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Theory of translation (UDC 81`25)

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ЧТО МЫ ЧИТАЕМ, ЧИТАЯ В ПЕРЕВОДЕ?

Аннотация

В статье рассматривается феномен понимания как коммуникативный процесс в целом. Чтение художественного текста позиционируется в этой связи как вариант коммуникативного процесса, где писатель - это отправитель сообщения, а читатель - получатель. Отдельным аспектом процесса понимания выделен процесс и результат понимания переводного текста. Автор анализирует механизмы и этапы процесса декодирования сообщения в условиях изменения внешней детерминанты. В статье приводятся некоторые эмпирические данные на основе сопоставления оригинала и перевода художественного текста, иллюстрирующие теоретические положения.

Ключевые слова: понимание, коммуникация, перевод.

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WHAT WE READ WHEN WE READ IN TRANSLATION

Abstract

The article treats the phenomenon of understanding as a communicative process in general, and reading a literary text is positioned as a type of communication process. In it the author is the message sender and the reader is the message recipient. Reading a translation of a literary text as a process and as a result is analyzed by the author particularly as an aspect of the process of understanding. The article also dwells on the mechanisms and stages of the decoding process when the linguistic and extra linguistic conditions are changed. The theoretical assumtions are illustrated by empirical data received in a research specially held by the author.

Keywords: understanding, communication, translation.

The communication act, according to R.Jacobson, is a linear interaction between the sender and the recipient mediated by the code, the contact and the context. Logically we may similize reading a text to oral communication. Thus, text understanding and interpreting are obviously determined by the same factors as verbal communication. Understanding of a literary text is the fulfillment of a definite communicative task. Which means that the difficulties in the text interpretation are similar to the difficulties in the interaction of communication participants. And the failure in decoding leads to the fact that the sender's idea is not perceived at all or at least transformed.

In our thinking the reading process being likened to the communication act may be also linear and the stages of the information processing are placed successively and alternately. Thus, we suggest an adaptation of the familiar scheme of the communication act and develop it in connection with the reading process. It becomes evident that the information sent and the information received may differ both in quality and in quantity because the reconstruction the reader has to hold is determined by a different set of factors than the author's and a new semantic entity, a new construction is given birth to.

Obviously its components will differ in quantity from the original one since any information transference implies information loss. More than that, the components of the recreated construction are far from identical to the original in quality. For, in the first place, they undergo individual processing by the reader, and, secondly, are affected by numerous linguistic and extra linguistic factors that change both their importance and their significance. Some researchers call it "the reader's determinant" meaning a variable element "determined by the reader's experience and the background (the reader's mental context)" [3; c.10].

The text recreation process itself may be modeled as a kids puzzle-picture building – attaching separate pieces to each other. But this metaphor does not give way to the great scale of variations that a text reconstruction suggests every time it is read. In a puzzle-picture a particular place is ascribed to a particular piece in accordance with its shape and its "contents", the places are fixed and preset by the programmed result – the original picture. The text recreation process can be also compared to the reconstruction of the patchwork quilt. The pieces are normally identical in size, they most definitely every time change their places, though remaining always the same in number. This never happens when reading a text, so neither analogy works here.

Text reconstructing is not predetermined by the expected result, neither it is directed towards a definite final product. Even the number of initial elements may differ in the recreated text, actually it always does. In other words, reading a text, or reconstructing a text, – is a creative process unlikely to be programmed and limited by the result.

The recipient is evidently made to search for the key or the signal to the most complete reconstruction of the text sent by a speaker or a writer. But reconstructing is logically a secondary process. It follows that the reconstruction is a variation to a certain degree different from the originally sent message.

The theory of communication operates with the basic scheme: "the sender – the message – the recipient". Its mechanism includes three stages: first there is a code preset by the discourse type, then there is a text coded within this system, transferred and decoded. The code is a constant, the text is a variable. Ideally the "input-text" and the "output-text" are identical, but in practice there is always a loss of information [2]. Y.M. Lotman states that this can't be avoided *a priori*. However, it may be disputable, for in the reconstruction process information may not only be lost but also incremented through the influence of the new context. In this connection we can hardly treat the transformation of the initial text in terms of the information loss.

Quite definitely, if the input and the output are not identical both in structure and in contents it is a loss. Because even if the reader manages to preserve the number of information slots does it mean that the lost original element and the new replacing element will be fully equivalent.

Our research goes further than that. We suggest that reading a literary text in translation makes a more complicated mechanism of information processing for it's mediated by another participant. The linear scheme is getting longer which leads to larger transformations of the original message. The communication chain is extended through another member. And the reconstruction as a product undergoes an extra transformation mediated by the interpreter. The new piece is characterized by a greater amount of both semantic loss and semantic increment. Consequently the message sent and the message received are inevitably different. The semantic transformation on the whole is especially obvious when it goes about the analysis of the original and a translation of a literary text.

The theoretical hypothesis has been studied empirically. We put under the comparative analysis the original and the translation of texts by the contemporary British author J.Fforde. The units of different language levels were studied: occasional words, proper names, allusions, quotations, parodies, stylizations and epigraphs. The research proved the semantic loss, the semantic increment or semantic transformation of the original text depending on many factors.

A few of the most demonstrative results deal with the associations and intertextual links of proper names in the original text and its translation. Statistics show that almost 80% of possible associative links are preserved in the translation. They are the cases when in the original and the translating linguacultures there are direct received equivalents, or when it runs of the universal precedents. Here refer proper names from the world literature, history, politics, culture. It is this fact that allows to preserve the allusive background of the original in the text of the translation. The 20% are made by unique proper names. They are produced by means of language play and mostly demand transformations thus changing the original semantics of the unit in particular and the text as a whole [1].

