

LITERARY TRANSLATION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

The term translation itself has numerous meanings: it can refer to the general subject field, the product (the text that has been translated) or the process (the act of producing the translation, otherwise known as translating). In addition, there are several types and directions in translation theory. In the translation process of literary works language and culture are main issues to be solved. Some translators prefer to keep the cultural message and language units of source text original while others consider that transferring meaning with adaption to target culture is essential in translation. Translating a literary work means re-writing it for the readers of another cultural atmosphere. In this process the problem of adequacy is important notion to keep the idea original and at the same time to make it understandable. In this article I will study proper ways of translating literary works on several genres. Moreover, following paper can supply readers with information about types of literary text and features of translation process that occurs while transferring cultural message.

Keywords: literary text, inter-lingual translation, intra-lingual translation, inter-semiotic translation, apprehension, interpretation, re-stylisation.

INTRODUCTION

Literature is one of the key notions to reflect or understand certain nation's culture. Literary works by writers and poets serve to demonstrate specific features related to time, location and lifestyle of peculiar period when they live in. It is possible to recognize the political, social, cultural and natural conditions of exact geographical places while reading descriptions which writer used. Furthermore, literary works can be created to illustrate unreal but wanted situations if they are associated with fictional stories. Imaginary works such as utopian and anti-utopian novels help writer to reflect appropriate cases to what they admire. On the other hand, literature helps not only describe known peculiarities of some period but also create possible solutions to the problems by giving imaginary options. Literary works are

used to enlarge readers' outlook to the life and social atmosphere where they survive. Writers use national-cultural bound phrases, ideological items to make literary work comprehensible for representatives of a certain nation. During the translation process of these works of art translators might face difficulties to adapt those ideas into target culture. The problem of adequacy comes into stage. The aim of this article is to review numerous linguists' theoretical works, discuss the problems of literary translation from source language into target one and give possible solutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The process of translation between two different written languages involves the translator changing an original written text (the source text or ST) in the original verbal language (the source language or SL) into a written text (the target text or TT) in a different verbal language (the target language or TL). (Munday, 2008, p. 5)

According to Catford, translation is the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL) (Catford, 1995, p. 20).

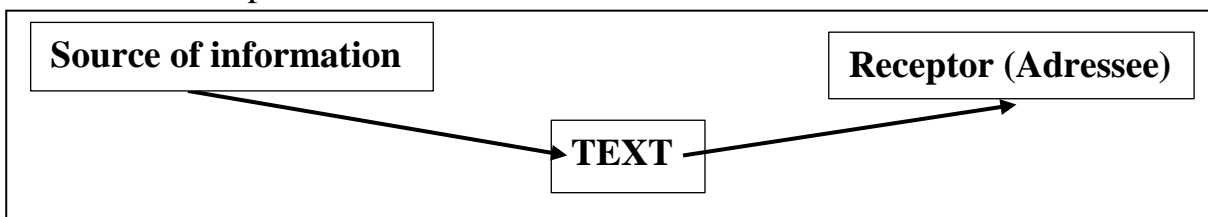
Susan Bassnett states that translation involves transfer of "meaning" contained in one set of language signs into another set of language signs through competent use of the dictionary and grammar; the process involves a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria also. (Bassnett, 2005, p. 21)

The second half of the 20th century has been crucial period for the translation study which is called like theory of translation, Science of translation, Translation linguistics or Translatology. According to Zoya Proshina (Proshina, 2008, p. 7) there are several aspects of translatology:

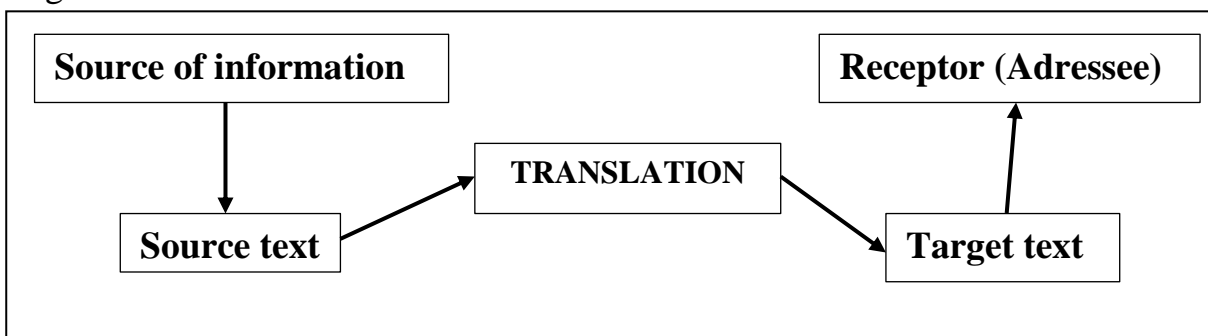
- General theory of translation which investigate on typical notions of translation from any languages.
- Specific theory of translation which studies rules of translation from particular selected languages.
- Special theory of translation that deals with the texts of various registers and genres.

