

MULTIDISCIPLINARY ASPECT OF TRANSLATION AS AN OUTCOME OF INTEGRATION PROCESSES IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

T.G. Pshenkina

Altai State Pedagogical Academy (Barnaul, Russian Federation)
E-mail: t_pshenkina@hotmail.com

Abstract. A multidisciplinary aspect of translation results from the integrated processes of Modern Linguistics. The complex nature of translation has been obvious for centuries as it is a meeting point of diverse knowledge and experience, yet the pros and cons of such meeting need a closer exploration to avoid misunderstanding in terminology and subject – object relations. The article explores a combined power of three paradigms – communicative, psycholinguistic, and cognitive – to reconstruct and construct speech in the process of intercultural communication. The advantages of such enterprise are plausible as they are based on the conception of language as only *one of* the mental faculties of a person alongside with a number of others.

Keywords: translation; theory and practice of translation; paradigm of knowledge; expansionism; knowledge integration.

Translation is one of the forms of language interaction, and its successfulness is achieved due to the experience amassed throughout years of translation practice and its analysis. However, we cannot yet confirm the close relationship between translation theory and practice, which is backed up by a number of scientific articles in *Mosty* (“The Bridges”) translation journal [1-3] and some other papers on this subject [4].

We believe that there are several reasons for that. One of them dates back to the 1950s when the idea emerged to grant translation studies the status of an independent science. The opponents argued that the explanation of translation solutions was to be found in comparative linguistics, hermeneutics and other scientific areas. Later on even the most obvious achievements of translation theorists (e.g., the classification of translation techniques) did not foster the prominence of translation theory. It all came down to the idea that this theory “was lagging behind translation practice” [5: 50].

The translation studies in the 1970s and the 1980s did little to single it out a separate branch. Russian and German translation theorist of that time treated translation as an act of communication performed by its participants in order to achieve a communicative effect. From the modern viewpoint this effect is manifested “either as a minimum understanding of the original text author’s intention or as a maximum communicative influence on the text recipient” [7: 130].

Thus, communicative approach has shown the need to focus on another component of the interlinguistic communication, i.e. on a person (text

producer, text recipient, intermediary). It coincided in time with the emergence of the new anthropocentric paradigm.

Scientific paper compilations of the late 1990s and the early 2000s highlight the popularity of translation research. According to M. Zwillling, "translation studies had made their way to become a quite ramified scientific discipline" [8: 32]. It is the interdisciplinarity of translation studies that we would like to dwell on in this paper.

Speaking about scientific research, nowadays the need for incorporating the knowledge of different areas is unquestionable. Expansionism remains one of the key features of linguistic science which were defined by E. Kubryakova [9: 207]. The productivity of the interaction between translation and adjacent sciences is historical and obvious, for the paradigm shift in linguistics promotes the disclosure of new aspects of translation, the new insights into translation strategies, etc.

Just as important is the feedback of humanities and translation. Today we observe the growing cooperation between translation and adjacent sciences. Researchers believe that is due to the rise of mental processes research. The opportunities offered by the joint studies of intelligence activity and translation are enormous. Translation process features double code change, and if the findings of studying this mental process can be recorded materially, then translation can be considered an natural way of obtaining objective data about human mental activities [10-12].

However, the excessive enlargement of translation studies subject area is duly criticized by translation theorists and practitioners. The paper by D. Buzadzhii and V. Lanchikov "Death list. On the Troubles of Modern Translation Studies in Russia" [2] offers convincing and well-grounded reasons on that score. The authors maintain that in an attempt to meet the goals of a particular piece of research scholars often ignore actual translation objectives, with the theoretical principles torn apart from translation practice and fundamental translation notions and terms being quite blurred. "Notions and terms are borrowed from foreign subject areas not because it is necessary but because it is trendy. <...> More often than not these terms become metaphorical and act as mere symbols enabling the researcher to juggle with them as he or she wishes" [Ibid: 53].

The concern of the D. Buzadzhii and V. Lanchikov is clear. Their paper deals with the most relevant questions of translation theory and didactics that cry for debate and answers. The article reflects the general ambiguous attitude towards translation theory and some adjacent study areas. Accepting the productivity of integrative research (e.g. employing the findings of psychology, corpus linguistics, etc.), translation theory at the same time attempts to preserve its autonomy. Despite existing skepticism towards research carried out within the scope of cognitive linguistics, it is safe to say that the integration of translation models based on various paradigmatic

cal foundations, promotes the meeting of translation goals and enables to bring together translation theory and practice.