Summing it up, the semantic loss is inevitable in the process of translation, since there is always something greater than a human being in it. And in spite of the assumptions that it's quite possible to represent particular language phenomena by means of another language to a full extent, still there are reasons why it is possible just in theory. These reasons are the grammatical types of languages, differences in lexical systems, cultural background etc. So the translation process is directly connected with many circumstances which finally define the quality of the "output-text".

Coming back to the question set as a title of this paper — What We Read When We Read In Translation? – we will sooner guess that it is a product different from its original version. It'll be safer to say that reading in translation we are reconstructing a reconstruction and recreating a recreation.

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ОСОБЕННОСТИ УПОТРЕБЛЕНИЯ И ПЕРЕВОДА ЛЕКСИКИ ИСЛАМА В РУССКОЯЗЫЧНЫХ
И АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНЫХ НОВОСТНЫХ ТЕКСТАХ
(ПЕРЕВОД ОРИГИНАЛЬНОЙ СТАТЬИ НА РУССКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ)

Аннотация
Статья посвящена проблеме употребления арабизмов исламской тематики в русскоязычных и англоязычных новостных текстах в связи с их актуализацией и лингвокультурным особенностям их перевода.
Оригинальный текст был опубликован в научном журнале "Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Лингвистика", № 1, 2013.
Ключевые слова: лексика Ислама, арабизм, актуализация, русскоязычный новостной текст, англоязычный новостной текст, перевод, коннотация.

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ASPECTS OF ISLAMIC WORDS TRANSLATION AND USAGE IN RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH NEWS STORIES
(TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL RESEARCH PUBLISHED IN RUSSIAN)

Abstract
The article deals with the problem of arabic Islamic words usage in Russian and English news stories in the context of their actualisation and linguacultural aspects of their translation.
Original research was previously published in the scientific journal "Bulletin of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. Series: Linguistics", No. 1, 2013.
Keywords: Islamic words, arabic words, actualisation, Russian news stories, English news stories, translation, connotation.

Nowadays mass media more often than ever use in their news stories the confessional vocabulary of the Arabic origin. The actualisation of the words of the above mentioned semantic group is seen in Russian, as well as in other languages, which can be accounted for by extralinguistic factors, namely by the activization of the world Islamic movement. Despite the active usage of such Arabisms by both English and Russian speaking journalists, there are certain peculiarities of their introduction in the Russian and English news stories, namely the additional connotations of their meaning in the latest decade such Arabisms as *mujahiddin, wahhabit, shakhid, juhad, talib* and some others have taken root in the Russian language clue to mass media.

As compared with their Arab etymons the meaning of these borrowings has experienced transformation. Thus, the word *Shakhid*which in the Arabic language means «a martyr for the faith» — «شـهيد» in Russian semantically has negatively evaluated component of «Islamic suicide-bomber, kamikaze». The word *Mujahiddin*, which in Arabic means مجاهد «a fighter for the right cause», in Russian has two meanings: 1) «a soldier of the armed forces supporting the opposition in the Afgan war (1979-1989)»; 2) «a terrorist». The Arabic word Wahhabi وهابي meaning in Arabic «self-denying» in Russian is used as the name of the religious political movement meaning» an Islamic adherent preaching religious purity, renouncing luxury, etc.»; Juhad in its first meaning in the Arabic language is «labour in the name of Allah (1), in Russian it means «holy war of Muslims against infidels, armed struggle», etc.

This discrepancy of meanings of the original word and borrowing is a vivid reflection of the opposite points of view concerning the same phenomena of life in different languages: thus, a martyr turns into a suicide-killer, a fighter for the right cause becomes a terrorist militant, service of God grows into armed struggle.

The above mentioned Arabic words-etymons are formed from the widely-used verbs with neutral stylistic and positive emotionally-expressive colouring: جهد, شهد , وهب.

In Russian Arabisms acquire negatively evaluated connotations supported by contexts.These borrowings are used in the texts, connected with war, extremism, terror, crime. The negative emotive meaning is manifested due to the compatibility of Arabisms with the words having the semantic component «violence»: target, executed, weapons, armed, terror, attack, explosions, etc., which the examples from Russian news stories:

1. «инструкторы и военные инженеры остаются такой же желанной мишенью для **моджахедов**, как и французский спецназ на границе с Пакистаном» — instructors and army engineers are as desired a target for **mujahiddins**, as the French special task force on the boarder with Pakistan»;

2. «на одном из экстремистских сайтов появилось сообщение: священник был «казнен» за оскорбления «Корана и нашего Пророка» в брошюрах и в ходе диспутов. Имя стрелявшего не упоминается, сообщается, что этот человек после «операции» перебрался на Кавказ, где до того не бывал, присоединился к **моджахедам** и стал **шахидом**» — «there was a message on one of the extremist sites: a church man was executed for insulting «Koran and our Prophet» in brochures and in the disputes. The name of the person who shot him was not mentioned. The killer was said to move to the Caucasus, where he had never been before, to join Modjuheeds and become a shakhid»;

3. «ни один новый солдат больше не поедет на войну с **талибами**; **талибы**, облаченные в «пояса **шахида**», были вооружены стрелковым оружием и пытались прорваться внутрь зданий» — «not a single new soldier will go to the war against talibs. Talibs, wearing suiside-bomber's belt, were armed with cartridge ammunition and tried to get inside»;