

Theory of signs. Theory of translation. Standardization. Usage. Geographical linguistics (UDC 81`2)DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.18454/RULB.11.08>

Харитоновна Е.В.

Доцент, кандидат филологических наук, Северо-Восточный государственный университет

ТИПЫ ТЕКСТОВ И ПРОБЛЕМА ПЕРЕВОДИМОСТИ**Аннотация**

В статье с новых позиций рассматриваются возможности текстоцентрического подхода к процессу и результату переводческой деятельности и подтверждается неизблемость текста как основной категории переводоведения. В результате исследования было показано, что многогранный характер перевода требует учета самых разнообразных факторов, однако конечный набор параметров, релевантных для процесса перевода зависит именно от текста, поскольку именно текст детерминирует первичную и вторичную коммуникативные ситуации.

Ключевые слова: тип текста, социолект, художественный перевод.

Kharitonova E.V.

Associate professor, PhD in Philology, North-Eastern State University

TEXT TYPES AND THE PROBLEM OF TRANSLATABILITY**Abstract**

The article aims at revealing the possibilities of a textual approach to the process and result of translation activity from a new perspective and stating the inviolability of the text as the main category of Translation Studies. The results of the conducted research show that the complex nature of translation requires con-sideration of a wide variety of factors, but the final set of parameters relevant to the translation process depends on the text, since it is the text that determines the primary and secondary communicative situations.

Keywords: text type, sociolect, literary translation.

Почта авторов / Author Email: eharitonova@yandex.ru

Introduction

Approaching Translation Studies has always presented a certain theoretical difficulty since it started to be viewed as an independent science, and not as a branch of linguistics. In the history of Translation Theory, as a rule, two major approaches to Translation Studies were distinguished: literary and linguistic (e.g. I. A. Kashkin, A. V. Fedorov). In recent decades attempts have been made to single out another approach, which can be defined as 'sociocultural'. Sociocultural method of approaching translation is contrasted with the text-oriented one ('textocentric' approach), which is primarily concerned with the source text and lies within the range of linguistics. Sociocultural approach, on the contrary, deals with cultural, psychological, social phenomena, and does not consider translations as single texts, but regards them as a conglomerate of extralinguistic factors influencing the process of translation.

Method

The system of methods used in the work combines the method of comparative historical and philological research and the method of comparative linguistic analysis of the original *The Gulag Archipelago* by A. I. Solzhenitsyn [4, passim] and its translations into German [9, passim] and English [10, passim].

Discussion

The linguistic stage in the development of Translation Studies was formed in the 50s of the twentieth century, when, under the influence of the ideas of J. Firth, M. A. K. Halliday, J. Catford and others, the Theory of Translation began to be considered as a branch of linguistics. In the second half of the 1960s, there has been a significant increase in research focused mainly on the addressee of the translation and analyzing the nature of the pragmatic impact of the translated text on its recipient. The publication of A. Neubert's work *Pragmatic aspects of translation* in 1968 finally marked a 'pragmatic turn' in translation theory, announcing further approaching translation within a target-oriented framework. As it is well known, the pragmatic adequacy of translation implies the semantic equivalence of the texts of the source

language and of the target language from the point of communication, and not from purely formal positions.

A pragmatic turn in Translation Studies became a necessary premise for a culturally oriented approach to translation theory. Within the new cultural paradigm in translation, the focus shifted from a single word, a sentence or even a text, to the culture itself. As P. Ricoeur states in his work *On Translation*, "the translator does not move from the word to the sentence, to the text, to the cultural group, but conversely: absorbing the vast interpretations of the spirit of a culture, the translator comes down again from the text, to the sentence and to the word" [8, P. 31]. The increased attention to the cultural aspects of translation, emerging in the early 1980s of the twentieth century, entailed a "cultural turn" [6, P. 166], which opened a new page in the development of the science of translation.

