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COGNITIVE ASPECT OF POLITICAL TRANSLATION

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КОГНИТИВНЫЙ АСПЕКТ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОГО ПЕРЕВОДА

Abstract. The paper aims at the analysis of different translating strategies used in the process of English-Russian translation from cognitive point of view. The material of the research is made up by a corpus of English political media texts, including multimodal advertisements and newspaper political cartoons, translated into Russian. The methods used for the paper include semantic, pragmatic and comparative analysis of the original and translated texts, as well as the method of cognitive modelling. The results are: linguistic transformations used by translators are numerous, but mainly fall into two opposite translating strategies – adaptation, or acculturation, and foreignizing. Translation opportunities are restricted by the set of word combinations used in the original text and depend on cognitive thesaurus of the translator.

Аннотация. Цель статьи состоит в изучении различных переводческих стратегий, используемых при переводе с английского языка на русский язык с точки зрения когнитивной лингвистики. Материал исследования представляет собой корпус политических текстов на английском языке, включая мультимодальные рекламные тексты и политические карикатуры, и их переводы на русский язык. Методы исследования включают семантический, прагматический и сравнительный анализ текстов оригиналов и их переводов, а также метод когнитивного моделирования. Результаты исследования показывают, что многочисленные трансформации, используемые переводчиками, в целом распределяются между двумя основными полярными переводческими стратегиями – стратегией адаптации, или аккультурации, и стратегией форенизации. Возможности перевода ограничены набором устойчивых сочетаний слов, использованных в тексте оригинала, и зависят от когнитивного тезауруса переводчика.

Keywords: *cognitive linguistics, translation, translation strategies, political discourse, thesaurus.*

Ключевые слова: *когнитивная лингвистика, перевод, переводческие стратегии, политический дискурс, тезаурус.*

Introduction

Translation is considered to be a specific kind of communication event and the transmitting of information is emphasized as its basic purpose. Such translation process has a lot in common with the speech and mental activity, the main object of cognitive linguistics studies. Cognitive linguistics is a field of study that deals with mental, psychological and linguistic spheres of language usage in the processes of communication and individual speech-and-mind activity. Cognitive linguists emphasize that speech is a part of the inner world of an individual. The speakers' personalities and their cognitive processes, that could influence their speech, are also being dealt with.

The paper aims at the analysis of different translating strategies (adaptation, modernization,

foreignization, etc.) used in the process of English-Russian translation from cognitive point of view. The texts under consideration are the translated English and Russian media texts, including multimodal advertisements and newspaper political cartoons. The methods used for the research include the analysis of text semantics, analysis of text pragmatics, comparative analysis of the source and target texts, and cognitive modeling of the translation process.

The process of translation suggests that the translator uses some kind of transformation tools to achieve the pragmatic aims of the chosen translation strategy. It may seem strange, but for the pragmatically opposite translation strategies such as foreignization and acculturation the interpreter may use the same transformation techniques. They include the use of the

word with a broader or a narrower meaning, grammatical change of a word form or syntactic change of the whole sentence, omission of words or phrases, and adding the words which the original text lacked. It makes us think that cognitive operations aimed at finding a proper variant in the target language are similar whatever translation strategy you choose.

We suppose that the cognitive process of finding the right words depends on thesaurus, or cognitive word system, of a particular person (a translator) and word combinations presented in the text under translation. Unlike the conception of thesaurus developed by the author of "Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases" Peter Roget [1] who sees thesaurus as the system of words presented in hierarchical order, the cognitive thesaurus has syntactic method of organization. It could effectively work as an explanatory instrument in revealing the translator's or the interpreter's axiological strategies used in the process of cross-cultural communication.