Translation can be defined by using several approaches to it. In case language is considered as a system of signs, it is possible to use semiotic approach to define translation properly. If all the elements of the source language are described as signs, then they can be used as alternative elements for code switching in the target language while translating. In his article 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation',

Roman Jakobson differentiates three types of translation relying on semiotic approach. The first type is called **“intra-lingual translation”**. It is possible to name this type as rewording. It means an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language. Secondly, he distinguishes **“Inter-lingual translation”** or ‘translation proper’ In this type verbal signs are interpreted by means of some other language. The third one is **“Inter-semiotic translation”** or ‘transmutation’. In this type of translation verbal signs are interpreted by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems) (Jakobson, 1959, p. 9). Translation might also be investigated according to its communicative features. In communication process speakers produce their speech in their mind and exchange by the means of language. In this situation the elements of communication in the same language and between two different languages are also different. Below it is possible to understand their differences with the help of images by Z. Proshina (Proshina, 2008, p. 10). Since both interlocutors use the same language, speaker creates some meaningful utterance and addresses to the listener. So, there is a text which is comprehensible to both participants of the communication process.



If in this case addresser and addressee of the communication are from various language area, the elements of this process will be different including source text, target text and translation.



While translating any text a translator has to feel a huge responsibility because history gives verification for the cases that translators have been punished strictly for the reason of mistranslating texts. In her book “Translation studies” Susan Bassnett writes about French humanist Etienne Dolet (1509–46) who was tried and executed for heresy after ‘mistranslating’ one of Plato’s dialogues in such a way as to imply

disbelief in immortality. In 1540 Dolet published a short outline of translation principles, entitled 'La manière de bien traduire d'une langue en aultre' (How to Translate Well from one Language into Another) and established five principles for the translator must fully understand the sense and meaning of the original author, although he is at liberty to clarify obscurities, should have a perfect knowledge of both SL and TL, avoid word-for-word renderings, use forms of speech in common use and choose and order words appropriately to produce the correct tone. (Bassnett, 2005, p. 60)

The adequacy and good quality of translation is also considered one of the most essential peculiarities of translation process. To keep these features of a good translation, in his book 'Translate to communicate: A guide for translators' M. Massoud gives following criteria:

'A good translation is easily understood, fluent and smooth, idiomatic, conveys, to some extent, the literary subtleties of the original, distinguishes between the metaphorical and the literal, reconstructs the cultural/historical context of the original, makes explicit what is implicit in abbreviations, and in allusions to sayings, songs, and nursery rhymes, and the last, will convey, as much as possible, the meaning of the original text.' (Massoud, 1988, p. 13)

There are a large number of definitions for the principles of translation. Below, these principles can be specified with the decisions made between following contradictory statements by Savory (Savory, 1957, p. 49):

1. A translation must give the words of the original.
2. A translation must give the ideas of the original.
3. A translation should read like an original work.
4. A translation should read like a translation.
5. A translation should reflect the style of the original.
6. A translation should possess the style of the translator.
7. A translation should read as a contemporary of the original.
8. A translation should read as a contemporary of the translator.
9. A translation may add to or omit from the original.
10. A translation may never add to or omit from the original.
11. A translation of verse should be in prose.
12. A translation of verse should be in verse

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to understand the stages of translation process Jiri Levy suggests table of ‘Communication chain in translation’.