The translation became not only a form of interlingual, but also a form of intercultural communication, entailing, according to A. Karamanian "a process of cultural de-coding, re-coding and en-coding" [7]. According to this approach translator had to be not only bilingual but also bi(multi)cultural, as he has turned to a mediator of cultures. Gradually, the research scope of Translation Studies included the study of the sociolinguistic and ethnopsycholinguistic factors influencing the process and result of translation, the special features of translation activity, related to the interpreter's personality as a secondary linguistic personality (Khaleeva 1989), the psycholinguistic aspects of interpreter's activity (Pischalnikova 1999; Pshenkina 2005; Sorokin, Markovina 1988), etc.

Summing up numerous studies devoted to various aspects of the status of the modern Theory of Translation, V. Sdobnikov came to the conclusion that the anthropocentric approach, involving the study not only of texts but also of those who use them and create them, has prevailed over the text-oriented one. According to the scholar, this change of paradigm laid the foundations for a new approach to the study and implementation of translation – "communicative-functional" [3, P. 6].

However, it seems that such a categorical one-sided assessment of the determinants of the translation process may turn to be rather vulnerable. Text is still the main object of the translation process, since it is the text that determines the primary and secondary communicative situations. Of course, the complicated nature of the translation requires consideration of a wide variety of factors, but the final set of parameters relevant to the translation process depends, in our opinion, primarily on the text. The importance of a text for the translation process can be assumed from the argumentation, given by I. Alekseeva, who devised a base for the translational classification of texts. The scholar argues, “texts of one type in different languages differ by formal signs on the phonetic, lexical, grammatical levels, but the same on the textual level” [1, P. 265]. The author also states that most text types are universal in nature, due to which translators rarely face troubles while translating different texts belonging to the same type.

It should be noted however, that the approach suggested by I. Alekseeva is not a universal one. It cannot be fully applied to the literary translation, since it is not only the meaning and function in the sentence that should be rendered in literary translation but the form itself, which may be important for communicating the emotional impact of the original.

Results

The degree of text universality can vary significantly. At the national level, the degree of universality of certain types of texts can significantly decrease, due to the uniqueness of historical development, political situation, specificity of mentality, and so on. As an example, we can name Russian and German literature of the twentieth century. Due to certain historical events inside the realm of two national literatures appeared the similar current, which was later defined as camp literature.

The uniqueness of the camp literature lies in the fact that its distribution historically is due mainly to two countries – the USSR and Germany (although some books from camp literature were created and published in many countries of the world). If we compare texts from the corps of camp literature in both cultures, we will see that even at the level of genre forms, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the types of texts will be identical. Novels (A. Solzhenitsyn *In the First Circle*, O. Volkov *Drowning into the Darkness*, V. Semin *Breastplate ‘OST’*, etc., A. Seghers *Das siebte Kreuz*, B. Apitz *Nackt unter Wölfen*, W. Bredel *Die Prüfung*), stories (B. Dyakov *The Story of my Life*, L. Vakulovskaya *Tungsten – a solid metal*, etc., K. Mundstock *Sonne in der Mitternacht*, S. Hermlin *Die Kommandeuse*); plays (A. Solzhenitsyn *The Love-Girl and the Innocent*, etc., P. Weiss *Die Ermittlung*); memoirs (A. Sandler, M. Etlis *Contemporaries of the Gulag: Book of Memories and Reflections, Living in the Gulag*, etc. K. Fraedrich *Im GULAG der Frauen*, P. Epp *Ob tausend fallen ..*); diaries (Y. Sokolova *From the diary (1937-1938)*, N. Lugovskaya *I want to live... From the diaries of the schoolgirl: 1932-1937*, etc. R. Laqueur *Schreiben im KZ. Tagebücher 1940-1945*) (see more in: [2, P. 58-69]).

