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Intertextual Element as a Unit of Translation

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The article is devoted to the study of intertextual element as a unit of translation. Intertextual element in the fictional text is described as a unit of translation, the main conditions of its identification in a fictional text and equivalent translation are featured.

Keywords: unit of translation; intertextuality; intertextual element; fictional text; intertextual element from the Bible.

Introduction

Intertextuality is a quality of any literary text and represents the ability of a text to accumulate information not only directly from the personal experience, but also indirectly from other texts, *intertextuality* is an ontological quality of any text, and, first of all – fictional. It is intertextuality that determines adoption of a fictional text into the process of the literary evolution. It means that fictional writing becomes a text only when its intertextuality is being actualized. In the fictional text intertextuality is actualized by the usage of the author of so-called “intertextual inclusions”, to be more exact, by the usage of intertextual elements. In the process of translation of a fictional text, translation of the intertextual elements requires a special attention of a translator, and these facts allow us to identify intertextual element as a unit of translation.

Point of view

Intertextual elements are “multifunctional: they increase time frames and cultural space of the text” (Denisova, 2001a, p. 113), thus making basis for creation of the multiple associations; they can be the means to express evaluation (as a way to affect by evaluation, which is made not directly, but with the help of the precedent texts), they can also be used to strengthen arguments or to create irony. Inclusion of the existing texts into new forms and their cultural and literal transformation at different levels give us the opportunity to consider intertextual elements as the most important part of intertextuality, which is defined by the reference of the text elements to the precedent facts. On the one hand, intertextuality is associated with ways of signification and labeling at the structural level, on the other – with the creation of associations aimed at the textual and the discursive levels.

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A text with intertextual elements is always stylistically marked, as intertextual elements “may loose connection with a source text, becoming, thus, the speech stereotypes” (Denisova, 2003, p. 222). Thus, the preservation of intertextual element in the process of translating a literary text is a necessary condition for the equivalent translation, which allows us to consider intertextual element as a unit of translation.

In the modern translatology, the problem of defining a unit of translation is one of the most debatable and difficult. According to many theorists of translation (Garbovsky, 2004), (Alekseeva, 2004), (Vitrenko, 2010), (Ballard, 2009) and others, the term “a unit of translation” appeared in the paper on the theory of translation by Canadian scientists J.-P. Vinay and J. Darbelnet – “Comparative stylistics of French and English» (Vinay, Darbelnet, 1958).

Attempts to define the unit of translation are present in the works of many theorists of translation. A.S. Barkhudarov (Barkhudarov, 1975), N.K. Garbovsky (Garbovsky, 2004), I.S. Alexeeva (Alekseeva, 2004), V.V. Sdobnikov (Sdobnikov, 2006), Y.I. Retsker (Retsker, 2006), M. Ballard (Ballard, 2009) attributed the term “a unit of translation” with the category of equivalence in translation. Translators believe that when considering the category of equivalence, the first thing that will be determined and what would have to be agreed is which units of the original text can and should find their equivalents in the translated text. Violation of the equivalence occurs when the interpreter makes a mistake in choosing the appropriate units of translation. Therefore, the units of translation are defined as units of equivalence.

R.K. Minyar-Beloruhev (Minyar-Beloruhev, 1996) identifies two possible approaches to understanding of units of translation:

1. “Semantic” approach in the isolation of the units of translation enables us to follow the source text strictly. The author notes that the very isolation of the units of translation at the same time, like any other segmentation of the text is, firstly, linear, and secondly, has subjective nature.

Among the supporters of the “semantic” approach are the following researchers: J.-P. Vinay and J. Darbelnet, Y.S. Stepanov, A.F. Shiryaev, R.K. Minyar-Beloruhev, V. Alimov, V.N. Comissarov, T. Kazakova and others.

In determining the principles of selection of the units of translation T. Kazakova believes that “the main condition for the correct determination of the initial units of translation is identification of the textual features of a unit” (Kazakova, 2003, p. 28). In the process of defining the units of translation in a source text, the text should be evaluated in terms of relations that determine content or the structural and functional properties of its constituent words. The author notes that the unit of translation may be a segment of words to the text.

According to R.K. Minyar-Beloruhev, to provide the units of translation, and therefore make a list of possible solutions in advance for all the cases in the practice of translation is impossible. These units can be any unit of speech, requiring a separate decision during the process of translation. The provision of such units of speech is also determined by the conditions of work. According to R.K. Minyar-Beloruhev, the selection of the unit of translation depends on the type of translation.

It should be noted that for translation and interpretation the unit of translation will be different. Y.S. Stepanov (Stepanov, 1965), studying the work of interpreters based his classification of the units of translation on gap value of an interpreter from the originator of the text – the magnitude of the differences

between the utterance of the speaker and the listener's understanding. A.F. Shirayev (Shiryaev, 1979), who also relied on the study of interpreters, suggested to name this unit "the unit of orientation". This unit is a "segment of the source text, meaningful perception which allows the interpreter to start the search or choose other translation solutions" (Ibid. 19), and denotes the phase of the reflection of certain "portions" of the original text necessary for the decision making.

2. "Functional" approach to the defining of the units of translation is featured by such authors such as Y.I. Retsker, L.S. Barkhudarov, S. Tyulenev, V. Sdobnikov etc. These researchers are based upon the proposition that every minimal amount of source code that executes in any function must have its compliance in the translation. And such a minimal amount of time is determined only by comparing the original text with the translated text. The functional approach allows us to speak about the translation of units mainly in the presence of inconsistencies between the source and target texts.

