, due to technical specifications, the so called “delayed” retrospection is resorted to more and more often: “Delayed retrospection can take place at any time after the task, but the time interval between the completion of the task and the initiation of retrospection is important, because the risk of forgetting, distorting and incomplete data increases proportionally to the length of the interval between the task and the retrospective report” (Hansen, 2005, p. 518). According to Dimitrova and Tiselius (2014), “a disadvantage of retrospection is that it generally does not allow complete recall of the information” (p. 179), while Rambæk (2004), on the contrary, believes that through carefully selected questions and topics retrospection successfully channelizes information and “gives greater insight if one wishes to study the translator’s global strategies or the cross-cultural aspects of translation” (p. 17).

The experiment devised for verifying the hypotheses put forward in the theoretical section of this paper was held in two stages. The communication between the subjects and their supervisor was established via the electronic mail. At the first stage, the subjects were tasked to translate multimodal puns. Immediately on completing the task, they sent the results to the supervisor and received the task for the second stage in the letter, specifying their further actions. Namely they were asked to provide their comments on the following aspects of their work: mechanism(s) of pun interpretation and the role of a visual mode in it; factors of opting for particular reproduction strategies for both modes; encountered difficulties and ways of their resolving.

The subjects of the experiment were four graduate students undergoing Master’s program in interpreting and translation at the School of Foreign Languages at V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University. Comparing different categories of translation experiments’ subjects, Kussmaul and Tirkkonen-Condit (1995) come to the conclusion that all of them (professionals, non-professionals and semi-professionals) have their advantages and disadvantages. Thus, the decision in favor of a particular category should depend on both the experiment’s conditions and tasks. Consequently, we opted for semi-professionals who are believed to take their decisions in a more conscious fashion proceeding from their mostly theoretical background. At the same time, their professional competence is not fully formed yet and many processes are not

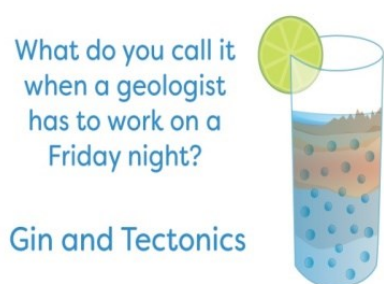
automatized, they lack standard ways of overcoming different types of translation difficulties/problems. And what is more important for the aim of our research, semi-professionals' approach is strategy-oriented, plus after making a plan they "appear to follow it systematically through the task" (Bernardini, 2001, p. 248). Due to the space restrictions, we will analyze in this article the translation of two multimodal puns out of five. The remaining three will be included in the upcoming and more comprehensive research publication.

Results

The first multimodal pun (see Fig. 1) offered for the subjects' translation includes an amplifying visual component.

Figure 1

Multimodal Pun with an Amplifying Visual Component



The humorous effect is produced due to the paronymic resemblance of the words "tonic" and "tectonics". Tectonics is defined as "a branch of geology concerned with the structure of the crust of a planet" (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary and Thesaurus) and the contents of the glass are drawn to resemble simultaneously a bubbly cocktail (together with a slice of lime!) and folds of the Earth's crust. At the same time, the picture is not involved with producing ambiguity and can be easily removed without affecting the pun's interpretation and consequent interlinguistic translation.

Subject 1 pursued strategies when the verbal component is translated literally (direct translation) and the visual component remains intact (zero translation):

«Як це називається, коли геолог працює у п'ятницю вночі? – **Джин тектонік**».

The realization of this strategy becomes possible because of the amplifying character of the visual component and international character of both involved lexemes that have transliterated Ukrainian equivalents: *gin* – «ДЖИН» and *tectonics* – «ТЕКТОНІК» (short from «ТЕКТОНІКА»). In their report, Subject 1 gives a comprehensive account of both their motivations and techniques: "While translating this pun I had no difficulties because the wordplay is built upon the name of the drink called 'Gin and Tonic' and the name of a geological concept 'plate tectonics'. It is obvious that the recipients should

know that a geologist is a person who works with the Earth's interior and might have heard about the tectonic plates. We usually translate English 'Gin and Tonic' as 'джин-тонік' with omission of conjunction 'and' and I followed this trend by simply adding prefix 'тек-'."

Subject 2 pursued the same strategies:

«Як можна описати ситуацію, коли геологам потрібно працювати у п'ятницю ввечері?
Джин з тектоніком».

Their report is sparser but quite illuminating as well: "My task as a translator was made easier by the fact that the pair of words that lie at the foundation of the pun 'tonic – tectonic' are transliterated into Ukrainian 'тонік – тектонік'. The role of the illustration does not seem important or such that would help interpret the wordplay though it could be otherwise for those ignorant of the cocktail drinks."