We believe that the cognitive thesaurus may be seen as one of the most effective explanatory instruments in cognitive modeling of neural network – as a model of a translator's or an interpreter's semantic and syntactic network. Usage of the cognitive thesaurus shows the translator's or interpreter's competence in setting adequate links between the source language word combinations and the target language word combinations. The two polar cognitive and pragmatic strategies, adaptation or foreignization of a text, used by the translators and interpreters, depend on standard or "foreigning" word combinations in the target text, which resulted in social acculturation or estrangement effects analyzed in the paper.

Review of the problem and research results

Means of all language levels are employed to make a written text emotionally saturated. The language elements of multimodal texts contain tropes: epithets, metaphors, metonymies, similes and puns, as well as figures of speech: the anaphora, rhetoric question, direct address, oxymoron and allusion. Loose translation of the language element can make it come to clashes with the picture and, as a result, the whole multimodal text will be lost upon the recipient. It is absolutely clear that instead of helping the translator, the picture hinders the process and its result since it could not be left out.

Translating multimodal texts is a challenge due to their specific nature. There exist different definitions to the texts binding together several semiotic systems of language and non-language nature. Some scholars call them creolized texts [2], others describe them as multimodal while the components inside them are treated as semiotic resources or modalities [3, 4, 5]. To avoid ambiguity referring to creole languages we treat texts consisting of a picture(s) and written text as multimodal (here belong comics, newspaper cartoons, advertisements, posters, etc.). Each multimodal text is semantically complex; its pragmatic potential builds on interrelation of codes of constituent modalities while the recipient perceives them as a unity.

Though being interdependent, modalities within a text don't always enjoy equal importance. All multimodal texts are classified according to the types of information carried by each constituent element [6]: either denotative (carrying general logic meaning of a word or a picture), or connotative (carrying evaluative and emotionally charged extra meaning). Thus, we have four types of multimodal texts:

- informative message (a picture and a written text both contain denotative information);
- illustrative message (a picture conveys denotative information, while a written text conveys connotative information);
- commenting message (a picture represents connotative information, while an accompanying text represents denotative information);
- symbolic message (a picture and a written text both contain connotative information).

The translator can opt for several strategies when coming across multimodal texts of the kind. The first one is turning to the precedent texts in the culture of the target language. We treat the precedent text as a "sequence of signs bound by coherence and cohesion and having value for the members of a particular cultural community" [7] and which is recurrent in the given community [8]. And there can be further choice of either exploiting the ready-made precedent text or modifying it to the communicative needs of the source text. However, if the source text is initially modified to satisfy the communicative needs of the author (usually, to produce some comic effect), the target text will undergo some modification, too, in accordance with the target language rules. For example, in the political cartoon criticizing Donald Trump's policy on illegal immigrants from Mexico and building a frontier-wall between the countries, we see a picture of egg-shaped Donald Trump mounted on the wall [9]. The picture is accompanied by the verse:

*Trumpty Dumpty
Built a great wall.
Trumpty Dumpty
Had a great fall.
All the good women
And all the good men
Couldn't be bothered
Putting Trumpty
Together again.*

There exists a translation of the original nursery rhyme into Russian made by Samuel Marshak. To preserve the comic effect and still keep the text highly recognizable, we adapt it to the norms of the Russian language and rhyme the verse:

*Трамтай-Болтай
Мечтал о стене.
Трамтай-Болтай
Свалился во сне.
Все прекрасные дамы
И всех кавалеров рать
Не хочет Трамтая
Болтая-Трамтая собрать!*

The strategy above falls under the category of adoption when the translator adopts the precedent texts

already existing in the accepting culture. When there are no precedent texts, the translator sets working on saving all the features which contribute to the estrangement of the multimodal text.

To explain many cognitive translation processes the scientists use the method of cognitive modeling, and the model of the cognitive thesaurus could be explanatory enough to reveal the basic features of many translators and interpreters' strategic decisions.

With the help of analytical reading and statistical methods of corpus linguistics, we found out that up to 65 percent of word combinations used in a random text extract may be used in many other texts. It makes clear that while composing texts, speakers mostly use "stable" word combinations in unique contexts.