With regard to determine the volume of the units of translation, L.S. Barkhudarov (Barkhudarov, 1975), S. Tyulenev (Tyulenev, 2004), I.S. Alekseeva (Alekseeva, 2004) believe that the unit of translation may be a unit of any textual level (from phonemes to the whole text). This unit is variable. According to the A.A. Alimov (Alimov, 2005) and V. Sdobnikov (Sdobnikov, 2006), each case may have a different unit of translation, or you can select a very special unit of translation. According to I.S. Alekseeva, between the level of supply and the level of text, acting as a translation unit, there is no distinct border: the restrictive labels, collocations and proverbs from the functional points of view, may be regarded as texts.

Y.P. Solodub (Solodub, 2005) in the study devoted to literary translation, identifies words

and similar linguistic units (idioms, collocations, proverbs and sayings) as units of literary translation, because, in the author's opinion, the process of literary translation begins with the perception by a translator of the role of words included in the original text, in terms of ideological and thematic content of the work and the basic intentions of the author. The author considers that the maximum unit of translation is literary text.

T.A. Kazakova (Kazakova, 2003) believes that the unit of translation may be a segment from word to text.

However, according to some translators, "words is not considered" as units of translation" and words can gather all the efforts of a translator. ... In the languages of the analytical system, such as English or French, the dependence of words on the sentence is significantly higher than in Russian, but it may be known on the stage, prior translation – the stage of understanding" (Retsker, 2006, p. 29). According to Y.I. Retsker, the unit of translation ought to be not less than a sentence. V.V. Sdobnikov (Sdobnikov, 2006) determines a text as the unit of translation. N. Shadrin (1986) and A. Fedorov (2002) also noted that "those researchers who call the ideal unit of translation a word or a sentence are wrong" (Shadrin, 1986, p. 60).

Thus, most translators believe that the unit of translation may be the unit of any textual level: phoneme, morpheme, word, phrase, syntagm, whole sentence, paragraph and the whole translated text.

R.K. Minyar-Beloruhev refers to units of transfer stamps, situational clichés, terms, figurative expressions and precise words (numbers, days of the week and months and proper names), which are units of translation because they are constant quantities in the work of a translator, the quantities that require a separate decision for translation.

On the basis of different approaches to the unit of translation the “Explanatory dictionary the translation” by L.L. Nelyubin (Nelyubin, 2003) lists seven definitions of the units of translation: 1) units of the original text relative to the system of the translated text; 2) the smallest linguistic unit in the text on the original text, which has similar meaning in the text to the language of translation; 3) a unit in original text, with the match in the translated text, but which parts do not have matches in the translated text; 4) a unit of speech which requires an independent decision for translation such as situational clichés, terms, proverbs and figurative expressions; 5) the smallest linguistic unit of the original language, which has a match in the language of translation; 6) in the process of translation the unit of translation may be a word, a phrase, a syntagm, the whole sentence, a paragraph and translated text; 7) the minimal part of a text in the original language, corresponding to a segment of a text in the language of translation (Nelyubin, 2003, p. 52).

N.K. Garbovsky (Garbovsky, 2004) also distinguishes onomasiological (from sign to the meaning) approach to the definition of the unit of translation. This approach, according to the author, is based on the fact that the transfer unit is defined as a unit of meaning. “The process of translation is not the process of converting signs from one language to the signs of another language, and the conservation and partial, but the inevitable transformation of the system of meanings contained in the signs of the original language in the process of translation to the language of translation” (Ibid. 257). In this case, according to N.K. Garbovsky, the category of meaning is the most important. A translator operates meanings, and in this case the unit of translation is a kind of quantum of information, a unit of meaning. In this case, according to the author, no matter whether this element is enclosed in a morpheme, a word or a phrase.

Intertextual element can also be a unit of translation. In the process of translation of intertextual element it is necessary to follow onomasiological approach, because the most important factor is to keep the meaning of the intertextual element in the translated text.

Thus, in the process of translation of the intertextual element from one language into another a translator should: 1) identify the intertextual element in the fictional text, 2) choose an appropriate variant of translation. These terms and conditions are necessary to keep the meaning of the intertextual element in the translated text, as intertextual element as a unit of translation requires a separate translation solutions. When intertextual element is not identified in the original text, there may be a mistake in the choice of the unit of translation, and it may lead to disturbance of the equivalency of the translated text.

Definite types of intertextual elements (for example, intertextual elements from the Bible) after their identification should be related to the certain type. Thus, according to the typology of the intertextual elements (see Klimovich, 2006) a translator may face difficulties in the process of translation of the words, idioms, modified quotations and interjections from the Bible. These types of the intertextual elements from the Bible may lose connection with their source – the Bible (e.g. proper names that became common names; idioms and modified quotations from the Holy Scripture and interjections which are not associated by the native speakers with the Bible).

Besides, the intertextual elements from the Bible are special translation units, as they are “stylistically marked speech patterns, which are kept in the collective mind of the native speakers as “ready to use “elements, and, for this reason, they are the most “favorable” signs to express the definite meaning, which has expressive and impressional connotation “.

Conclusion

Thus, determination of the intertextual element as a unit of translation should be based on onomasiological approach to the translation. When choosing a method of translating of the intertextual element it is necessary to identify the intertextual element

in a literary text and choose an appropriate way to translate it. In some cases (words and idioms from the Bible) it is necessary to determine the type of the intertextual element.

To keep the meaning of intertextual elements in the translated text is supposed to be a necessary condition for their translation.

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Интертекстуальный элемент как единица перевода

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Статья посвящена исследованию интертекстуального элемента как единицы перевода. Дается характеристика интертекстуального элемента в художественном тексте, интертекстуальный элемент рассматривается как единица перевода, рассматриваются основные условия его идентификации в художественном тексте и эквивалентного перевода.

Ключевые слова: единица перевода, интертекстуальность, интертекстуальный элемент, художественный текст, библеизм как интертекстуальный элемент.
