Students' Perception on the effects of Transcreation Skill Development Program

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of Transcreation Skill development program and determine the opinions of students towards the process. The study was designed in mixed research model which combines both qualitative and quantitative data. In the quantitative aspect of the study, with a pretest-posttest control group, was used and the data were analyzed by two factor variance analysis for mixed measurements. Transcreation and Localization are two of the fastest-growing areas of the translation industry. The confluence of computing, globalization and digital media has created new models for the translation profession, which was tailored in both approach and in the use of technology. In the world of marketing and advertising transcreation is believed to be important process that gives unbelievable opportunities today.This research paper aimed at integrating Transcreation Skills for an undergraduate students as a translator training program. Data were gathered from 25 final years under graduate students from different streams who are from five different districts such as Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Coimbatore and Chennai connected by WhatsApp. The twenty five samplers were divided into five groups to carry imaginary transcreation projects. For the qualitative aspect of the study, content analysis techniques were employed to analyze the data which were collected by open-ended question forms. The analysis showed that students developed positive opinions towards Transcreation Skill development program for their adventurous career.

Keywords: Transcreation Skill, globalization, digital media, qualitative and quantitative data.

Introduction

"This process allowed for a number of even radical changes to the original texts, which went well beyond the concept of 'translation proper' as it was and is still perceived within translation studies. The transcreated text had to be entirely fluent and, most importantly, it had to be fully understandable to its target audience" (Di Giovanni 2008:33). As our world is becoming increasingly global, companies face the challenge of successfully communicating on a global scale to an increasingly varied audience. For communication to be effective across borders, it is

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argued that companies need to transcreate their message to make it truly speak to the local audience linguistically and culturally. This process, which is also referred to as transcreation, is the focal point of this study. The transcreation professional as a translator, copywriter, cultural anthropologist and marketer knows exactly what works for the target market and culture and is able to use the right words to create the desired effect on the readers. When it comes to marketing and advertising texts, transcreation is the only way to produce copy that can truly resonate with the target audience for which specific skillset is required for transcreation professionals.

Translation is mainly about language. Transcreation, however, focuses on tailoring the content to the location in which it will be distributed, making every detail work for the target audience. Where translation is mostly content-focused, transcreation looks at content andcontext. Transcreation is about understanding the local culture, brand voice and messaging when creating content in another language. It requires the talents of a copywriter or content creator, where creativity and knowledge of language and culture play equally important roles.

Else Ribeiro Pires Vieira in her "Readings of Antropofagia and Haroldo de Campos' poetics of transcreation" also supports the idea that transcreation is a kind of translation strategy, that "demythicizes the ideology of fidelity" (Vieira 1999:110). Thus, from the very beginning, transcreation has been closely connected to the translation process and was perceived as transformative recreation of the ST, "referred it to practices of transfer which involve the constitution of new texts and new realities" (Di Giovanni 2008:34).

On the other hand there have been serious flaws where Transcreation has not been used by a manufacturer resulting in damage to brand image of the concerned company. One outstanding example of such a case was back in 2011 when the renowned sportswear brand PUMA in an advertising move produced special trainers in the color of the UAE (United Arab Emirates) flag in honor of its 40th National Day. The company didn't realize that in the Arabic culture shoe is considered as something unclean and thrown as a gesture of dislike and hate towards a person or a picture. Realizing this cross culture difference, they quickly withdrew the trainers from the market. One other example is the use of "Fitta" as the name of a car model not realizing that this name in the Nordic countries carried and offensive meaning. They acted fast and changed the name of the car model. Chevrolet Nova was a typical case of cross-culture hazard in global marketing. One of the reasons that the sale of this car model in Latin American countries was so low was later analyzed to be the root of the name Nova, because "No Va" in Spanish means, "Doesn't go"! These examples show all too well the challenges Transcreators face and the absolute necessity of Transcreation in global marketing.

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The purpose of this paper is how to inculcate transcreation skills among graduates. This will be done by answering the following questions:

1. What are the three tiers or categories of the work in Transcreation Process?
2. What are the services come under the umbrella term 'Transcreation', skills needed for those services and ways to imbibe in the translator training program?

There are three tiers or categories of work under the overall umbrella of "transcreation" which are Copy finishing (Tier1), Pre-Translation assessment and source preparation (Tier 2) and Full treatment transcreation (Tier 3). Each tier takes progressively more time and effort.

Tier 1: Copy Finishing The most basic type of transcreation is "copy finishing." This is an additional editorial step, taken after translation of ST text, by in-country professional copywriters. Copy finishing is typically performed after translation by a bilingual or monolingual professional in-country copywriter. An example of material needing copy finishing might be promotional materials for heavy equipment or chemicals, where the text first needs to be translated by a subject matter expert or technical translator, but the client also wants the copy to flow in a natural, appealing way. This is where copy finishing by a native language copywriter is your best resource. The deliverable for this process will be the translated and copy-finished text with both technical accuracy and aesthetic appeal.

