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THE ROLE OF THE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSLATION AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract: In this article the role of background knowledge in the process of translation and intercultural communication is considered as the topical issue of the modern Theory of Translation. On the example of translation of historical realia from Russian into English the author makes an attempt to analyze the extent of influence of background knowledge on adequacy of the choice of translation methods for the Russian historical realia.

Keywords: historical realia, intercultural communication, lingua-ethnic barrier, background knowledge, pragmatic adaptation

At the present stage of development of Theory of Translation the use of communicative approach for the description of translation has won wide recognition. The majority of theoretical works in the field of Theory of Translation considers translation not only in the aspect of interlingual communication, but also in the aspect of intercultural communication, emphasizing that the translation act is not only a contact of two semantic systems, but also a contact of representatives of two linguacultural communities. Each of these communities has its own worldview, the certain fund of cultural heritage: background knowledge, moral-ethical norms, knowledge of rules of speech etiquette [1].

The understanding and interpretation of language units and speech utterances by participants of monolingual and especially bilingual communicative processes are different. Degree of such differences depends on linguistic and extralinguistic experience (background knowledge) of participants of communication. In the process of translation this postulate of pragmatics plays the essential role.

Considering the process of translation in the frame of communicative scheme of translation process (E. Nida, A. D. Schweitzer, A. Popovich, V. N. Komissarov), it should be noted that a translator always plays a double role: as the Receiver of the source text in the act of primary communication and as the Sender of the target text perceived by the receiver of the target text in the act of secondary communication. As the Receiver of the original text in primary communicative act for understanding of the translated text it is essentially important for a translator to possess a certain store of background knowledge. Many scientists pointed out that it is very important for the participants of communication to possess the background knowledge. In the context of this article it is essential for us to emphasize the importance of presence of certain background knowledge, first of all a translator's background knowledge.

In particular, A. S. Barkhudarov, A. D. Schweitzer and other translation theorists constantly emphasize that besides knowledge of language the important condition for the prevention of mistakes in translation process is the understanding of reality and situation in the

source text, also it is necessary to take into account the background knowledge of the recipient of the source text [2]. At the stage of perception of the source text a translator aspires to extract information contained in this text as fully as possible, for this a translator has to possess not only sufficient knowledge of the source language, but also the background knowledge of the bearers of source language. An opportunity to render properly the designations of objects and phenomena of the source text, and the related associations and images, especially assumes that a translator as the Sender of the target text has to possess the certain knowledge of that reality which is represented in the target text.

In the process of monolingual communication its efficiency can be interfered with distinctions in psychological features of communicants, their beliefs and habits. In the process of bilingual speech communication in addition to such social and personal barriers takes place a lingua-ethnic barrier, i.e. «a discrepancy in the languages, regularities of their functioning and cultures of communicants» [3]. Raising an issue of determinants of translation activities, L. K. Latyshev describes a lingua-ethnic barrier as a complex notion which includes a number of factors: a discrepancy of two language systems, a discrepancy of the language and speech norms that operate in the communities of source language and target language speakers and a discrepancy of background knowledge of bearers of different languages [3]. Neutralization of a lingua-ethnic barrier, i.e. obstacles which follow from belonging of participants of interlingual communication to different lingua-ethnic communities, is one of the main pragmatic objectives of a translator in translation process.

In this article we would like to consider in more detail the influence of such determining factor as a discrepancy in background knowledge of source language and target language speakers on the strategy of translation activities in case of the translation of the Russian historical realia into English.

As it was already stated above, adequate perception and understanding of the text by a translator depends on knowledge of features of culture and history of the people in

which language the source text was created. These features are most brightly reflected in realia, i.e. in the words that serve for designation of objects, concepts and phenomena which are absent in other culture and other language. National, cultural and often a historical content in realia constitute the meaning of realia. Therefore, it is lawful to consider them as the basis of background knowledge.

The Russian historical realia have the valuable information which a translator cannot extract without the corresponding background knowledge. Therefore once again we will emphasize the thesis that background knowledge is one of the major determinants of translation activity at the stage of perception of the source text when translator acts as the Recipient. Let's consider several examples:

И опять по обеим сторонам столбового пути пошли вновь писать версты, станционные смотрители, колодцы, обозы, серые деревни с самоварами, бабами ... (Гоголь Н.В. «Мертвые души») - Once more there began on either side of the turnpike a procession of verst stones, road menders, and grey villages; inns with samovars and peasant women... (tr. D.J. Hogarth)

Она взглядывалась в полевую даль, ...вглядывалась в белые церкви сельских погостов... (Салтыков-Щедрин М.Е. «Господа Головлевы») - She looked intently into the distance, gazing...at the white churches of the country-side. (tr. N. Duddington)

«...Теперь станем продолжать собрание голосов. Господин коллежский советник! Скажите нам ваше мнение!» (Пушкин А.С. «Капитанская дочка») – «Now let us continue to collect the votes. The College Director will give us his opinion. » (tr. Marie H. de Zielinska)

The given examples clearly demonstrate that background knowledge of translators is obviously not enough to disclose adequately the meaning of the appropriate Russian historical realia. Lack of knowledge or incorrect understanding of such Russian historical realia as *stantsionnyi smotritel* – rus. *станционный смотритель* (the chief of the mail station), *pagost* – rus. *погост* (the

burying-place, usually rural), *kollezhskii sovetnik* – rus. коллежский советник (a civil rank of the 6th class) became the reason of the mistakes made by translators [4]. In theory and practice of translation, the issue of realia is considered mainly as a problem of search of optimum methods of translation of such lexical units. But before translating it is necessary to recognize realia in the text, to understand it, and for this purpose the background knowledge of language and culture are necessary for a translator.