Subject 3 pursued quite a different strategy for the verbal mode. Though leaving the visual component without any changes, they transformed the verbal component by partially changing the original situation and omitting both 'gin' and 'tectonics'. Instead, they made an attempt to create another pun by putting together the noun 'occasion' (to have a drink) and the verb 'to dig' (out) in an ad hoc combination 'to dig out an occasion to have a drink':

«Кожну п'ятницю геолог відкопує новий раніше нікому невідомий привід випити».

Unfortunately, their Report is very brief and does not provide for a full picture of the translator's decision-making: "Here, I decided to use a substitution in order to make my translation relevant and preserve the humorous effect of the source text."

We think that despite the changes there is no obvious clash between the new verbal component and the old pictorial one, which is an important factor to avoid during the translation of a multimodal pun.

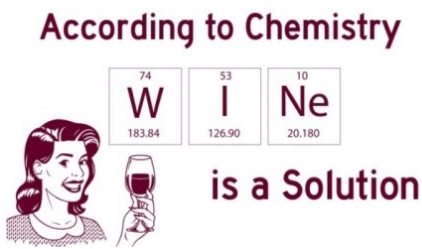
Finally, Subject 4's strategies are similar to those of Subject 1 and Subject 2:

«Як це називається, коли геолог змушений працювати у вечір п'ятниці? – **Джин з тектоніком**».

Their considerations are likewise: "During the interpretation of this pun, the image had no impact upon the meaning because I was familiar with the drink called 'gin-tonic' whose association was used in the pun. Besides, I was familiar with the word 'tectonics' that became part of my background knowledge for this interpretation. For translating this pun, I made a choice in favor of a calque in order to preserve a humorous effect because the target language has necessary equivalent units. I guess, in this case I successfully managed to overcome the interlinguistic difficulties and to render the pun."

The second multimodal pun (see Fig. 2) offered for the subjects' translation includes a creative visual component:

Figure 2
Multimodal Pun with a Creative Visual Component



In fact, here we deal with two cases of wordplay. The first involves the icons of three chemical elements ('W' for 'Tungsten', 'I' for 'Iodine' and 'Ne' for 'Neon'), that make the word 'wine' when put together. The second pun is based around the two meanings of the word 'solution': (1) an action or process of solving a problem; (2) an act or process by which a solid, liquid, or gaseous substance is homogeneously mixed with a liquid or sometimes a gas or solid; a homogeneous mixture formed by this process (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary and Thesaurus). The picture of a woman with a glass of (presumably) wine is of an amplifying character.

Subject 1 opted for the strategies of "double translation" – of both visual and verbal components. For the chemical icons, the transformation of substitution was applied, which resulted in a combination of the Latin alphabet letters that make the transliterated acronym 'vyno' from the Ukrainian «вино» ('wine'). The second pun is unfortunately lost. In their Report, Subject 1 once again gives a thorough account of their actions: "While translating this pun, I encountered several difficulties. Firstly, I could not understand how to translate the word 'wine' and to preserve the picture that is essential here because chemical elements are depicted in it. Then it occurred to me that if I wanted to preserve the picture I needed to find the chemical elements that would make up the Ukrainian 'vyno'. Secondly, it was important to render the wordplay with 'solution'. <...> While in English this word has two meanings, the same notions have different nominations in Ukrainian. If I translate 'solution' as 'liquid' it will be inconsistent with the picture of a joyful woman with a glass of wine. Thus, I decided the best decision will be to use the equivalent 'decision' and add the word 'liquid' but cross it out" (see Fig. 3):

Figure 3
Translation by Subject 1 of a Multimodal Pun with a Creative Visual Component



Subject 2 opted for a different set of strategies according to which the verbal component was substituted for a different wordplay (built on the Ukrainian paronyms «цикорій» – ‘chicory’ and «цирконій» – ‘zirconium’):

«Хіміки, звісно, на боці Цирконія, а разом із ним і цикорію, але це не вихід, тому ранок вони починають, як і нормальні люди, з кави» (“Chemists are obviously on the side of zirconium and together with it of chicory, that’s why they begin their morning like all normal people with coffee”).

In their Report, this decision is explained in the following way: “Zirconium is the 40th element of the Periodic Table. The pun is lost because «цирконій» (‘zirconium’) and «цикорій» (‘chicory’) only seem identical. I must admit that I was trying to find some way to unite chemical elements with drinks. Thus, chicory appeared as a coffee substitute.”

As a result of applying this strategy for the verbal component, the visual one was lost (the strategy of omission).