As an example let us consider the potential of three modern paradigms to meet one of the major translation goals: the reconstruction and the conveying of the intentional meaning. Based on the assumption that the understanding happens as a result of intersubject activity, the born meaning cannot be only and ultimate. The proponents of different translation models offer different solutions to this task.

The advocates of psycholinguistic models believe that starting point should be the study of psychological, mental, emotional and intentional activity of the text creator, the translator and the text reader (for further details see [14]). It is assumed that the mechanisms of translation process are contained in activity theories of translation. According to these theories, the unit of analysis is a basic speech act. Acts here are defined as *ways of representing meanings through language expression*. By such expression the author singles out various meanings, while the translator produces his own ones based on the interpretation of conventional language units of the text. The interdependence of language units within the text structure enables the translator to identify the author's intention of using definite language units. The content of the text always implies its reconstruction by the reader in accordance with his understanding of the message. The translation activity emerges as speech-and-thought production and translator's reconstruction of the integrative / dominant meaning of the original text [15].

Having said that, the majority of translation theorists nowadays agree that translation includes semantic differences and semantic shifts depending on the translator's interpretation of the source text [16, 17]. Naturally a question arises as to the extent to which this semantic shift may happen and how it can help integrate the knowledge of different ethnical cognitions.

The answer can be found if we resort to cognitive paradigm, which possesses explanatory potential. One of the basic terms of cognitive linguistics is the concept, which is an operational cognitive unit and contains the information about the way things stand in the world. Integrating the knowledge of the two paradigms, the cognitive and the psychological one, the concept can be thought of as a complex meaningful unit the structure of which includes several components: the body of the sign, notion, image, objective content, associations, emotional and evaluative components [15: 36]. The concept has a field structure in the center of which is the a notion or one of its characteristics, with the relations between the components based on functional principle.

Why can the integrative approach to the concept be exciting for a translator? First of all, it provides him a reference point in the continual and infinite space of meaning. The idea of translation as the activity of selecting functional foundations aimed at creating integrative cognitive structures en-

ables to consider the model of concept put forward by psycholinguists as the basis for designing and developing translation programs, selecting translation strategies and verifying the quality of translated texts.

Let us go through a particular example.

The adequate translation of the sentence below can be carried out only when the emotional and evaluative component of the concept *guerrillas* is correctly interpreted:

Past links to terrorist groups... are proving useful in helping to free hostages held by Muslim guerrillas [19].

One of the most authoritative English-Russian dictionaries edited by Yu. Apresyan has the following entry: *guerrilla*–1. *Партизан, боец*. The entry does not include any information necessary for proper understanding of this concept. Historical and discourse experience of a Russian receiver of the translation makes the meaning of the Russian equivalent *партизан* distinctly positive. So the seemingly obvious meaning of the English sentence confuses beginner translators. The inner context of the recipient contradicts to the external context of the sentence. It is not quite clear for Russian mentality why *партизаны* should hold hostages that are to be freed.

At the same time, the English concept of *guerrilla* includes a negative evaluation component, which is quite clear when you study the definition provided in English language dictionaries: *guerrilla* – *a member of an unofficial military group, esp. one fighting to remove a government, which attacks its enemy in small groups unexpectedly* [ELAC]; *guerrilla* – *a member of an irregular military force that uses harassing tactics against an enemy army* [AHD]. Hence we can translate *guerilla* as *боевик*.

Another approach to semantic text interpretation is suggested by D. Buzadzi, representative of the linguistic translation school currently being developed at Moscow State Linguistic University. It is based on the functional and communicative perspective, and, on the one hand, can be compared to the selection of foundations for translation strategies described in earlier approaches, and, on the other, makes them more specific and complete thus further uniting translation theory and practice.

In his article describing the essence of the suggested model the author specifies that communicative adequateness of translation is achieved by rendering functional and information pictures of the original text. The former is associated with the “wind rose”, a number of vectors the resultant of which determines the nature (informative, affective, aesthetical) of the analyzed text or an extract from it and implies one more opposition of the line “author’s vs. general” (“idiolect vs. conventional”). The information picture is “a set of actualized communicatively essential meanings of the original text that are to be translated” [22: 53]. The four types of notional information (situation, expressive-evaluative, associative-figurative, and style information) can be represented in juxtaposed texts to different extents.

