METAPHOR AND COGNITIVE EQUIVALENCE IN TRANSLATION

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Regardless of its popularity and mechanism of operation, metaphor as a linguistic device exists in all human languages. The word 'metaphor' comes from Greek *"metapherein"*, meaning *'to transfer*' or to *'carry over.*' Reference to this universal linguistic phenomenon can be found in the writings of Greek philosophers and rhetoricians, as well as of contemporary linguists [2; 3]. The earliest definition of metaphor—quoted from Aristotle's *"The Poetics"* by Richard [8, p. 89] is "a shift carrying over a word from its normal use to a new one." Under this quite broad definition, all other instances of semantic extension such as allegory, synecdoche, metonymy, etc. might be categorized as being metaphoric. Whichever term is used for labeling these expressions, they all exhibit some kind of semantic and logical violation to the referential components of their lexical constituents. Hence they are studied as instances of figurative (as opposite to literal) language, where words gain extra features over their referential ones. Therefore, the meaning of any of these lexical constituents cannot be predicted from their referential meaning. Unfortunately, the translator has to suffer twice when s/he approaches these metaphoric expressions. First, s/he has to work out their figurative meaning intralingually (i.e. in the language in which a metaphor is recorded). Second, s/he has to find out equivalent meanings and similar functions of these expressions in the TL.

Studies of metaphor have been largely dedicated to issues such as the meaning, forms, components, typology, and the role of metaphors as speech ornaments and meaning-enhancing analogies. These studies shy away from the exploration of the continuous connection of metaphors as mental or picturesque representations of the real world and the language used to realize these pictures in words. Despite the large amount of literature available on the literary aspects of this linguistic phenomenon, very little research has been done on the cogno-cultural translation of metaphors. Contemporary studies on metaphor intends to show how metaphors reflect cognitive and cultural human experiences encoded by language as a means of recording human experience and how culture models and constrains this cognition. In particular this paper is an argument in favor of a cognitive approach in the translation of metaphors, especially between culturally distinct languages, e.g. English and Ukrainian. The study of the metaphoric expressions of a given culture would, hopefully, gives us a chance to see how the members of that culture structure or map their experience of the world and record it into their native language.

Since one of the basic assumptions is that culture influences metaphor in an important way, this paper aims at clarifying how metaphor is a cultural object.

D. Katan suggests that a cognitive approach to the study of culture can be seen in terms of the form of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating to, and interpreting them [1]. This view of culture suggests that, when translating a text to a SL of any other culture, one needs to be aware not only of the patterns of thinking, and acting in one's own culture, but also of the TL's cultural models of reality. J. Nida (1964) described the 'best' translation as the one capable of evoking in the TL reader the same response as the SL text does to the SL reader. Although we find this a rather unreachable objective, we still believe that some of it can be achieved provided that the following two conditions are satisfied. First, the translator must understand the way in which receptive readers perceive the world and structure their experience. Second, s/he must also try his best to find a way to accommodate his text to the experience of the target-language reader, and to the way it is recoded in the TL. Our argument in favor of a cognitive approach to the translation of metaphors derives from the notion of 'cognitive equivalence,' where metaphors can be translated from one language to another with a minimum degree of loss. For this reason, we think that metaphors must be looked at as cognitive constructs rather than mere linguistic entities or rhetorical phenomena. In other words, metaphors represent instances of how people conceptualize their experience and how they record it. Hence, it is believed that the cognitive approach will work for this purpose.

In cognitive linguistics, metaphor is often given a cognitive function in which human beings draw upon the experience of each other or non-human surroundings or even other concepts or images. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) define metaphor as a means to understand one domain of experience (the target domain) in terms of another, a familiar one (source domain). This usually takes the form of analogy or comparison between two existent entities or one existent entity and another one assumed to exist. To say that someone is a 'lion,' for example, reveals that a link has been established between that individual (tenor) and the 'lion' (vehicle) as a symbol of bravery or strength. Therefore, metaphors are 'conceptual' phenomena in which the source domain is mapped onto the target domain. To put it differently, the structural components of the source conceptual schema are transferred to the target domain. Here one should deter the crucial role of culture in this process of symbolization and conceptualization.

In the cognitive study of metaphor an emphasis is made on the psychological as well as on the sociocultural and linguistic aspects of metaphor. Furthermore, metaphors are associated with 'indirectness' [2, p. 203]; this is possibly why they are common as a special mode of expression in politics and public speeches where direct expressions are censured. To those who studied metaphor within the scope of cognitive linguistics (e.g. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), metaphor is 'pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action,' and that our 'ordinary conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature' [3, p. 3].

