CULTURE STRATEGY IN TRANSLATING POSTMODERN LITERARY TEXT

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Abstract. The article focuses on the major notions of modern translation studies: translation process, translation strategy, translation procedure. Culture strategy due to its hybridity, special linguo-cultural layer, which reflects cultural identity of a multilingual author, is defined as the key point in translating a postmodern literary text. The theoretical assumptions are illustrated on the postcolonial novel "Midnight's Children" by S. Rushdie.

Keywords: translation strategy, translation procedure, postmodern literary text, culture strategy.

Introduction

Throughout history of mankind written and oral translations have played a crucial role in human communication, providing broad access to important scientific texts, as well as to masterpieces of the world's literature. The term "translation" comes from the Latin "translatio" (transporting), which in its turn originates from the verb "transferre" (to carry over).

Today the word "translation" has several meanings: (a) special science, the subject of which presupposes different ways of rendering a language phenomena from one language to another; (b) a product, the result of translation – the text that has been translated; (c) the process of doing translation, which involves changes of the original text written in a source language into the written text in a different language.

It is quite obvious that translation needs special strategies, procedures, techniques and methods in order to get a new Target text (TT) that should be similar to the Source text (ST). *Translation strategy* is the overall orientation of the translated text, while *translation procedures* are understood asspecificmethods applied by translators at a given point when transferring from the Source Text (ST) to the Target Text (TT).

In this article we shall draw our attention to cultural aspect of the translation andits peculiarities while working ona postmodern postcolonial literary text.

R. Jakobson in his work "On linguistic aspect of translation" (Venuti, 2004: 9) defines three types of translation process:

1) Intralingual (rewording) translation – is the interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language (e.g. a summery, the adapted version of the text for children in the same language).

2) Interlingual translation or "translation proper" – is the interpretation of verbal signs by means of other language signs.

3) Intersemiotic translation (transmutation) – the interpretation of verbal signs by means of the signs of non-verbal signs systems (e.g. the written text is translated in various semiotic ways, such as music, dance, film or painting).

In the course of its development translation theoryhas always been a set of changing relationships between the relative autonomy of the translated text, and the translator's activities within two concepts: equivalence and function. *Equivalence* stands for "accuracy," "adequacy," "correctness," "correspondence," "fidelity," or "identity" of the translated text comparedto the original. *Function* refers to the number of diverse effects the original and translated texts produce in their own cultures.

At all stages of its development translation was always closely connected with culture. At early times, translation served as a means of communication (it was used mainly to sell different goods or to develop political ties between different countries). The only requirement to the translation at that time was that the other partner could understand the general idea of the foreign speech. Later, translation was used for cultural purposes, namely for propaganda of religious beliefs (e.g. the Bible has been translated into various languages to spread Christianity). At the times of industrial revolution, with the help of translation a lot of technical innovations were introduced to promote scientific and technical development throughout the world. Still later translation was used as a means of political influence. For example, at the beginning of the 20th century, Marxism was translated into Chinese to spread new political ideas and overthrow feudalism (Yan, Huang, 2014: 487).

As the English language became an increasingly global language, a lot of people became bilingual or multilingual. That iswhy English became probably the most widely translated language in the world. Hence, the important status of culture in translation and the cultural influence of translation in receptor-language region are greatly emphasized if we treat translations as independent literary texts, but not the mere copy of original texts. This tendency into translation studies was introduced in 1990 by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere and is called ***"a culture turn"*** (Bassnett, Lefevere, 1990:12).

Being popular representatives of cultural approach in translatology (Translation Studies), S. Bassnett and A. Lefevere attached great importance to the role of culture in translation, the social background, the subjectivity of translators making the researching shift from linguistic to culturalone (Bassnett, Trivedi, 1999). Before that, from the late eighteenth century to the 1960s and even later, grammar-translation (Cooper, 2010: 9–15) dominated. Applied to translate Classical Latin and Greek and then modern foreign languages, this approach accentuated the study of grammar rules and structures of the foreign language. These rules were both practiced and tested by the translation of a series of usually unconnected and artificially constructed sentences exemplifying the structure(s) being studied (we mean translation exercises in practically every textbook).

In traditional linguistic approach word, phrase, sentence, and text are translational language units; cultural approach being different from traditional considers culture to be the main translational unit. It also emphasizes the important role that culture played in translation, and treats translation as micrographic cultural shift with the focus changing from the source text to translated text, from the author to the translator and the source culture to the receptor culture. They envisaged that "neither word, nor text, but culture becomes the operational 'unit' of translation" (Bassnett, 2012: 8). In other words cultural approach replaced linguistic approach and cultural factors became dominant in translation.