Figure 1. The communication chain in translation

		Author			Translator			Reader	
Reality	→	Selection	Stylisation	Text in → foreign language	Reading	Translation	Text in → Translator’s language	Reading	Concretisation

In his book ‘The art of Translation’ Jiri Levy gives following (Levy, 2011, p. 23) definition and binomial chain for the translation. ‘Translation is communication. More precisely, translators decode the message contained in the text of the original author and reformulate (encode) it into their own language. The message contained in the translated text is then decoded by the reader of the translation. A binomial chain of communication is established, which can be represented as follows.’

Jiri Levy distinguishes three main stages of translator’s work. (Levy, 2011, p. 31)

1. Apprehension of the source;
2. Interpretation of the source;
3. Re-stylisation of the source.

‘**Apprehension of the source**’ means not only understanding of a text but consciously understanding all its characteristics. A translator, first of all, must be a good reader. While reading the source language text he is expected to be able to comprehend linguistic and literary terms in it. In this process translator must possess specialized training and experience. Some mistakes can occur because words might have several meaning or associations according to source language features. Translator is supposed to apprehend their meanings in the context, not only dictionary definition. This ability is considered one of the main parts of apprehension of the source text. Furthermore, Levy states about apprehension: “*a true reading of the text mediates to the reader its ideo-aesthetic values, i.e. its emotional tone, ironic or tragic undertone, aggressive attitude towards the reader or pure statement of fact etc. The ordinary reader is not expected to be aware of these attributes, but the translator ought to be capable of rationally identifying the means used by the author to achieve these effects. Over and above the understanding of a work that is derived from a*

straightforward reading, translation requires not only a more in-depth understanding, but above all a more conscious understanding". (Levy, 2011, p. 32)

Interpretation of the source' comes into stage when translator faces difficulties to find alternative concept for translating the notion in the target text. This problem can be in various forms. Sometimes either there is no same concept in both source and target languages or notions differ from each other according to their gradation layer. In such cases translation should be relied on interpretation of that expression. Translator must specify the expression to make them equal in both source and target languages.

The language of the source text and the language of translation are not always be commensurate. They do not match in the stylistic quality of expressions. It is connected with style of the source and target text. Because the verbal means of languages are not equivalent, it is hard to translate mechanically. Meanings and their aesthetic values do not coincide precisely; consequently, the greater the role of language in the artistic structure of the text, the more difficult translation becomes. The translation of poetry therefore demands greater flexibility and greater freedom overall. This means that translator can recreate the style of the translation. This stage of translation can be called **'Re-stylisation of the source'**.

Translation process can vary according to the type of material which is being translated. Z. Proshina states that (Proshina, 2008, p. 21) according to the dominating function of the source text, translations are divided into two types. The first type is called **literary translation** which the poetic function of the text prevails in it. This type of translation comes into stage when the work of fiction prose, drama, and poetry are translated from one language into another. Translator usually should ask permission from author to translate this kind of works. The second type of translation is **informative** one which is the translation of texts on science, technology, official writings, business messages, newspaper and magazine articles, etc. The aforementioned texts can also have an expressive or emotive function, but it is not in the outstanding function in the text. The dominating function in these texts is informative.

Ashurova D.U claims that according to the functional styles reference text are divided into following groups (Ashurova D. , 2011, p. 29) :

- newspaper articles (brief news items, press reports, the editorial, etc);
- official documents (business letters, records of proceedings, applications, etc);
- publicistic (chronicle, sketches, essay);

- fictional (story, novel, play, etc);
- scientific (review, article, monograph).

Regarding to this classification the main material of literary translation is fictional texts. In their book “Stylistics of literary texts” D. Ashurova and M. Galiyeva states that first and foremost the fictional text reflects an imaginary world not associated with the practical activity of communicants, and therefore it is certainly devoid of the factual accuracy (Ashurova & Galiyeva, 2013, p. 32). From this point of view fictional texts can be called literary texts. For providing adequate and equivalent literary translation the particular features of literary texts are supposed to be discussed. In the aforementioned book following definition for these features has been found:

A distinguishing feature of the literary text is its aesthetic function. The aesthetic function presupposes a certain impact on the reader called forth both by the beauty of a linguistic form and the conceptual significance of its content. The aesthetic information is aimed at arousing aesthetic feelings, i.e. the feelings of pleasure and beauty on the part of the reader. Aesthetics of the text is closely interlinked with the categories of imagery, evaluation, emotiveness. (Ashurova & Galiyeva, 2013, p. 32)

As it is seen, in literary texts there are numerous dominating peculiarities which differentiates from informative texts. For this reason, various techniques are suggested for literary translation. John Dodds suggests following areas of source text as crucial points for the translator to pay attention (Dodds, 1994, p. 141).

