Problems of translation theory and practice: original and translated text equivalence

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Abstract

The conceptual approach to the translation phenomenon is viewed as a deep integration of national cultures, and their interactions. Literary translation should be considered in the context of literary interaction as a part of multi-ethnic factor. Translation Studies in Kazakhstan has had many directions and common issues of prose, poetry and drama, the specifics of the translation process, and the place of translation studies in multicultural literary process has become the subject of translation studies. Literary translation schools reflect the evolution of transferability categories and contain modern concept of communicative equivalence of the original and the translated texts as a norm of translation accuracy.

Modern communicative approach to translation is due to the facts of cross-language communication and translation dominants. Expansion of the original and the translated text communicative equivalence should be tolerant to the type of the receiving audience. The problem of interlinear translation was the object of translators’ attention for a long time. So the current study is aimed at several purposes as:

• establishment of translation freedom and the problems of interlinear translation.
• linguistic and extra-linguistic factor synthesis (including cultural, psychological, etc.)
• classification of translation approaches
• establishing criteria for translation accuracy

In the result of qualitative and contrastive analysis we have found out that any text is translatable due to the general principles of translation: the requirement to reproduce the original strophic form, find similar rhythmic forms,
maintain the historical and national style.

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1. Introduction

Cultural, communicative, sociolinguistic aspects of translation define trends in contemporary translation studies. The conceptual approach to translation phenomenon is due to the deep integration of national cultures, and their interactions (Marinetti, 2011). Common problems of prose, poetry and drama, specific questions of translation process, the place of translation in multicultural literary process have become the subject of translation study research. Dynamic development of national literatures required not only translation reforms, but also changes in the reader’s cultural expectations and era’s aesthetic concepts (Robinson, 1998). The condition of translation studies was influenced by a number of circumstances. First of all, the objective conditions characterized the formation of literary translation: the nature of the national literature, the development degree of the native literary language, the strength or weakness of translation traditions, the geographical, political differences in living conditions, influencing the reader perception and differences in culture. Unfortunately, the national psychological traits, the specificity of creative thinking, genre constructs were often left out of the translator attention. Partly this factual information relevant to the interior colour, and traditions were compensated by footnotes, annotations, but it did not contribute to the full accuracy of the translation. Therefore full attention should be paid to translation of lingua cultural concepts, because the current problems of cultural transmission are of great importance.

2. Purpose of research

Communicative approach is one of the current trends in the theory of literary translation. This trend is due to cross-language connections of original and translated texts and translation dominants. Expansion of the original and the translation text’s communicative equivalence should be tolerant to the type of the receiving audience. The problem of interlinear translation was the object of translators’ attention for a long time. So the current study is aimed at several purposes as:

- establishment of translation freedom and the problems of interlinear translation.
- linguistic and extra-linguistic factor synthesis (including cultural, psychological, etc.)
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Thus, analysis of lingua cultural aspects as one of the most important factors of effective translation should be used for achieving equivalence of original and target text translation.

3. Research methods

The aim of our research was to investigate the difference of Kazakh and Russian speaking audience in perception and modification of original and target text translations. During our investigation 20 students (10 Kazakh and 10 Russian speaking students) have been interviewed. For the investigation of the stated problem we have done qualitative analysis and compared the differences in perception and transformation of translation material. The methods of literary comparative study are important factors to create a complete history and theory of literary translation and identify translation communicative equivalence. Comparative literary studies in translation theory and practice require comparative approach to translation analysis. Hence there is a need to examine the language and text equivalence of translation (Gasparov, 2003). It is important to take into account the degree of language relatedness, their typological similarity, as well as the circumstances of time period when the original and target texts were created. Advantage of comparative method as a part of comparative-historical, typological and comparative approaches in linguistic science has improved the analysis of translation transformations. The translation process determines the place of comparative literary studies in the modern theory of translation. It is
known that "the text of one culture, translated into another language becomes the part of the culture, with all the consequences" (Nelubin & Khukhuni, 2006). School of Comparative Literature studies recognizes literary translation as effective form of relationship. The translator’s purpose is to find a new expression for the world where the translation was created. The issue of translation communicative equivalence is seen as ways to compare different translations of the same work. There are obvious advantages of comparative literary studies, which reflect the idea that the "faithful" translation does not require external, formal similarity with the original, but the "clarity" in meaning transmission. The translation possibility is determined by the ability of multilingual texts to act as communicatively equivalent in the process of communication. Comparative analysis of different translations of the same original texts can find advantageous strategy of literary translation in a given period. (Pym, 2010)

It can be concluded that one of the important outcomes of translation studies of the last decade was the idea that literary translation is an integral part of the literature history. It is doubtless that the maximum respect for the object of literary translation should be required from modern interpreters to re-create it as a work of art with full respect to the content and form, national and individual uniqueness. Changes in translation strategies are factors of translation evolution. Accordingly, the translation possibilities are endless.

