

APPENDIX III

FILM PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES USED IN THIS EXPERIMENT.

An analysis of all the factors involved proved this project to have certain production intricacies requiring special treatment and planning.

Since there were to be eleven versions in all, each involving two reels of film, it became obvious that standard procedure would not only be costly but lengthy both in film consumption and in time required to make the films.

It was, therefore, determined to by-pass the work print⁴ stage, and deal directly with the original reversal black-and-white footage during editing.

Having made this decision, it then became necessary to devise a special technique for filming the material itself so that the greatest degree of efficiency and economy could be attained.

The problems were as follows: Part I of each version was simply to show the complete list of twenty pairs of English and Russian words in a pre-determined order. Each pair of words was to remain on the screen for ten seconds.

Part II, the learning section of each version, was to begin by showing the English word only, followed by clear film to give the learners light enough to try and write the corresponding Russian word. This was followed by a repetition of both words again.

In the case of versions 1 and 6, the words alone without any picture appear on the screen. The filming of these versions was

⁴A work print is used to edit and combine the various picture scenes of a motion picture into the desired form.

comparatively simple. Thirty seconds of both words was shot, giving us 15 seconds of material for Part I, and 15 seconds to take care of the repetition in Part II. Then, the Russian word was masked off, and 15 seconds of the English word only was photographed. The five seconds of "over-shooting" in each case were to allow for editing space.

It might be well to mention at this juncture that all the word combinations were printed in the same size, style of type, and in white, on punched and registered black cards. The mechanical devices used in actual photography are described in Appendix IV.

When the problem of combining picture with the word titles arose, the techniques became more complicated.

Versions 2 and 7 included a still picture to illustrate each word.

Versions 3 and 8 consisted of identical subject matter as in versions 2 and 7 except that motion was involved.

The pictures for versions 3 and 8 also were to be used for versions 4 and 9 respectively which were to have a sound track added, with a narrator pronouncing the English and Russian words. The same was true for versions 5 and 10, wherein the narrator pronounced the words and then asked the learners to participate.

In order to complete the shooting of each set of words in its entirety, with enough original footage for versions 2 and 7 and the three other versions involving motion, the following system was used:

1. The camera was placed on a fixed stand and photographed one minute of the card containing both words.

2. The cameraman then wound the film back the full 60 seconds to

the point where it had started.

3. The scene that was to illustrate the word was then set up. The camera was moved from the stand to a tripod and was focused on the scene. The model (if one was used) was instructed to hold as still as possible for 30 seconds. This provided the film footage with both words necessary for versions 2 and 9 through double exposure.

4. The model was then instructed on the appropriate action to perform and was asked to repeat it three times. The first two times were double-exposed over the 30 seconds of both words, still remaining on the wound-back film. The third repetition, of course, had no words on it, as yet, but space was provided by using a black mask that blocked out the bottom-fourth of the frame.

5. The model was then asked to hold still for an additional 15 seconds. This ended the live picture photography. However, the last 30 seconds - 15 of motion and 15 of still - had still no words exposed on it.

6. The camera was moved from the tripod back to the stand, and the exposed 30 seconds was wound back. The Russian word was masked off on the card, and the camera ran out its 30 seconds on the English word only.

The result was that with only two camera moves, all the original footage for versions 2 or 7, 3 or 8, and 4 or 9 was filmed. By the use of this system, the camera crew was able to complete shooting nine words in a single day.

A woman, formerly a native Russian, was employed as the narrator.

Two magnetic recordings were made - one for version 4 or 9, and another for version 5 or 10.

For versions 4 and 9, the narrator pronounced first the English,

then the Russian words distinctly and with a fairly deliberate rhythm that varied little throughout.

The same was done for versions 5 and 10, except that she added the words "Now you say it" after each pair of words, thereby inviting the learners to participate aloud.

These were later re-recorded twice each on optical film sound track in order to provide narration for both Part I and II of versions 4 and 9, and 5 and 10.

Editing was a lengthy but purely mechanical task. Special handling precautions were, of course, necessary, since we were working with original film.

"Dupe" negatives⁵ were then made from the original edited film and the release prints were struck off. The principal reason for printing from negatives is that quality and uniformity can be controlled better, in this way.

⁵A "dupe" (duplicate) negative is a negative film that is produced by printing from a positive. A dupe negative is used for providing prints which might be made from the original negative.