Project-Based Learning (PBL) in Huflit's Transinterpretation Theory Classroom

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ABSTRACT
Transinterpretation theory has been taught in HUFLIT since 2007 as a major and introductive subject for all learners of the major. The problems lie on the test, not on the classroom methodology, nor teaching materials, or in-charge lecturers. The study is partially withdrawn from the writer's hands-on experience with the hope to produce an analysis on the procedures and techniques of teaching and testing Transinterpretation theory in our institution. The paper mainly investigates some issues circling the popular test tasks, based on the data from the informal interviews, the questionnaires conducted on 210 students, and finds out an urgent need to change the test form, and also provides some recommendations that test designers should further study the test takers' competence through the requisite tests for the reliable data before working out with new Transinterpreting theory tests.

Key Words: Intertranslation theory, project-based learning (PBL), closer-to-the-norm tests.

1. INTRODUCTION

Transinterpretation theory has long been a very challenging subject not only for the learners of the tertiary level, partly from its varied, complicated relative languages; partly from its ambiguous frontiers in the analysis approach, but also for the lecturers-in-charge.

The subject requirements consist of a comprehensive understanding of the marvelous comprising languages, the modern analysis approaches, and the competence of each individual student in practice.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In the Faculty of Foreign Languages in Ho Chi Minh University of Foreign Languages and Information Technology (HUFLIT), the debates circling what level Transinterpretation theory should be applied in have been a hard-to-cope-with puzzle for all teachers and the management. If it is taught for seniors, it is difficult for them to employ the learned theories in the Translation and Interpretation subjects designed for lower levels. If it is provided for freshmen, they are not qualified enough to obtain the subject's detailed analyses.

Besides, most theoretical subjects in Vietnam (VN) request learners to deal with answering questions, which squeeze them into rote learning, a traditional approach that has been controversially proved ineffective in the modern teaching methodology. The followings are examples of traditional tests and PBL tests.

1.2.1 Traditional test

Frequently, in order to test if the learners comprehensively understand and can be able to practice what they have learned, a traditional test requires students to answer some theoretical and practical questions as follows:

    a.   Write the Culture definition.

   b.   Underline Cultural words in the text.
In this sense, we can say that the learner is thinking about an end result that is more dream-like than realistic - they are already imagining themselves proficient enough in the language to reach the life goals they are aiming for. This is a good sign: having a real-life, meaningful goal to speak a language plays a key role in learner motivation and their desire and willingness to keep on studying. However, to make this happen and avoid frustration, an autonomous learner should be able to identify specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely goals.

   c.   Write the Functional Equivalence definition.
   d.   Underline Functional words in the text.

One of France's biggest export industries is facing a devastating blow after an unusually severe frost earlier this month damaged vineyards across the country, heaping pain on winemakers already reeling from the pandemic and US tariffs. The frost has affected 80% of vineyards in France's primary wine-growing areas, according to the European Committee of Wine Companies. "This is expected to cause a yield loss ranging from 25% to up to 50% in some regions," the trade body told CNN Business on Wednesday. Winemakers tried to keep air temperatures up by lighting candles and braziers in their vineyards, but in many cases it was not enough to protect their budding vines.

1.3 Hypothesis

An improvement in Transinterpretation theory test tasks in HUFLIT can help produce a better practice, hands-on analysis experience, and the washback effect on learning. Furthermore, it can provide a better accurate assessment based on test takers' real competence of text classification.

1.4 Research questions

The research question in this minor study centers on the Transinterpretation theory text analysis according to the learning outcome requirements of the curriculum:
   - Can the Transinterpretation theory test in HUFLIT be changed to provide better results in practical text analysis and learning motivation?

1.5 Significance of the study

The currently applied Transinterpretation theory test in HUFLIT after replacing the old test type has shown better testing measures and techniques on the testees' memory, working methodology, and practicality in terms of authenticity. It also meets the proposed learning outcomes in improving learning motivation and students' real competence in the translation-based text analysis.