The presence of texts of the same type in different languages greatly simplifies the task of the translator, leveling to some extent the specificity of the language in which the text was created. In other words, the complexity of

the translation of Russian camp literature depends greatly not only on the specificity of the source and target languages, but on the presence or absence in the target language culture of texts with a similar communicative function and subject content that could serve as a kind of ‘donor texts’, thoroughly scrutinized by E. Narbut in her dissertation thesis [2, passim].

As an illustration, let us compare the translations of one of Solzhenitsyn's most famous works, *Gulag Archipelago*, into English and German. Analyzing the numerous reviews and critical articles on translations of the *Gulag Archipelago* into English and German, one cannot help but noticing the general positive evaluation of the German translation, on one hand, and many negative reviews about the translation in English, on the other. The translation in German was made by A. Peturnig, a specialist in both Russian and German, the author of the English translation (Vol. I and II) was T. Whitney, an experienced translator, who had translated Solzhenitsyn more than once before. Analyzing the reasons for translation inadequacies in the English and German versions of the translation, A. Bond notes that A. Peturnig originally had more advantages than the American translator: “it must be questioned whether P. (A. Peturnig — E.K.) enjoyed an advantage, to a degree, over a W. (T. Whitney — E.K.) which lies outside a competence as a translator” [5, P. 311]. The reasons for translation failures in the English translation A. Bond seeks mainly in significant discrepancies in the language structures of Russian and English, with their relative similarity in Russian and German.

However, in our opinion, the main reason why the German translation was mainly characterized as one of the most successful translations of A. I. Solzhenitsyn, while the translation into English, according to the reviewers, accurately conveyed only the content of the original, lies not in the discrepancies in the language structures. T. Whitney more than A. Peturnig had to face not only the differences in the linguistic structures of the English and Russian languages, but also in the ‘worlds’ themselves, that is, in the objects and phenomena described. The whole system of execution of punishment in the Soviet Union was so specific that it cannot even approximately be identified with similar institutions in the UK or the US. T. Whitney, therefore, had to solve the problem of transmitting the subject matter of the narrative. The situation is different with the translation into German. The use of similar camp systems in the USSR and Germany affected the wide dissemination of specific camp vocabulary in both languages, which was not and could not be the case in English-speaking countries where there was no system of concentration camps.

Conclusion

Coming back to the idea set forth by I. Alekseeva on universal nature of text types, we can continue that the degree of universality of text types can vary significantly. Certain types of texts, such as sociolect texts to which the texts of camp literature belong, may rank from monocultural, i.e. existing in a particular national culture, to polycultural, existing in several national cultures, and universal, lacking the links with a specific national culture. The degree of the universality of a certain text influences its translatability, due to the existence or absence of the corps of texts of the same type, serving as donor-texts for the translator.

Список литературы / References

1. Алексеева И. С. Введение в переводоведение: учеб. пособие для студ. учреждений высш. проф. образования / И. С. Алексеева. – СПб.: Филологический факультет СПбГУ; М.: Академия, 2012. – 368 с.

2. Нарбут Е. В. Оригинал, текст-донор, перевод: проблемы взаимодействия: на материале переводов романа Э.М. Ремарка «Искра жизни» на русский язык / Е. В. Нарбут: дис. ... канд. филол. наук: 10.02.20. – Магадан, 2007. – 283 с.
3. Сдобников В. В. Коммуникативная ситуация как основа выбора стратегии перевода / В. В. Сдобников: автореф. дисс. ... д. филол. наук: 10.02.20. – М., 2015. – 48 с.
4. Солженицын А. И. Архипелаг Гулаг 1918–1956: Опыт художественного исследования I–II. Т. 1 / А. И. Солженицын. – М.: ИНКОМ НВ, 1991. – 432 с.
5. Bond A. A Study of the English and the German Translations of Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn's The Gulag Archipelago, Volume I / A. Bond. – Bern; Frankfurt/Main; N. Y.: Lang, 1983. – 320 p.
6. Genzler E. Translation and cultural studies / E. Genzler // Übersetzung, Translation, Traduction. 1. Teilband. – Berlin, N. Y.: Walter de Gruyter, 2004. – S. 166–170.
7. Karamanian A. P. Translation and Culture [Electronic resource] / A. P. Karamanian // Translation Journal. – 2002. – № 1 (January). – URL: <http://www.translationdirectory.com/article14.htm> (accessed: 25.07.2017).
8. Ricoeur P. On translation: tr. by Eileen Brennan / P. Ricoeur. – London, New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Gr., 2006. – 46 p.
9. Solschenizyn A. I. Der Archipel Gulag. 1918-1956 Versuch einerkünstlerischen Bewältigung / A. I. Solschenizyn / Üb. von A. Peturnig. – Bern: Scherz, 1974. – 619 S.
10. Solzhenitsyn A. I. The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956: An experiment in literary investigation. [Vol. 1], [Parts] 1, 2 / A. I. Solzhenitsyn / Translated by Thomas P. Whitney. – N.Y...: Harper & Row Publishers, 1974. – 660 p.