4. Finding and results
For evaluation of Kazakh and Russian-speaking students’ lingua cultural competence in translation the following Self observation list was suggested.

Table 1. Self-observation list of Kazakh and Russian speaking students’ lingua cultural competence in translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Kazakh speaking</th>
<th>Russian speaking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you consider it to be the sign of female beauty?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;as a rose&quot; (face)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;like diamond&quot;(eyes)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;as white as snow&quot; (neck)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;a broad forehead&quot;</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;wide back&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How the Kazakh and Russian-speaking students understand the cultural concepts or in contrary fail to choose appropriate strategy in translation are represented in Table 1. As we see from the figure the perception of the signs of female beauty by Kazakh and Russian speaking students differ. The equivalent and common description is perceived as the sign of female beauty by both cultures (Kazakh and Russian). But the problem in achieving equivalence of original and target texts can be caused by the differences of value systems in different cultures, therefore Russian speaking students do not share the same idea with Kazakh speaking students. For instance, Abay’s imagery epithets in Kazakh literature, reproducing the stereotypes of female beauty are typical for eastern classical poetry. Hence, there is the comparison of the face - with rose, eyes - with diamonds - and neck to be as white as snow. Psychology of beauty reconstructs the folk traditions familiar to Kazakh reader. “A broad forehead, wide back” is a sign of Kazakh beauty in the original, can’t represent the charm of female beauty in the target language due to the cultural differences. For example, the description of the blades, “тақпайдаң эмес жаурыны бар”- "blades as tablets", "кең маңдайсы" - "broad forehead" are natural to the mind of the Kazakh reader as a detailed description of a person's appearance, which became the subject of attention. However, as in the case with the mentioned examples, the difference in the mentality of the people and, therefore, cultural stereotypes and direct translation of the original text could lead to the unexpected effect of the reader who is unfamiliar with the culture of the source text. Consequently, the adaptation of the text to the perception of the reader should motivate the interpreter to use the strategies combining reproduction of beauty stereotypes with the tone of delight, admiring and
maiden’s beauty (Bahtikereeva, 2009). So, taking into account the reader competence is one of the requirements of the translation strategy. Genre modification is retained by the artistic transformations of the cultural peculiarities of the East. Introducing readers with the Kazakh culture via adaptation eastern literature and poetry translation to the culture, history, and traditions of target text of the readers is required by the needs of translation studies. Cultural and linguistic translations of marked units are the object of great interest and can course the problems in translation. For example, a fragment of figurative semantic field “шаңырақ” in Kazakh can be represented by several micro fields: wooden circle at the top of the yurt, the chimney). It seems that competent in both languages (source and target) they can fail to transmit the variety of meaning of the marked units and in figurative meaning characterize the notion of “family”: қыртық көтеру- a) the establishment of a yurt, қыртық көтеру- b) (figurative meaning) posterity, family. All units with “шаңырақ” semantics as a part of a yurt in its literal sense and in figurative meaning characterize the notion of “family”: қыртық көтеру- householder; бір озі қалды- He was the last of a family; қара қыртық- head of a large family (father’s house in relation to the sons’ one); қыртық көтеру- to get married; қыртыққа қара- Be careful, you are not in your home!; қыртықтың ат ойнату- smash down; қыртықтың өртісіна түсті- to lose the family support, қыртықтың шайқалды- destroyed family; қыртықтың бір өлі болсын- wish to the family to be strong. If the translator is not competent in both languages (source and target) they can fail to transmit the variety of meaning of the marked units adequately and preserve the equivalence of the message of original text. It seems more appropriate for translators to compose semantic fields (lexical units with common lexical components) to make the meaning more clear.