Tier 2: Pre-Translation Assessment and Source Preparation A second level of transcreation requires pre-translation assessment and source preparation. In this case, marketing materials are adapted for another culture. In addition to assessing the relevance of the concept, images, colors, fonts, and overall design will be reviewed to point out possible unappealing or confusing elements. The first idea behind pre-translation assessment and source preparation is that it will ensure that transcreators are not negatively impacting the audience. While pointing out elements that may misfire, the cultural consultant also makes recommendations for alternative strategies to improve your message.

Tier 3 Full treatment transcreation It may result in the complete revision of marketing campaign, with the intention of communicating with consumers or buyers in another culture using not just another language, but another set of concepts tailored to the audiences want to reach. Global brands like Subaru, Nike, and Apple routinely create new advertising and marketing campaigns to appeal to other cultures. Full treatment transcreation involves discussions with your transcreation team, several rounds of creative work and review, and possibly market research in the form of in-country focus groups and concept-testing with target audiences.

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Transcreation requires four different skills: **Language skills:** The copy is written in a foreign language and it must be decoded. In this respect the transcreation professional is ¼ translators. **Copywriting skills:** The target text must be as punchy as the original and consistent with a specific advertising strategy. This means that the transcreation professional is also ¼ copywriters. **Cultural sensitivity:** The target text must be appropriate for the target culture. In this respect, the transcreation professional is also a cultural anthropologist of sorts – someone who knows what is and isn't acceptable in their own culture. **Local market understanding:** The target text must be appropriate for the target market. A transcreation professional needs to be aware of the images and wording used by a brand's competitors so as to avoid them and produce copy that sounds as unique as possible. For this reason, a transcreation professional is also ¼ marketers.

Methodology

In this study, explanatory mixed methods was employed which combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches. By using mixed methods research, strong aspects of quantitative and qualitative methods can be utilised and its limitations can be minimised (Creswell, 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Particularly, complexity of social facts is eliminated by bringing different methods together then observing and discussing them, which hereby contributes to the better understanding of the fact (Creswell, 2003).

The collaboration between trainers and Chennai based transcreators assisted to shape the projects. The fact that there are not many previously documented experiences on working with copywriting content from a transcreational perspective within TS made it necessary to develop the whole project outline from scratch. Every project stage (from text selection to project management, guidance, project documentation and other supportive elements) was carefully designed once enough information on the nature of transcreation projects was available.

The imaginary projects' main objectives were as follows:
1. Developing transcreation projects which could be integrated into a core Professional Translation module. Project tasks included:

a. Transcreation where a given ST exists: Two different tasks were developed, 1) students receive non-translated content with a transcreation brief to produce transcreated deliverables; 2) students receive low-quality translated copy to review and improve the deliverable text according to the creative brief.

b. Copywriting based on a brief, no ST available: students write brand new content following the indications of a creative brief.

c. Students detect realia, culturally-bound variables or other translation problems in a ST, and then decide how to work with these: explicitly identifying non-translatable elements for the

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client, writing transcreation reports informing clients on nuances and risks of a given content when processed interculturally, researching functional equivalences of given realia and culturally or brand-bound elements in order to offer functionally equivalent examples to the client following the briefing, etc.

3. Integrating transcreation skills in translator training and informing students of employability and further training prospects vis-à-vis transcreation.

4. Designing and piloting brief-based assessment tools for transcreation processes.
Students were asked to justify their transcreated slogans and hashtags in a presentation given in class just as they would do if they had to convince an end client about the efficiency and functionality of their creative solutions. Their transcreations were assessed by tutors vis-à-vis the brief (call-to-action, character limit, intentional message) and the background research and creative work done behind each slogan.

Students Imaginary Projects

Students were asked to write short transcreation reports to inform the client about the main issues and possibilities surrounding the launch of this campaign in various foreign languages. Students were asked to justify their transcreated slogans and hashtags in a presentation given in class just as they would do if they had to convince an end client about the efficiency and functionality of their creative solutions. Their transcreations were assessed by tutors vis-à-vis the brief (call-to-action, character limit, intentional message) and the background research and creative work done behind each slogan.

Conclusion

An online student satisfaction survey (anonymous and confidential) was carried out once the project was concluded, to gain an objective insight into student learning experience and to see whether participant students had adapted well to the general design, resources and goals of

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the project. Final survey results are very positive in general, with over 90% of the students stating that they found this learning experience positive, enriching and inspiring. At the end of the study students could create concise, eye-catching, and innovative headlines and body copy, consistently brainstorm and collaborate with team for new ideas and strategies, build a following for brand on social media with creative work, researching markets and industries to compare and create content that is innovative and original.

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