Subject 3 pursued yet another set of strategies in which the visual component remained intact (“zero translation”) while the verbal component was rendered with the help of the transformation of substitution: the original ‘solution’ was changed for the Ukrainian «істина», which led to the reproduction of a famous Latin expression ‘In vino veritas’ (see Fig. 4):

Figure 4

Translation by Subject 3 of a Multimodal Pun with a Creative Visual Component

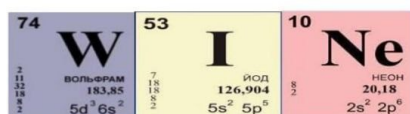
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Subject 3’s considerations are expressed in the following way: “In this case, I resorted to the substitution of the original expression in order to preserve the multimodal pun. Immediately, I had an association with the Latin expression ‘In vino veritas’ and I decided to play with it. It was not especially difficult. And I think that the rest of the picture goes well with it because these words may come from the woman with a glass of wine.”

The strategies applied by Subject 4 are those of leaving the visual component of the multimodal pun intact (“zero translation”) and translating literally the verbal one. This combination leads to preserving the first wordplay (“wine”) but losing the second one (“solution”) (see Fig. 5):

Figure 5
Translation by Subject 4 of a Multimodal Pun with a Creative Visual component

За правилами хімії,



– найкраще рішення.

According to their Report, this decision of Subject 4 is based on the assumption that “wine” will be understood by the Ukrainian recipients even in its original form: “During the interpretation of this pun, I faced big difficulties with translating the icons of the chemical elements making up the word ‘wine’. Maybe I lacked theoretical knowledge for fulfilling this task. As a result, I took a decision to leave the icons unchanged provided that the word ‘wine’ is familiar to most of the recipients even in English. But obviously this decision leads to the loss of the second instant of a wordplay. The picture of a smiling woman with a glass is also very important because it helps you understand the pun even if you don’t know the English ‘wine’. I believe that I managed to reproduce the multimodal pun but only partially.”

Discussion

In terms of psycholinguistics, the analysis of the subjects’ translations as well as their reports demonstrates some traits of behavior characteristic of semi-professionals’ decision-making in the situations of dealing with translation difficulties/problems. First of all, all the subjects explicitly expressed their willingness to find the best possible solutions for the multimodal puns offered for their consideration, which may be accounted for by their student-oriented approach: though the participation in the experiment was voluntary and anonymous, the “student–professor” factor cannot be absolutely ignored. The experiment did not involve a lot of participants and was not aimed at obtaining statistically-relevant information, but we share Gile’s (2004) opinion that for large-scale experiments it is hard to expect this kind of subjects’ response: “Some students do not know what to report in spite of instructions received, and some ignore the reporting requirement. Fortunately, there are always enough students who do understand and do comply, so that the third stage can take place, and other students can see examples of successful reporting which they then use for guidance” (2004).

Another important fact confirmed by our research is that channelizing the subjects’ recollections through a series of carefully selected and formulated prompts allows to receive some interesting feedback even in the conditions of delayed retrospection, which is of special value when the researcher is interested in some

particular aspects of the translator's behavior rather than in a total account of their actions.

The experiment also validated the tendency to appeal to the subjects' theoretical background at the different stages of problem-solving. We can find these theoretical traces in the names of translation strategies/methods/techniques (transliteration, omission, substitution, calque, etc.), in appreciating the role of background knowledge as a factor of interpretation, in mentioning the cognitive mechanisms involved for the sake of coining the necessary equivalents (association), finally, in understanding the linguistic essence of a pun and its function. We believe that by doing this the subjects try to substantiate their decisions even if they themselves are not always satisfied with them. One can easily find in the reports some elements of frustration typical for such complicated tasks whose solution would require more creativity than practical skills or theoretical knowledge ("I could not understand how to translate the word", "maybe I lacked theoretical knowledge for fulfilling this task", "I believe that I managed to reproduce the multimodal pun but only partially").

Summarizing, we would like to point out the positive role of translation experiments not just as a source of valuable information concerning different aspects of translation as a process and cognitive activity but also as a powerful mechanism of training professional translators and/or interpreters, who can get a better view of their own decision-making and problem-solving through reflective analysis of prior actions.

Conclusions

Setting off the current research project, we formulated two hypotheses for verifying which a psycholinguistic retrospective translation experiment was devised and conducted. The first hypothesis stipulating that multimodal puns with a creative visual component pose a more formidable challenge for interlinguistic translation is confirmed by the subjects all of whom successfully coped with the first multimodal pun and noted that while reproducing it they did not need to juxtapose information presented by visual and verbal modes separately. At the same time, the reproduction of the second multimodal pun was not so successful despite a greater variety of strategies pursued by the subjects.

The experiment also confirmed our second hypothesis about the necessity of mapping out separate strategies for interlinguistic translation of multimodal puns as compared to one-mode verbal ones. In accordance with the obtained results, these strategies are of a double nature: on the one hand, each mode requires its own sub-strategy, but on the other hand, these two sub-strategies must be coordinated for the sake of providing the best possible result for preserving the source formation's ambiguity and humorous effect.

Disclosure Statement

The authors reported no potential conflicts of interest.

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