The described model features two levels of source and target language text juxtaposition. The first is the level of form (phonetic, morphological, lexical, syntactical and idiomatic) that reflects the conventionality of language means used in both texts. It is represented by five axes corresponding to the five types of forms, while the conventionality picture is marked by a curve intersecting each of the axes. The second level, the level of content, features a curve that enables to evaluate and compare the density of every type of information expressed in a communicative passage of the source text with the potential translation [22: 50].

Let us try and integrate the ideas of all the three approaches and conduct a comparative content analysis of several passages from J. Brodsky's *Watermarks* [23] and its translation *Набережная неисцелимых* by G. Dashevsky.

A Venetian essay is a passionate declaration of love in winter Venice, a remarkably beautiful city on water. Reminiscing about his first arrival, the author writes:

1. *Then I saw the only person I knew in that city; the sight was fabulous* [22].

Тут я увидел единственное человеческое существо, которое знал в этом городе; картина была сказочная [Ibid: 103].

It should be noted that psycholinguists generally call for including the problems of understanding into the subject area of translatology. It usually takes place in translating literary texts where reflection is based on the synthesis of the translator's life and discourse experience. In such cases the actualization of linguistic form correlates with constant changes in the semantic space of the literary work. As a result, new meanings emerge and new translation strategies have to be selected.

This very case is given in the analyzed essay. Taking into account Brodsky's bilinguism, we can suggest that the choice of the lexeme *sight* was influenced by A. Pushkin's verses dedicated to A. Kern ("Я помню чудное мгновенье" – *I still remember that amazing moment*). Hence the translation calls for the word *виденье*. It looks quite suitable in this context [24: 47], whereas the chosen variant *картина* does not reveal the emotional component of the concept "beauty" prevailing in Brodsky's essay.

The language unit *sight*, once appearing in the source-language text, emerges multiple times again further on and acts as an emotional and evaluative marker of describing the Venetian acquaintance of the writer. The translator has to take this point into consideration while selecting translation strategies in order to preserve the author's narrative features, i.e. the functional picture of the original text. However, the variant *картина* is not equal to the original lexeme on every level. Below are seven cases of the contextual repetition of the lexeme *sight* and its translations. In our view, all of them have one feature in common, viz. they lack the conventionality of expressing

the target meaning, because the author deviates from general language standard.

2. *The sight had come there in the guise of a Slavacist* [23: 11]. – Тогда картина явилась в облике славистики [Ibid: 103].

3. *That nearly disqualified the sight as a subject of interest in the eyes of the coterie to which I belonged* [Ibid: 11]. – Последнее чуть не зачеркнуло картину как объект интереса в глазах моей компании [Ibid: 103].

4. *So we regarded the sight as the physical extension and embodiment of our ideals and principles* [Ibid: 13]. – Мы считали картину физическим продолжением и воплощением наших идеалов и принципов [Ibid: 105].

5. *Soprettywasthesight...* [Ibid: 13] – Картина была такой хорошенькой [Ibid: 105].

6. *The nutria-clad sight next to me began to explain* [Ibid: 14]. – Рядом со мной картина в нутрии объясняла... [Ibid: 103].

7. *...inthewakeofthesight'sdimming* [Ibid: 29] – ...вслед за тем, как картина померкла [Ibid: 110].

Conforming to conventionality in expressing the meaning is an important part of the translator's professional competence, which is pointed out by N. Ryabtseva [4]. She notes that "a professional translator rather seeks to express the relevant meaning in the target language in accordance with its norms. Thus, the quite controversial precondition for the translator's creative thinking is the search for the most *stereotypical* expression in the target language" [Ibid: 65-66].

We can conclude, therefore, that the disciplinarity is the result of integration processes in the contemporary science. References to careless usage of terms or departure from methodological principles in new disciplines are the result of human factor rather than a feature of interdisciplinarity, which is the signature of modern science. Here one would recall the prediction of V. Vernadsky who suggested that the expansion of scientific knowledge would blur the boundaries between separate sciences and researchers would have to specialize not in branches of science but in scientific issues.

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