Such method of study expanded the scope of translation studied enormously and opened a new field of study, thus it enhanced further and more comprehensive development of translation studies. Now translation is regarded as the act of translating and can be subdivided into different types according to: lingual mode (interlingual, intralingual); media (printed,

audiovisual, electronic); mode of translation (covert/overt, direct/indirect translation, mother tongue/other tongue translation, pseudo-translation, retranslation, self-translation, sight translation, etc.); of specific field (political, journalistic, technical, literary, religious, scientific, commercial) (Bassnett, Trivedi, 1999: 223).

Such variety of translations is closely connected with "polysystem theory", which was suggested before the appearance of theculture turn. By the way, polysystem theory emphasized cultural environment in general that helped to reveal the key method/strategy of translating texts.

In the 1990s, the culture turn tended to be political, and finally developed into feminist approach, cannibalism and post-colonialism approach. The latter was prompted by the emergence and continuing growth of postcolonial Anglophone and Francophone literatures from the ex-colonies as well as the increasing ethnic minorities. That is why *hybridity* became a key feature of postmodern literary text.

Hybrid postmodern literary texts embrace works of art which transgress genre boundaries by combining characteristic traits and elements of diverse literary and non-literary genres (Laviosa, 2014: 227). According to M. Bakhtin, this genre is "a mixture, within a single concrete utterance, of two or more different linguistic kinds of consciousness, often widely separated in time and social space" (Doorslaer, 2007: 46).

Postmodern literary texts combine, transform, and subvert the conventions of several narrative subgenres, go beyond the boundaries of fiction, and integrate various text-types.

Postcolonial literary texts are frequently referred to as *'hybrid'* or 'métissés' because of specific linguo-cultural layering, which exists within them. These texts written by postcolonial bilingual authors create a language 'in between' and therefore come to occupy the space 'in between'. Such language can be created by approximating thought-structures and speech patterns not typical for the English language, or by translating local speech rhythms, idioms and culture lacunas from native languages into English. As an example let us take a textual fragment from S. Rushdie novel "Midnight's Children":

Padma's story (given in her own words, and read back to her for eye-rolling, highwailing, mammary-thumping confirmation): "It was my own foolish pride and vanity, Saleem baba, from which cause I did run from you, although the job here is good, and you so much needing a looker-after! But in a short time only I was dying to return."

For the European reader this seems to be typical Rushdie language, because of the complex adjectival phrases *("eye-rolling, high-wailing, mammary-thumping"*), the mix of formal *("confirmation, "foolish pride")* and familiar *("dying to return")* registers and the creation of neologisms *(" a looker-after").*

Besides, any specialist in Indian languages can recognize specific cultural Indian atmosphere, from the form of address *"Saleem baba"* ('baba' is used by servants with respect to young boys of higher social status, also as a term of affection), from thecomplicated phrase *"from which cause I did run from you",* recognizable as a structure literally transcoded from Hindustani/Urdu. These stylistic devices characterize the postcolonial Indian hybrid text (*Snell-Hornby, 2006)* and determine the ethnical identity of the author.

As the world bestseller and winner of the Booker Prize (1981), the novel "Midnight's Children" was naturally translated into various European languages (German, Russianand Polish).

But some fundamental problems of translating a hybrid English postcolonial text intothe language of another European target culture appeared there. The difficulty lies in the lack of the comparable colonial past with the corresponding plurality of associations, language

usages and cultural backgrounds, which were not reflected in word-to-word translations thus vanishing the specific cultural colouring of the original.

For example, in most grammar-translations made by European translators the speech made by an illiterate woman is grammatically correct, having no signs of any transcoding from Urdu, neither the equivalent for the "looker-after", nor the signals in the form of address (despite limited explanations at the end of the novel). So, the language of the original has been neutralized into linguistically correct and stylistically unified formal statements.

A completely different kind of problem is posed by postcolonial literature written in local languages, and afterwards translated into English in order to reach a wider market. Such translations are mostly culture-translations, they are usually sponsored and/or published locally thatis why the translators first of all try to translate their culture not just the best language equivalent. One of such series is *"Modern Indian Novels in Translation"*, sponsored by the Indian industrial house published by Macmillan India.

Conclusions

Translation can be seen as a problem-solving activity in which a source element may be rendered by one or more elements in the target language. The key point in translating postmodern literary texts is culture strategy due to its hybridity and the special linguo-cultural layer, which reflects cultural identity of a multilingual author. Thus, it is worth mentioning that languages differ due to cultural differences between them, where local communities have their own universe and way of interpreting the world. This is vividly seen in postmodern postcolonial novels. Any language plays a very important role in building culture. Linguo-cultural peculiarities of postcolonial novel make it difficult for the translator to find the equivalent for some culture-specific words, as in the postcolonial novel "Midnight's Children" by S. Rushdie.

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