1.6 The scope and delimitations of the study

The findings can be widely applied in other institutions consisting of those that still used other forms of tests. However, my proposal's apparent setbacks are its cost, time, and effort consummation in the status of lacking adequate professionals.
This pilot study with a relatively sufficient number of participants is just worked out within HUFLIT's Faculty of Foreign Languages; therefore, its conclusions may not be true when it is repeated on a larger scale or in other institutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining Project-Based Multimedia Learning

"Project-based multimedia learning is a method of teaching in which students acquire new knowledge and skills in the course of designing, planning, and producing a *multimedia product*."
Your students' multimedia products will be technology-based presentations, such as a computerized slide show, a Web site, or a video. These presentations will include evidence that your

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Proceedings: *International Invention, Innovative & Creative (InIIC) Conference, Series 2/2021*
eISBN: 978-967-18412-7-3 *(Publication Date: 9 November 2021)*   MNNF Publisher

students have mastered key concepts and processes you need to teach and will be a source of great pride for them and for you.

Dimensions of Project-Based Multimedia Learning

We can also find the key dimensions "Project-based multimedia learning has seven key dimensions: core curriculum, real-world connection, extended time frame, student decision making, collaboration, assessment, and multimedia… Here is a brief explanation of each."

"Core curriculum. At the foundation of any unit of this type is a clear set of learning goals drawn from whatever curriculum or set of standards is in use. We use the term *core* to emphasize that project-based multimedia learning should address the basic knowledge and skills all students are expected to acquire, and should not simply be an enrichment or extra-credit activity for a special few. Often, these projects lend themselves well to multidisciplinary or cross-curricular approaches."

"Real-world connection. Like the Velveteen Rabbit in Margery Williams's famous story, project-based multimedia learning strives to be real. It seeks to connect students' work in school with the wider world in which students live. You may design this feature into a project by means of the content chosen, the types of activities, the types of products, or in other ways. What is critical is that the students—not only the teacher—perceive what is *real* about the project."

Being a supporter of the functional approach, Nord (2009) states that translation teaching should be similar to the real practice of translation. Clavijo (2013) also quotes Nord (2009) "She proposes the "functionalist didactics" that includes criteria to select texts to be translated in class, how to classify translation problems and procedures, how to monitor students' progress, and how to evaluate translations."

They consolidate their argument with some important items "Tests that measure multiple characteristics are usually divided into distinct components. Manuals for such tests typically report a separate internal consistency reliability coefficient for each component in addition to one for the whole test. Test manuals and reviews report several kinds of internal consistency reliability estimates. Each type of estimate is appropriate under certain circumstances. The test manual should explain why a particular estimate is reported" (Saad et al., 1999: 24).

Saad et al. (1999) also explain Test-retest reliability, which "… indicates the repeatability of test scores with the passage of time. This estimate also reflects the stability of the characteristic or construct being measured by the test. Some constructs are more stable than others. For example, an individual's reading ability is more stable over a particular period of time than that individual's anxiety level. Therefore, you would expect a higher test-retest reliability coefficient on a reading test than you would on a test that measures anxiety "(Saad et al., 1999: 24).

Krajka (2016) states "With language awareness already established as a key concept in language learner and teacher education, ways need to be found to foster language awareness of prospective teachers. It goes without saying that without teacher autonomy and control over the foreign language it is impossible to effectively develop learner autonomy. ... finding, evaluating, selecting, compiling into a corpus, and analysing and extracting examples into a quiz authoring tool (Krajka 2016: 1).

3. METHODS OF STUDY AND SOURCES OF DATA

3.1 Research Purpose

Getting the controversy of the knowledge final test for the aforementioned subject, we decided to conduct a survey with some experiments to see if the new form of task-test (PBL) brings about the expected outcomes.

3.2 Population of the Study

All students of 5 Transinterpretation classes were requested to answer 11 questions after taking their mini-test, which has the similar design to the traditional test, to check for its backwash effect.

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The number of respondents is 210, academically satisfactory for reliable research and it represents an important part of learners. All sophomores sent their answers for the survey 1 week after their mini-test. This can be seen as a pilot study in HUFLIT for further researches.

3.3 Instrument Used

The humble scope of the article, the only tool in the study is data collection from attitude questionnaires distributed in the first semester. The questionnaires were sent to participants via email to assure prompt reception and all responses were returned before the deadline for the convenience of data collection.

3.4 Statistical Treatment

Statistical data is treated with SPSS to show the percentage of agreement/disagreement and the individual solutions/proposals/personal views from the participants.

4.0 PRESENTATION, DATA ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Presentation and Data analysis

The survey circles around practicality and student learning motivation of the Transinterpretation theory test for English-majored juniors in the Faculty of Foreign Languages, HUFLIT. The test is designed with 3 main components:
1. A full-page English text within the research scope.
2. A translation version, which is worked out by the student himself.
3. A full text analysis comprising the important items in the course: Cultural equivalence, Non-cultural equivalence, Funtional equivalence, Semantic equivalence, Grammatical equivalence, Types of metaphors.