For the translation of metaphor, we would like to incorporate N. Mandelblit's "Cognitive Translation Hypothesis", but this time for a different purpose and in a different framework. N. Mandelblit proposed two schemes of cognitive mapping conditions (i.e. Similar Mapping Condition (SMC) and Different Mapping Condition

(DMC)). While the author intended to show that 'the difference in reaction time is due to a conceptual shift that the translator is required to make between the conceptual mapping systems of the source and target languages' [4, p. 493], we are more interested in the outcome of the research than in its methodology and objectives. She found out that metaphorical expressions take more time and are more difficult to translate if they exploit a cognitive domain different from that of the target language equivalent expression. According to the hypothesis, the reason for this delay, difficulty and uncertainty in the translation of different domain metaphors is the search for another conceptual mapping (i.e. another cognitive domain). That is to say the fact that metaphors almost always exploit such different cognitive domains implies the search for a cognitive equivalence for SL metaphors in the TL. In other words, the translator is called upon to play the role of a proxy agent doing the act of conceptual mapping on behalf of the TL reader. If he can touch upon a similar TL cognitive domain, then his task will be fulfilled quite successfully and easily. If not, he has to look for the cognitive domain that fits in the TL as the SL one does. The result of the first action is often an equivalent TL metaphor or—under the worst conditions—a TL simile. The result of the second action, however, is open to many possibilities, of which rendering the SL metaphor into a TL one is the least likely. Thus a metaphor might be rendered into a simile, a paraphrase, a footnote, an explanation or—as a last resort—it can be omitted.

Therefore, we believe that attempts of literal rendering or mere linguistic meaning transference of the metaphoric expressions from one language to another are deemed to result in a noticeably bad product, especially when these expressions draw on culture-specific methods of thinking rather than on shared or universal notions or schemata.

Referring to cultural aspects and drawing on the general guidelines of the cognitive framework (i.e. the cognitive equivalent hypothesis) for metaphor translation, we utilized three sets of authentic English and Ukrainian examples of metaphors. The first set comprises metaphors of similar mapping conditions reflecting shared ideas which are expressed by identical metaphors in both languages, and other instances of metaphors which are realized by different lexical items in the TL. The third contains metaphors of different mapping conditions, and which lack equivalents in the TL.

Metaphors of similar mapping conditions

This category represents metaphors expressing a small number of ideas shared by the two languages and hence expressed, roughly speaking, by similar expressions. Anthropologists call theses shared ideas 'cultural universals.' Comprising many diverse sub-cultures, a universal culture can be thought of as a constellation of common core attitudes and values reflected by practices common to most of the sub-cultures. Similarities in mapping conditions across diverse cultures could be labeled as 'pancultural metaphorical expression,' which derives from 'panhuman sharedness of basic experience'. Consider the following almost similar English and Ukrainian metaphors; most of them are proverbs reflecting the wisdom of many sub-cultures. Having a didactic function, these metaphors figure human philosophical insights, logic, wisdom, and instructions in ways which reinforce universal conventional images and

attitudes, and therefore both reflect and reproduce those conventions. In other words these metaphors are a reflection of human experience; they can contribute to exposing the way such conventions are embedded in language.

1. SL/ A black hen lays a white egg.
TL/ Чорна курка несе білі яйця.
2. SL/ Actions speak louder than words.
TL/ Не по словах судять, а по ділах.
3. SL/ All is not gold that glitters.
TL/ Не все золото, що блищить.
4. SL/ Bad news travels quickly.
TL/ Погані новини передаються швидко.
5. SL/ Custom is a second nature.
TL/ Звичка – друга натура.
6. SL/ Extremes meet.
TL/ Протилежності сходяться.
7. SL/ Time is money.
TL/ Час – гроші.
8. SL/ To be up to the ears in love.
TL/ Бути по вуха закоханим.
9. SL/ Take the bull by the horns.
TL/ Брати бика за роги.
10. SL/ Every man for himself, and God for us all.
TL/ Богу молись, а сам стережись.

