Tapping the linguistic competence in the respeaking process

Comparing intralingual paraphrasing done by interpreting trainees, translation trainees and bilinguals

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Introduction

- Simultaneous listening and speaking (Romero-Fresco 2011: 45)
- Geens (2011) – training interpreters into respeakers (Ghent)
- Ability to paraphrase and condense the text (Luycks et al. 2010, Sandrelli 2013)
- Qualitative omissions (meaningful words or phrases)
- Quantitative omissions (grammatical words, discourse markers, features of oral speech) (Eugeni 2009 as quoted in Sandrelli 2013)
Objectives

- Are interpreters better predisposed than translators and bilinguals to being respeakers?
- Are some paraphrases more difficult than others?
- Is simultaneity a problem?
Participants

- 17 interpreters and interpreting trainees
- 18 translators and translation trainees
- 6 controls (non-interpreting and non-translating bilinguals)
Task

- Intralingual (Polish) paraphrasing of sentences
- Simultaneous or delayed (counterbalanced) (after Christoffels & de Groot 2004)
Stimuli

- 60 sentences recorded (approx. 110 wpm)
- "Perfect" subtitles (2 x 40 chars) manipulated = approx. 42-syllable sentences

Dziecko przyszło na świat nieco wcześniej, ale wszyscy są szczęśliwi i zdrowi.

The child was born a bit earlier, but everyone is happy and well.
Stimuli (gram)

- 20 sentences with grammar problems/hesitations

specjaliście... specjalista ➔ specjalista

to an expert... an expert ➔ an expert
Stimuli (mark)

- 20 sentences with oral discourse markers

właśnie
że tak powiem ➔
znaczy
prawda

(actually, so to say, I mean, well)
Stimuli (sem)

- 20 sentences with semantic redundancies

niezawierający alkoholu → bezalkoholowy

not containing alcohol → alcohol-free
Dziecko przyszło właściwie na świat nieco wcześniej niż się spodziewano, ale wszyscy... prawda... są bardzo szczęśliwi z tego powodu i zdrowi.

The child was actually born a bit earlier than expected, but... well... everyone is happy and well because of that.
Procedure

- Intralingual (Polish) paraphrasing of sentences
- Stimulus sentences heard over headphones
- Instructions
- Training block
- Simultaneous and delayed block (counterbalanced)
Study design

- Mixed factorial design
- 3 groups (int, trans, bils)
- 3 sentence types (gram, mark, sem)
- 2 conditions (simo, del)
Data analysis (dependent measures)

- Scoring
- Rating
- EVS (ear-voice span)
- Mixed ANOVAs
Results (scoring)

No main effect of group ($p=0.118$)
Results (scoring)

Main effect of sentence type (p<.001)
Results (scoring)

Main effect of condition (p<.01)
Rating tool
Results (rating)

No main effect of group (p=.381)
No main effect of sentence type (p=.338)
Results (rating)

Main effect of condition (p<.001)
Results (EVS)

The child was actually born a bit earlier than expected, but... well...everyone is happy and well because of that.

No group effect (p=.833)
Results (latency)

No group effect (p=.492)
Conclusions

- No advantage for interpreters
- No transfer of skills/training (no intralingual paraphrasing involved in interpreting/translation)
- Good news - no group better predisposed to be respeakers
- Semantic paraphrasing more difficult than reduction of oral discourse markers and grammar problems/hesitations
- Simultaneous condition of better quality in rating, but delayed condition of better quality in scoring – verbatim repetition favoured by participants
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