- Phonological features (rhythm, alliteration; sense in sound)
- Syntactic features (verb tense, word constructions, pre/suffixes, grammatical structures, ...)
- Positional features (foregrounding, parallelisms, paragraph structure, poem line breaks, ...)
- Semantic features (partial synonyms, antonyms, leitmotifs, keywords, ...)
- Figures of speech (analogy, metaphor, metonymy, ...)

In the sphere of literary translation, linguists spend more time on researching into possible solutions to the problems of translating poetry than other literary texts. When translator translates a poetic text, he can use several methods to make it clear to the reader. Susan Bassnett, in her book “Translation studies”, gives Andre Levefere’s catalogue of strategies for translating poetry (Bassnett, 2005, p. 87). According to his catalogue one of these strategies is “**Phonemic translation**”. This

strategy helps translator transfer not only meaning, but also reproduce the source language sound in the target language. He believes that phonemic translation plays a huge role in the translation of poems which have onomatopoeia in the lines. The second strategy is “**Literal translation**” which emphasizes word-for-word translation. This strategy is able to give exact translations of the words but it distorts the sense and the syntax of the original. “**Metrical translation**” is following in the catalogue, where the main criterion is the reproduction of the source language metre. Lefevre concludes that, like literal translation, this method concentrates on one aspect of the SL text at the expense of the text as a whole. The fourth strategy is called “**Poetry in prose**”. In this strategy poetic text is transferred into prose. Although there is some distortion on the sense, syntax and communicative value of the source language, it is not to the same extent with literal and metrical translations. The following strategy is “**Rhymed translation**” where it is more difficult for translator to enter into double bondage of metre and rhyme simultaneously. The sixth strategy is named “**Blank verse translation**”. In this strategy limits by the choice of structure are emphasized. However, the greater accuracy and higher degree of literariness can be obtained. The last one in the catalogue is “**Interpretation**” which is called *versions* by Lefevre. In this strategy of the translation the substance of the source language is saved but the form is completely changed. Translator produces imitations on his own. Only title and plot of the translation can be in common with the source text.

Like in the translation of poetry, texts in prose should be translated by obeying particular rules of translation. S. Bassnett defines six general rules (Bassnett, 2005, p. 120) for the translation in prose which was given by Hilaire Belloc:

1. The translator should not plod on, word by word or sentence by sentence, but should always block out his work. She understands that by ‘block out’, Belloc means that the translator should consider the work as an integral unit and translate in sections, asking himself “before each what the whole sense is he has to render”.
2. The translator should render idiom by idiom ‘and idioms of their nature demand translation into another form from that of the original.
3. The translator must render “intention by intention”, bearing in mind that ‘the intention of a phrase in one language may be less emphatic than the form of the phrase, or it may be more emphatic’. Bassnett explains that by “intention”, Belloc seems to be talking about the weight a given expression may have in a particular context in the SL that would be disproportionate if translated literally into the TL.

4. Belloc warns against *les faux amis*, those words or structures that may appear to correspond in both SL and TL but actually do not. These kinds of words are also called “false friends of a translator”. For example, the word “magazine” has similar variant “магазин” in Russian which means “shopping centre”.

5. The translator is advised to ‘transmute boldly’ and Belloc suggests that the essence of translating is ‘the resurrection of an alien thing in a native body’.

6. The translator should never embellish. He means that translator should never try to make the target text more attractive and emotive than the source one by adding extra elements of his own.

CONCLUSION

Translation is one of the most important fields of linguistics because it contains several phenomena on intercultural communication. Translator has to pay attention to all aspects of work while he is translating umpteenth literary work. All features of literary text such as stylistic, lexical, syntactical, morphological, phonetical peculiarities must be taken into consideration because translated text should have almost the same features in order to keep emotiveness and literary effect on a reader. What is more, cultural and social ideology of a work must be converted to target language without losing main points. Translation might be considered as a successful piece of work if that conversion is done sensibly and accurately. Adequacy of a text should be in balance so that the reader from different cultural background does not get misinformed about the original idea. In this case translation can make bridge between source and target culture to exchange valuable information and ideas effectively.

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