Although examples above represent metaphors expressing a small number of ideas shared by the two languages, hence expressed, roughly speaking, by similar expressions and reflect values, and beliefs peculiar to each particular culture (i.e. English and Ukrainian). It is important to notice how users of each language conceptualize the concept of love in (8) to reflect the same idea. Attention should be also paid to example (7), where the similarity in 'value' conceptualization in each language is shown. Thus, both in English and Ukrainian 'time' is likened to 'money' (i.e. the monetary value). Further, religious affiliations affect the lexical choice to express the same idea in each language, as it is the case in (10). However, examples, such as (2) (3) above, embody a conceptual metaphor, where the SL (i.e. English) concept or experience is borrowed and loan-translated into Ukrainian.

Metaphors having similar mapping conditions but lexically realized differently

As stated above, beliefs and religion are aspects of culture that play a very significant role in translation. As is shown in the following examples, although the English examples and their Ukrainian counterpart metaphors are related to the same conceptual domain, the ethical system in the TL has led to major differences in lexical choice.

1. SL / All are not saints that go to church.
TL / Бога благає, чортові служить.

2. SL / God's mill grinds slow but sure.

TL / Від розплати не втечеш.

3. SL / The gods send nuts to those who have no teeth.

TL / Бог горіхів послав, як чорт зуби забрав.

4. Where God builds a church, the Devil will build a chapel

TL / Пусти чорта в хату, то він і на піч залізе.

5. SL / Man proposes, God disposes.

TL / Бачить Бог з неба, що кому треба.

In the five examples above, the only plausible justification for this variation in the use of metaphoric expressions is the fact that the users of each language map the particular conceptual domain of their own world differently.

Metaphors of different mapping conditions

Examples of this category generate when working on culture-bound SL metaphors that are mapped into a domain different from that of the TL. Since "languages are the best mirror of human cultures", and "it is through the vocabulary of human languages that we can discover and identify the culture-specific conceptual configurations characteristic of different peoples of the world" [7, p. 57], different cultures conceptualize experiences in varying ways. Therefore, "the translatability of any given SL metaphor depends on: 1) the particular cultural experience and semantic associations exploited by it, and 2) the extent to which these can, or not, be reproduced non-anomalously in TL, depending on the degree of overlap in each particular case". This is typically the case when working on metaphors mapped in the religious and political domains. Such metaphors are called root metaphors underlying people's views or attachments and shaping their understanding of a situation. Religion is considered the most common root metaphor since birth, marriage, death and other life experiences can convey different meanings to different people depending on their religious beliefs. Below are examples of English conceptual metaphors the image of which cannot be reproduced in the TL. Therefore, the translator has no choice other than replacing the SL image with a TL image that does not clash with the target culture. This can only be done by resorting to the strategy of different cognitive mapping in search for cognitive equivalence. As mentioned before, the product of this process might be a TL ***simile, paraphrase, explanatory remark***, or even ***a footnote***. The reader is invited to see how inadequate the translation is due to the absence of identical cognitive mapping of the SL expressions in the TL on behalf of the translator. Proverbs constitute a rich source of such metaphors which pose a serious problem even to the most experienced professional translators. To shed more light on this subtle aspect of metaphor, let us consider some authentic exemplary metaphors:

1. SL / Punctuality is the politeness of kings.

TL / Краще на годину раніше, ніж на хвилину пізніше.

2. SL / You cannot wash a charcoal white.

TL / З чорної кішки білої не зробиш.

3. SL / Every Jack must have his Jill.

SL / Нема кращого друга, як вірна супруга.

4. *SL / Whisky make rabbit hug lion.*

TL / Як п'ян – капітан, а проспиться – то й свині боїться.

5. *SL / Life is not all cakes and ale.*

TL / На віку, як на довгій ниві, всього трапляється: і кукіль, і пшениця. (A footnote: *кукіль* – бур'ян з родини гвоздикових, що росте серед хлібних злаків).

It is apparent that the attempts to maintain these metaphors in Ukrainian translation have communicatively failed. To solve this problem, the translator of these proverbs provides even a footnote to explain the meaning of Ukrainian metaphors. However, a better policy in such cases is to provide a brief explanation in the main body of the text provided that it does not unduly interrupt the flow of the text.

Literature

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Резюме

У статті йдеться про особливості перекладу метафор з точки зору когнітивної лінгвістики. Відповідно до гіпотези когнітивного перекладу метафор Н. Менделбліт існують два способи перекладу метафор: метафори, що мають спільний концептуальний рівень, але реалізуються вербально по-різному в двох мовах, та метафори, що ґрунтуються на відмінних вербальних та концептуальних рівнях. Втім малий відсоток деметафоризації на вербальному і концептуальному рівнях свідчить про адекватність перекладу метафор, незважаючи на національно-культурну специфіку образів, що лежать в їхній основі.