The most notable results in the field of translation communicative equivalence have been achieved in linguistics and literary criticism and in the linguistic theory of translation as well. In the process of verbal communication texts for interlocutors are recognized communicatively equivalent and combined into a single unit, and the translated text is recognized communicatively equivalent to the original text. The task of translation is to ensure cross-language communication in the text created in the language of Recipient (on "target language") which can act as a complete replacement of the original text (on "source language") in the functional, structural and content relationships. It can be challenging because the texts as part of the same message are based on different language systems with units that do not match, either in form or in content. The possibility of the translated patterns is determined by the ability of multilingual texts to be communicatively equivalent in the process of information exchange. The equivalence of the original and target text is achieved in case when the translation reproduces the original content transmitted by means of another language. Translator has to convey accurately the structure and the content in the original text without any deliberate structured transformations. The number and content of sections and other parts of the original and translated text must be the same. If certain idea is expressed at the beginning in the original text, it should be found in the same place of the translation, etc. If the translator changes some details in the structure of the text, it can be done only in order to convey the original content better (Gasparov, 2001). Thus, literary translation can be defined as a kind of linguistic mediation, in which the created text is communicatively equivalent to the original, and its equivalence is evident in functional, contextual and structural levels. For recipient translation replaces the original and becomes full representative of original work. Modern theory of literary translation is associated with the heyday of literary translation. Its central concept is the category of literary text transferability and the accuracy of the translation as a consequence. Communicative equivalence of the original and translated texts is provided by the translation strategy, the reader's competence and analysis of cultural differences. Translation service is formed by reader's demand. There are a number of works in modern theory and practice of translation that expand the understanding of original and translated text communicative equivalence. There are various opinions on the problems of national translation theory and practice, sometimes opposition and controversial. For instance, the notions of translation competence and types of readers have been analyzed in F. Sologub and A. Strelnikova’s translations. According to Marshak’s conceptual basis, translator along with the original creator is responsible for the poem future. There are other Marshak’s ideas that a translator cannot remain dispassionate reader of the original text, and must express their own emotions, perception of life and attitudes relying on their own experience, in other words, the personal worldview should be reflected in the translation. According to Marshak’s ideas neither translation conveys fully the original text: each translator chooses an important detail in the original, it submits secondary, omits or substitutes third-rate one. Translator’s own taste, the taste of his literary school, his historical era determines what they (translators) consider to be principal and third-rate.

Another principle "More attention to the script" was expressed by Lozinski, which demands knowledge of the original language (Ivanovskiy, 2005). He formed literary translation strategy based on the need to maximize the similarity of the source and target texts and required: "By all means reduce the angle between the original and
translation!" His understanding of accuracy lays on identifying the boundaries of interpreter’s freedom of creativity. His slogan is: “Do not be a slave of the original text. You have the right to carry an unusual string from one stanza to another, if it is, of course, does not destroy the internal connections. It is important to show the phenomenon. Where – it is not so important.” However, the strategy of Lozinski’s literary translation implies the unity of content and form. For the strategy of literary translation one of the central concepts is the notion of the reader’s competence as a criterion of literary translation adequacy and appropriate translation strategy. According to Levik: “The reader must understand the art of translation” He raised the issue of transferability (Levik, 1968). He is confident that absolute equivalent poetry translation from one language to another is impossible. The result of translation can only be a new poetic work that is similar to the original one. Thus, strategies and principles of literary translation are as follows: the choice of translation strategies (freestyle, literal, appropriate, equivalent), identifying functional correspondences, or functional dominants. Matching genre structures are also the criterion of translation accuracy with main components as the composition, style, image system, the structural principles, and the method of coloured lexis transmission, grammar and stylistic norms of the target language.

5. Conclusion

Literary translation is a historical category. Different historical periods have different content and different interpretations of its relationship to the original literature. The history of translation in almost every culture throughout ancient times to the present was developed under the sign of the two requirements, sometimes, contradictory. It was either the requirement of maximum transmission close to the original, or adaptation of the target text to the reader perception. Bakhtin wrote that each era has its one style and own recipient of a literary work. The history of literary translation is distinguished by the dominance of one requirement mentioned above. Analysis of translation quality should be based on consideration of the translation strategies in unity with the reader's competence. With the development of national literatures changed not only the circumstances of literary translation, but the reader’s perception of text translation in the light of the cultural stereotypes and aesthetic concepts typical to his cultural environment. The formation of national literatures was characterized by the rapid quantitative growth of translation, which was perceived by readers on a par with the works of original art. Translated literature of different cultures begins to be realized as the achievement of the national literature maturity connected with the particularly important period in the national literature as formation time of drama, short story, and novel. So the quality of literary translation as a factor of its entry into the target language culture was assessed from the standpoint of translation strategies and the readers’ competence. The national school of literary translation reflects the evolution of the category of transferability and contains the origins of the modern concept of original and target text communicative equivalence as criteria of accuracy. Transferability as one of the central concepts of translation studies showed the evolution of the untranslatability concepts to the concepts of accuracy as a criterion of equivalence of literary translation. At the present, the notion of translatability has become an axiom.

References


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