УДК 811.112

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VERBAL IMAGE AS A TRANSLATION PROBLEM

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ПРОБЛЕМИ ВІДТВОРЕННЯ ХУДОЖНІХ ОБРАЗІВ
ПРИ ПЕРЕКЛАДІ

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In order to study stylistic functions of simile and the way it affects reader's perception we turned to the novels by a prolific British writer of the 20th century Graham Greene.

Another aspect of our research touched upon the problem of simile reproduction in translation. Similes raise problems in interpretation, due to the fact that only some of them are easily recognizable as belonging to the class of idiomatic expressions. The ways of simile rendering in translations are revealed.

Keywords*: comparison, translation transformation, semantic structure, stylistic significance, meaning.*

Дослідження присвячене вивченню художніх порівнянь з позицій їх нормальної структури, семантики та стилістичної значущості. Дослідження формальної структури художніх порівнянь у англомовних текстах виявило значну кількість граматичних структур, залучених до створення порівняння. Водночас, аналіз перекладів романів Грема Гріна виявив, що при відтворенні у перекладі втрачається різноплановість структури художнього порівняння, хоча й за умови збереження смислу висловлювання. Це спричиняє недостатньо адекватну передачу особливостей індивідуального стилю цього автора.

Ключові слова*: художнє порівняння, перекладацькі трансформації, семантична структура, стилістична значущість, смисл.*

Исследование посвящено изучению художественных сравнений с позиций их формальной структуры, семантики и стилистической значимости. Одновременно анализ переводов романов Грэма Грина обнаружил, что при воспроизведении в переводе теряется разноплановость структуры художественного сравнения, хотя и при условии сохранения смысла высказывания. Это приводит недостаточно адекватную передачу особенностей индивидуального стиля этого автора.

Ключевые слова*: художественное сравнение, переводческие трансформации, семантическая структура, стилистическая значимость, смысл.*

According to Literary Encyclopaedic Dictionary the verbal image is the aesthetic category characterizing a specific method of cognizing and transforming the extralinguistic reality, which is an intrinsic feature only of art. Translating figures of speech deals with finding secondary meaning in the source language (SL), and finding cultural meaning and appropriate equivalence in the target language (TL). Figures of speech are some of the most challenging translation difficulties.

Principles are amalgamated integrally within the verbal image, reflecting the reality and at the same time generalizing it, creating a new fanciful world by means of creative transformation of a real matter (colours, sounds, words) into an individual thing occupying a special place among the other real world objects.

A good way of understanding the image and the methods of its translation was provided by V. V. Koptilov. Subordination of all the lexical units of belle-lettres style to the task of image creating is the main feature of literature. Image is the main component of a literary text and its main translation unit. But it should not be regarded separately from the linguistic means of its realization. The best way to understand the notion of verbal image and its translation properly is to regard this lingual phenomenon as a whole, a system or a living organism depending on the extralinguistic world and the processes circuiting in it, for any efforts aimed at studying the separate parts of the image (lexical units bearing no expressive imagerial charge, except for the denotation) will end in failure [2].

Similes raise problems in interpretation, due to the fact that only some of them are easily recognizable as belonging to the class of idiomatic expressions. Baker (1992) identifies two main problems for translators dealing with phraseo-logical expressions: the ability to recognize and interpret an expression correctly and the difficulties involved in rendering the various aspects of meaning that a phraseological expression conveys into the target language.

Once a simile has been recognized and interpreted correctly, the next step is to decide how to translate it into the target language. Expressions directly linked to English social behavioural patterns' (relate to specific habits or social occasions) may be difficult to translate because of their associations with culture-specific contexts.

Most often, expressions with proper names referring to characters that are more or less known, require disambiguation and evidence of cultural specificity. Thus, semi-proverbial English colloquial expressions such as *lazy as Joe, the marine, who laid down his musket to sneeze* or *lazy as Ludlam's dog, that leaned his head against the wall to bark* are used to characterize exceedingly lazy persons; *black as Newgate knocker* contains a prototype for blackness which has a questionable reference even for natives: either the fringe or lock of hair which costermongers and thieves twist back towards the ear (Brewer 1993) or the colour of the heavy iron knocker on the gate of the Newgate Prison from London. Their translation into Romanian entails a serious loss of these cultural elements, unless we use strategies of paraphrasing or an elaborate explanation in a footnote (Некряч 2008).

An interesting example of culture-specific elements in Ukrainian similes is represented by an expression containing an outdated prototype (in semantics, the prototype is the object considered as very typical of the kind of object which can be referred to by an expression containing the predicate *as, like* or *similar to… and)* .Simile as well as any other image-bearing device poses some serious challenges to a translator. Difficulties arise from the divergence between the source language culture and the target language culture as well as grammatical and lexical resources available in the target language. Translation strategies are determined by all of the five elicited features of simile and encompass the following: literal translation (retention of the same vehicle); replacement of the vehicle; retention of the same vehicle accompanied by its explanation; reduction of the simile; omission of the simile.

Having received the evidence that simile is an indispensable part of the imagery space of G. Grene's novels, we turn to the translation of one of his novels in order to explore the reproduction of the author's individual style in translations.