Список литературы на английском / References in English

1. Alekseeva I. S. Vvedenie v perevodovedenie: ucheb. posobie dlya stud. uchrezhdenij vyssh. prof. obrazovaniya [Introduction to Translation Studies: a textbook for stud. of Institutions of higher education] / I. S. Alekseeva. – SPb.: Saint Petersburg: Philological faculty of Saint Petersburg State University; M.: Akademiya, 2012. – 368 p. [in Russian]
2. Narbut E. V. Original, tekst-donor, perevod: problemy vzaimodejstviya: na materiale perevodov romana E.M. Remarka «Iskra zhizni» na russkij yazyk [Original, Donor Text, Translation: Problems of Interaction: on the Material of Translations of the Novel by E.M. Remark "The Spark of Life" in Russian] / E. V. Narbut: dissertation for a PhD in Philology Degree. – Magadan, 2007. – 283 p. [in Russian]
3. Sdobnikov V. V. Kommunikativnaya situaciya kak osnova vybora strategii perevoda [Communicative Situation as a Basis for the Choice of the Translation Strategy] / V. V. Sdobnikov: Synopsis of the Doctoral Dissertation for a PhD in Philology Degree. – M., 2015. – 48 p. [in Russian]
4. Solzhenicyn A. I. Arkhipelag Gulag 1918–1956: Opyt hudozhestvennogo issledovaniya I–II. T. 1 [The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956: An experiment in literary investigation] / A. I. Solzhenicyn. – M.: INKOM NV, 1991. – 432 p. [in Russian]
5. Bond A. A Study of the English and the German Translations of Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn's The Gulag Archipelago, Volume I / A. Bond. – Bern; Frankfurt/Main; N. Y.: Lang, 1983. – 320 p.
6. Genzler E. Translation and cultural studies / E. Genzler // Übersetzung, Translation, Traduction. 1. Teilband. – Berlin, N. Y.: Walter de Gruyter, 2004. – S. 166–170.
7. Karamanian A. P. Translation and Culture [Electronic resource] / A. P. Karamanian // Translation Journal. – 2002. – № 1 (January). – URL: <http://www.translationdirectory.com/article14.htm> (accessed: 25.07.2017).
8. Ricoeur P. On translation: tr. by Eileen Brennan / P. Ricoeur. – London, New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Gr., 2006. – 46 p.
9. Solzhenitsyn A. I. Der Archipel Gulag. 1918-1956 Versuch einerkünstlerischen Bewältigung [The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956: An experiment in literary investigation] / A. I. Solzhenitsyn / Üb. von A. Peturnig [translated by A. Peturnig]. – Bern: Scherz, 1974. – 619 p.
10. Solzhenitsyn A. I. The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956: An experiment in literary investigation. [Vol. 1], [Parts] 1, 2 / A. I. Solzhenitsyn / Translated by Thomas P. Whitney. – N.Y...: Harper & Row Publishers, 1974. – 660 p.