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FEATURES OF TRANSLATING TECHNICAL TERMS IN PORTUGUESE AND ENGLISH

Summary. The article deals with the main difficulties and features of military interpreting in technical aspects in English and Portuguese, which an interpreter can face in process of translating and several ways of dealing with them.

Keywords: interpreting; military interpreting; warfare; small arms; Portuguese; English.

Even experienced interpreters sometimes face different problems in military interpreting and with military terms in particular. This is caused by the ever-changing military environment and unstoppable scientific-and-technological advance. The outlook of the armed forces of major global powers has undergone radical changes over the past few decades, as well as the outlook of modern warfare in general. That is one of the main features of military interpreting, where at first sight a present-day term may lose its edge and be replaced by another one [1].

The objective of the research is to find out whether the military terms of the armed forces of Portuguese- and English-speaking countries are similar and whether it is possible to translate some Portuguese military terms using the English language into Russian.

1. Small arms. Meeting with a mount of variants of translations for terms, there frequently appears a question: which one is the most relevant?

Practice shows that it is better to focus on those who are going to receive the translated message. For example: for an ordinary Russian military serviceman, such a phrase as «assault rifle» («штурмовая винтовка») is unfamiliar and strange. Therefore, when translating the expression «assault rifle» or «automatic rifle» it would be better to translate it as «автомат». In that case the conflict between the terms is caused by the differ-

ence between Russian and foreign small arms classifications. Even though the word «автомат» is often interpreted as «submachinegun», such a term is unacceptable speaking about American assault rifles because its Russian equivalent is «пистолет-пулемет». Speaking about Portuguese military speech, in particular, for example in Angola, the expression «submetralhadora» is applicable to AK-type small arms [2].

2. Weapon parts and devices. While on the subject of small arms let us discuss the general structure of the AK-74 assault rifle:

- 1) Bolt carrier – затворная рама – armadilha de culatra;
- 2) Breech block – затвор – culatra;
- 3) Spring mechanism – возвратный механизм – mecanismo de recuperação;
- 4) Magazine – магазин – carregador;
- 5) Top cover – крышка ствольной коробки – tampa de caixa de culatra;
- 6) Gas tube – газовая трубка – tubo de gas;
- 7) Tool container – пенал с принадлежностями – os acessórios;
- 8) Stock – приклад – coronha;
- 9) Pistol grip – пистолетная рукоять – aperto de pistola;
- 10) Hand guard – цевье – guarda-mão;
- 11) Gas block – газовая камера – câmara de gas;
- 12) Cleaning brush – шомпол – vareta de limpeza;
- 13) Flash suppressor – пламегаситель – quebra-chamas;
- 14) Front sight – мушка – ponto de mira;
- 15) Rear sight – целик – aparelho de pontaria;
- 16) Safety catch – предохранитель – alavanca de segurança;
- 17) Receiver – ствольная коробка – Caixa de culatra [3]

The main problem here is to translate the terms, which do not exist in a target language or do not correspond to its realia. To deal with it the interpreter can formulate a new term, which would be familiar to a foreign language speaker. For example, there is no such expression as «возвратный механизм» in English. Even though it would be wrong to call this detail «spring» in Russian (because a spring is one of 4 parts of this mechanism speaking about the AK-type weapon), in English or Portuguese it is possible to do so. There these terms sound like «spring» or «mola recuperadora» [4]. The various readings here are caused by the differences in the main types of small arms in Russia and countries of NATO. For example, in the M16 assault rifle this mechanism is a simple spring. Another important

point is the details, which have another principle of functioning. The best examples here are the terms: «top cover», «receiver» and «крышка ствольной коробки» and «ствольная коробка». For the majority of Russian small arms, the detail named «крышка ствольной коробки» has to be translated as «top cover», speaking about western weapon systems this part is named «upper receiver». This owes to the fact that in M-series rifles, and in a great variety of other foreign assault rifles as well, the upper receiver is an integral part of a weapon's structure and the majority of the AK-type weapon can operate without this detail at all. The same situation is with the pointing equipment. There are traditional terms for these parts in Russian: «мушка» and «целик», meanwhile in NATO countries such elements are normally translated as «Front sight» (передний прицел – *досл.*) and «Rear sight» (задний прицел – *досл.*).

3. Common mistakes in translating military technical terms. One of the most popular mistakes among interpreters is unwilling substitution of terms. For example: the term «silencer». That is a pretty useful word in military sphere and it is usually translated as «глушитель». In Russian military realities, such a device is named ПБС (прибор бесшумной стрельбы). Without knowing the subject of a text, the interpreter can face the problem of polysemy of terms. In such a manner, the word «round» depending on a context may mean «заряд», «снаряд», «ракета» or «патрон» in Russian [5].

Likewise, there may appear a number of mistakes, which result in the wrong translation. One of them is the substitution of terms «магазин» and «обойма» in Russian, and the usage of a slang expression «рожок». The difference in the first ones is their designation: the word «магазин» has to be translated as «magazine», and «обойма» – «clip». The magazine is the mechanism which serves for delivering ammunition into a magazine-type weapon. The clip is a steel plate used for speeding up the process of reloading a weapon, which can be used for the acceleration of the process of loading the magazines as well. The usage of such expressions as «рожок» is unacceptable in translation because they are wrong despite the fact that military men in their everyday speech can use them. The same situation is with the words «спусковой крючок» and «курок» (trigger and firing hammer). There is a popular mistake when the trigger is named hammer in Russian. However, the firing hammer is another detail, which serves as a part of a firing mechanism, as well as the trigger.

There is another common problem in the military interpreting process – military slang. The most difficult part of this type of translation is to know the realities and history of the language of the forces in a particular country. Once again, background knowledge of the interpreter determines the quality of his translation [6].

Conclusion. We can see, therefore, that it is very important for a military interpreter to know not only the foreign language he studies but many features of different military spheres as well. Such knowledge always helps to overcome the variety of difficulties, which the interpreter faces in process of his work [7-9].

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