It is obviously important for us to note one more feature: in all three cases translators that are foreigners, not native speakers of Russian, execute the translations. This fact, in our opinion, can demonstrate that linguacultural belonging of a translator can be also carried to the determining factors that influence the adequacy of the translation already at the stage of primary communication when perceiving the text of the original [5].

At the stage of secondary communication when a translator acts as the Sender of the target text, translation process is determined, as it has been already mentioned, by the need of neutralization of a lingua-ethnic barrier, i.e. need of compensation of discrepancies in the volume and content of background knowledge of source language and target language speakers. As a result when making a translation of the original text, a translator uses various methods of pragmatic adaptation of the source text taking into account sociocultural discrepancies between recipients of the original text and the translation. A. D. Schweitzer notes that readdressing a message to foreign-language recipients and making the amendment with account of the specified discrepancies, a translator tries to find not just semantic equivalents, i.e. units designating the same phenomena of the reality, but those functional equivalents which are capable to cause the reaction of the foreign-language recipient similar to the reaction which the given message causes in those who perceive this message in the original form [5].

Choosing one or another way of pragmatic adaptation, translators of the Russian classical literature into English are guided by the average English-speaking

recipient of the translation. These typical representatives of target language culture are not familiar with the Russian historical realia. For ensuring the adequate understanding of the text by a recipient of the translation, in particular by the English-speaking reader, when choosing a way of translation of the Russian historical realia it is important for a translator to estimate correctly the general background knowledge, awareness and comprehensive abilities of the alleged recipient of translation. Let us consider some examples of the translation of the Russian historical realia:

В эту минуту хозяин вошел с кипящим самоваром... (Пушкин А.С. «Капитанская дочка») - *At this moment our host entered with the portable furnace and boiler, the Russian Somovar* (tr. Marie H. de Zielinska).

В ворота гостиницы губернского города NN въехала довольно красивая рессорная небольшая бричка, в какой ездят холостяки... (Гоголь Н.В. «Мертвые души») - *To the door of an inn in the provincial town of N. there drew up a smart britchka – a light spring-carriage of the sort affected by bachelors...* (tr. D.J. Hogarth)

Каморка запиралась на замок, напоминавший своим видом калач, только черный... (Тургенев И.С. «Муму») - *The garret was locked up by means of a padlock that looked like a kalatch or basket-shaped loaf, only black...* (tr. C. Garnett)

In the given examples translators give realia unfamiliar to a reader by means of transliteration accompanied with the short description with the purpose to provide more exact understanding of the corresponding lexical unit for a recipient of translation. Translators try to explain a reader the concepts that are unclear or unfamiliar to a reader, and at the same time to keep national and historical peculiarities reproducing a linguistic form of the corresponding realia.

Thus, a need of adequate verbalization of background knowledge in the translation process of the Russian historical realia is assured. Discrepancies in the volume of background knowledge of the source language and target language speakers in translation of the Russian historical realia into English as the

determining factor in process of translation of literary texts are not only the factor causing the necessity of pragmatic adaptation when translating the Russian historical realia, but also the factor that definitely influences the adequacy of understanding of the corresponding Russian realia by a translator in such cases where a translator is not a bearer of the source language.

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АУДАРМА ЖӘНЕ МӘДЕНИЕТАРАЛЫҚ ҚАРЫМ-ҚАТЫНАС ПРОЦЕСІНДЕ ФОНДЫҚ БІЛІМДЕРДІҢ РӨЛІ

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Аңдатпа: Аннотация: Осы мақалада аударма және мәдениетаралық қарым-қатынас процесінде қазіргі заманғы аударма теориясы үшін маңызды рөл атқаратыны туралы мәселе қарастырылады. Орыс тілінен орыс тіліне тарихи шындықты аудару мысалында автор түпкілікті білімнің орыс реалистикалық тарихи үрдістерді аудару жолдарын таңдаудың жеткіліктілігі туралы әсер ету дәрежесін талдауға тырысады.

Тірек сөздер: шындықтар-историзмдер, мәдениетаралық қарым-қатынас, лингво-этникалық кедергі, фундаменталды білім, прагматикалық бейімделу

РОЛЬ ФОНОВЫХ ЗНАНИЙ В ПРОЦЕССЕ ПЕРЕВОДА И МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

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Аннотация: В настоящей статье рассматривается актуальный для современной теории перевода вопрос о роли фоновых знаний в процессе перевода и межкультурной коммуникации. На примере перевода исторических реалий с русского языка на английский

автор предпринимает попытку проанализировать степень влияния фоновых знаний на адекватность выбора способов перевода русских реалий-историзмов.

Ключевые слова: реалии-историзмы, межкультурная коммуникация, лингвоэтнический барьер, фоновые знания, прагматическая адаптация