Most existing thesauri including electronic online word databases (such as WordNet [10]) are organized as hierarchical word systems. Such thesauri can work only within a particular part of speech, be it the noun, the verb, the adjective. In the cognitive thesaurus, nouns and verbs or nouns and adjectives form the indivisible units. To make it clear, the word *bed* in thesaurus dictionaries goes as a hyponym to the general term *furniture* whereas in cognitive thesaurus it is stored in combinations like *go to bed* or *bed of flowers*, for instance. It works so because people learn and remember words from other people's speeches, not from dictionaries. That is why little children know the word *bed* and understand the expression *go to bed* long before they learn the word *furniture*.

It means that for a translator the process of rendering the source text in the target language goes as the process of pulling out of memory word combinations suitable for the given context. Thus, *go to bed* will be much more frequently translated into Russian as *иди спать* rather than *иди в кровать* and *bed of flowers* as *клуба* or *цветочная клуба*. In both cases, the Russian equivalent for *bed* – *кровать* – may be replaced by other lexemes depending on the chosen "stable" word combinations.

Creating a new text, a writer works with quite a restricted set of word combinations which are cultivated in a particular culture, society, and group of speakers. The number of such word combinations (which we may call "thesaurus units") as well as their lexical components depends on not only the structure and vocabulary of the language but on the tradition of word-use in the society. Thus, the interpreter's or translator's competence (which we agree to define as Rui Rothe-Neves as the "efficient performance" [11, p. 136]) is mainly displayed in setting adequate links between the source language word combination and the target language word combination. If the resulted text is perceived by target language speakers as the text created in this language, obviously, the translator has chosen the strategy of cultural adaptation.

The opposite social result of the translator's performance can be achieved in case of creating such word combinations which do not correspond with the target language speakers' thesaurus units. It happens when the translator uses target language words in word combinations standardly used in the source text. Many

examples of such "misfits" are found in the analyzed speeches of Dmitry Medvedev, the Ex-President and the Ex-Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, especially with the words *кооперация* and *коллаборация*: *двусторонняя экономическая кооперация, новая кооперация, укреплять коллаборацию*. These phrases look like literally translated from the English language, though the words *сотрудничество* and *отношения* could be much more suitable in such combinations (*двустороннее сотрудничество, укреплять отношения*).

So, the translators' or interpreters' thesaurus could be considered as one of the most effective cognitive instruments to construct neural networks as the explanatory models of the socially oriented results of translation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that the ambivalent values of the contemporary multi-polar society are often shaped in the translated texts. The translators and interpreters now mostly fail in searching for the precise equivalents for the politically correct terms working in translation from English into Russian. They create loose translation equivalents or work with the politically correct discourse terminology as with the untranslatables creating neologisms or giving the explanatory translation versions. Though, transferring the parody to the politically correct discourse from English into Russian, the translators were a success in pragmatics and managed to keep to the original in its comic effect. It leads to the acculturation of a fragment of the politically correct discourse in the target culture due to the key axiological strategy, adaptation, used in all the translations mentioned.

As for the translation of multimodal texts, it involves a number of difficulties, the major of them being the inseparability of a picture and a text which causes the translator to be very careful about any transformations. Anyway, transformations are inevitable and they appear in target texts as a result of several strategies: adoption of precedent texts; adaption to the language rules of the recipient culture; narrowing the pragmatic potential of a source text through the loss of one of the meanings in translation; semantic development of the source text and translator's commentary. All in all, the strategies above can be referred to as adaptation.

The opposite axiological strategy of the translators and interpreters, foreignization, could be seen as a result of the intended "hybrid" combination of the source and target language words and phrases in the target text. The standard or the "foreigning", hybrid structure of the translated text analysis is held with the help of the translator's cognitive thesaurus as one of the most effective cognitive and pragmatic models.

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