Due to the fact that the formal structure its simile and its stylistic functions have been described in detail, we turn to a new look at this phenomenon of text in light of comparative stylistics. The latter implies a reproduction of the original text as well as its transfer to a different cultural environment, which necessitates consideration of differences in systems of figurative reflection of reality and characteristics of traditional genres and compositional forms, rooted in the respective culture [1].

Similes are taken to be the most fundamental form of figurative language, carrying the assumption that terms literally connected with one object can be transferred to another object. A writer/speaker often uses simile with the intentions of introducing a new object/concept, offering a more precise meaning, or simply presenting a more poetic effect to his text/speech [3].

Translation is an act of transference, in which a text from the source language (SL) is replaced by its equivalent in the target language (TL) (Catford 1965). Newmark's (1988 :5) (in his modern version of the term) states that it is though not by any means always, rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text.

Even the mere thought of inferring from these two definitions that the task of a translator and the whole translation process is a simple one seems a naiveté on the part of the inexperienced. Any given source text intended for translation, regardless of its text-type, is required to undergo a close reading in order to understand what it is about, and then an analysis from the point of view of the translator. The analysis stage consists of determining the intention of the text – which, according to Newmark (1988), represents the SL writer's attitude to the subject matter – and also the style in which it is written. Being

attentive to the selected lexicon, the syntax, figures of speech, neologisms, punctuations, names, and many more is a vital role the translator plays in the process of translation. In the case of poetry, apart from all the above features there is a surplus of sound effects such as rhyme, meter, assonance, alliteration, stress, onomatopoeia. The most common goal among translators is, and always should be, to create the same effect on the target reader as the original writer had intended for his readers. Understanding and analyzing figurative language in a text, as mentioned above, is one of the difficult processes in translation. One of these figures of speech is simile which is considered by linguists as the most basic where one object is used to describe another object and both objects are essentially disparate entities, but common in one or more attributes [1].

Newmark proposes the following strategies for translating simile:

– reproducing the same image in the TL;

– replacing the image in the SL with a standard TL image which does not clash with the TL culture;

– translation of simile by metaphor, retaining the image;

– translation simile by simile metaphor plus sense;

– omission. If the simile is redundant or serves no practical purpose, there is a case for its deletion, together with its sense component;

We turned to the novel by G. Greene *Monsignor Quixote* and its translation into Ukrainian by V. Mytrofanov. Consider the following examples:

1. *Rather as thought he were a deacon arranging the altar before Mass the assistant laid out on a counter a variety of purple socks* (MQ 1982 :89).

Продавець, ніби диякон, що готує вівтар до меси, виклав на прилавок цілий розмай лілових шкарпеток.

2 *He looked like a judge who is pondering the alternative of a death sentence* (MQ 1982 :17).

Наче суддя, подумав отець Кіхот, що обмірковує вирок, перш ніж засудити обвинуваченого.

7

3. *Don't tell me that Brezhnev is not just as much a bourgeois <u>as</u> you and me* (MQ 1982 :100).

Не кажіть мені, що Брежнев не такий самий буржуа, <u>як</u> ви і я/

4. *Cars <u>like</u> women, shouldn't never be spoiled* (MQ 1982 :123).

Машини та жінок розпещувати не можна.

5. *Father Quixote started the engine and Rocinante responded <u>with the jump of an antelope</u>* (MQ 1982 :220).

Отець Кіхот увімкнув мотор, і Росінант стрибнув <u>як</u> антилопа.

These are all clear examples of subordinate structure which allows us to separate simile from metaphor and periphrasis. As to the nature of communication, then these similes should be viewed through the prism of category of similarity, which is installed on different objects and provides gradualism. The basis of how assimilation within the simile is a common finding: in the behaviour (examples 1, 2) life priorities / values (Example 3) and signs (examples 4, 5). Assimilation of the two entities can occur outside domains: machine and a woman, beast and machine (examples 4, 5).

Having defined the basic elements of the structure, we propose to move immediately to the ways of translating. The first three examples are variations of «standard» translation in which the structural elements of the original are identical variant translation: ie, the structure of the simile is the same. Interesting to consider are examples 4 and 5, in which differences can be observed in the construction in the original and translation. Thus, in Example 4 in English presented the standard structure of the simile «machine as a woman», but in Ukrainian translation the structure is destroyed. These similes are based on the conjunction «as» that serves as an indicator of simile, both in the source and target texts.

Translation problems incurred by similes are of different kinds. They can be culturally bound, as well as caused by the divergence in the language systems. In order to overcome these difficulties, the following translation strategies

are used: a) literal translation; b) the changes in metaphorical expressions. As a result, similes in the source and target languages draw on different source domains and have different linguistic realizations; c) omission of the simile.

The above mentioned text manipulations help to keep the general logical meaning of the text unaltered, while the implicit emotional meaning undergoes significant changes. It leads to the transformations in the entrenched recipient design of the literary text, as well as introduces changes to the individual author's style. Thus, it must be concluded that altering stylistic devices that are intrinsic to the imagery space of the author could hinder adequate perception of the literary work.

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