The first two questions focus on gender and learning experience. The respondents were divided into 2 groups: 142 females and 54 males. Most of them were juniors and 21. To answer the research question, we set up an open-ended question survey surrounding the better results of the new test form and learning motivation.
1. Q1 is if Translation-Interpretation theories are hard to remember. Only 12 students (6.1%) said no. 55 (27.8%) showed no opinions. 129 respondents (65.2%) agreed.
2. Q2 focuses on if these theories can be easily applied into practice.Similar to Q1, only 14 students (6.6%) said they could. 24 (12.1%) showed no opinions. Up to 158 respondents (65.2%) disagreed that these theories can be easily applied into practice.
3. Q3 asks the respondents if students should follow the traditional test form. 28 participants (14.1%) said yes for they were familiar to it. 58 (29.3%) had no ideas. 110 (55.6%) Did not agreed to follow the traditional test form.
4. Q4 asks the respondents if students should follow the new test form. Just 13 (6.5) said no. 77 (38.9%) showed no opinions. 106 (53.6%) agreed to follow.
5. Q5 centers on if the new test style really brings about more advandtages than the traditional test form without affecting the content. 18 respondents (9.1%) disageed. 58 (29.3%) had no opinions. Up to 120 respondents (60.6) confirmed it.
6. Q6 requests the students to confirm if the traditional test style contains more disadvandtages. 18 (9.1%) did not confirm it. 42 (21.2%) showed no ideas. 134 (68.8%) did confirm it.
7. Q7 asks the students if the new test form save their time comparing to the traditional one. 28 (14.1%) disagreed. 82 (41.4%) did not know. 85 (42.9%) said yes.
8. Q8 asks the students if the new test form save their preparation efforts comparing to the traditional one. Only 6 participants said no. 123 (62.1%) had no ideas. 57 (33.8%) accepted that new test form save their preparation efforts comparing to the traditional one.

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9. Q9 concentrates on the student learning motivation in working with the new test form. This is a crucial question for it directly related to the research question. 12 (6.1) said no. 85 (42.9%) had no ideas.99 (50%) agreed that working with the new test form gives them learning motivation.
10. Q10 circles around students' confidence in applying their knowledge into practice with the new test form. Only 5 students (2.5%) said no. 46 (23.2%) showed no ideas. 146 (73.2%) confirmed that they were confident in applying their knowledge into practice with the new test form.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Transinterpretation theory tests in HUFLIT, though have been studied and scientifically adjusted over the past years, still need some minor modifications depending on the practical situations such as the best test style, which can satisfy most of the testing requirements in HUFLIT's context.

Some changes in the previous assessment approaches have brought modest results and require the better one to meet the testing requirements such as avoiding rote-learning, real analysis from students, more creativity, improving learning motivation.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 For test designers

The proposal is that the test designers should further study the test takers' competence through the requisite tests for the reliable data before working out with new Transinterpreting theory tests, especially a comparison between the selected traditional test and the new one, to learn more about the new teaching and testing approaches, which have been considered a big problem for all stake holders.

5.2.2 For students

Students should do their best to practice not only in the classrooms, but also outside whenever and wherever they have a chance. They should spend more time on the authentic texts that they can freely select on net to work out their own analyses and to motivate both learning and entertainment.

5.2.3 For researchers

This is just a pilot study with a relatively sufficient number of respondents, reliable for a research. However, there is a need for further research on whether or not the new test form of "text analysis" can be used to replace the traditional one, especially when its proportion is higher than the other classroom practices, and on how to get closer to the international test criteria.

5.2.4 For instructors

Teaching Transinterpretation theory requires lecturers to put much effort on the exercises, which have not been available in HUFLIT, to help their learners get the best learning outcomes set up by the course outline. Various and attractive teaching techniques should be studied and applied to gain better motivation.

5.3 Limitations

Besides the above-mentioned limitations e, the study may be seen as a rather distinctive case study in HUFLIT, not popularly to be applied in other English classrooms. It is also difficult to persuade busy lecturers to make an update if they are unwilling to have a change, especially in testing, a controversial section in Vietnam's modern universities.

The findings in the pilot study may not gain the same results when being applied to a different population, different teachers, or in different institutions.

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