

TEACHING LEXICAL ASPECTS OF TRANSLATION ON THE EXAMPLE OF ARCHAISMS

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Abstract

The paper deals with the peculiarities of translation of the German archaisms taught at the translation practice lessons with university students-linguists trained as interpreters and translators. The study is relevant, since the process of archaization is the vivid evidence of the language dynamism, and the analysis of this phenomenon in different languages will help students to identify the peculiarities of archaic words functioning in the language and to avoid translation errors in the future. Archaisms and obsolete vocabulary in general are the valuable material not only in terms of linguistic heritage, but also in terms of language learning. Despite the fact that archaic words are rarely used in modern speech, their role is important. First of all, learning these units allows identifying the features of the national worldview, cultural identity and uniqueness of people. Secondly, archaisms carry a large amount of historical information, and thirdly, when studying archaisms, we enrich both our passive and active vocabulary, our oral and written speech. Learning archaisms at the lessons helps students to identify and interpret them appropriately. The aim of the paper is to study the features of archaisms in the German language and to analyze the ways of formation skills necessary for translation of this lexical phenomenon into Russian. The authors applied such research methods as descriptive, continuous sampling method and method of comparative analysis. Material for the study was selected from the etymological dictionaries and other lexicographical sources (electronic resource "Kunstworte", online dictionaries of the archaic words of the Russian and German languages). The analysis of obsolete vocabulary revealed changes on the phonetic and morphological levels in both languages. Among the thematic groups of archaisms there are groups with the names of professions and names of abstract notions. In the German language historisms are considered to be a type of archaisms. As a result of the study, the authors compiled a set of exercises and tasks, on the basis of factual material, aimed at the developing translation skills in students trained as translators and interpreters.

Keywords: Teaching, linguistics, translation, language education, obsolete vocabulary, archaism, historism.

1 INTRODUCTION

Language is a dynamic system which constantly develops, primarily due to the continuous flow of new vocabulary. However, changes in the vocabulary of a language are associated not only with the emergence of new words, but also with the opposite process – with the obsolescence of certain words. This phenomenon does not serve as a determinant in the development of the vocabulary of a language, but it is of particular importance. Therefore, this paper is devoted to one of the types of obsolete words – archaisms. The study of archaisms in the language is relevant, since the process of archaization is one of the most vivid evidences of the language dynamism.

The term "archaism" comes from the Greek *archaios* (ancient). Archaisms are defined as obsolete words, phrases and other language units ousted by the synonymous units. They are a part of the language

vocabulary which is chronologically limited in use, along with historicisms, as well as neologisms and occasionalisms. Archaisms and historicisms are obsolete words of the modern language.

According to L.G. Babenko's definition, archaisms are "words that, for various reasons: intralinguistic or extralinguistic, are ousted from the vocabulary and replaced by other words, their absolute synonyms. For example, in Russian: *перст* – *палец* (finger), *лоно* – *грудь* (bosom), *присно* – *постоянно* (constantly)" (Babenko, 2008, pp. 112-113). G.V. Tokarev defines archaisms as "words denoting concepts that are relevant to the linguocultural community, but have an outdated plane of expression" (Tokarev, 2008, p. 98). Galperin A.I. is of the opinion that archaisms are obsolete words and expressions which are not used in modern speech because they have the corresponding "modern" synonyms (Galperin, 1958, p. 67).

Knowledge of the meaning of obsolete words, archaisms in particular, by modern native speakers reflects the cultural development of the nation. "The vocabulary of the Russian language, largely in its obsolete part (historisms and archaisms), as the most important level of the language system, preserves and transmits from generation to generation information about the features of the national worldview, the identity and uniqueness of the people" (Vinogradov, 2001, p. 23). Archaisms are inextricably linked with the history of the nation and reflect the peculiarities of the historical development of the national mentality.

Archaisms are found in the literature and scientific works of past centuries, in the national folklore, in newspapers, in films and theatrical performances based on the fiction of the past, in proper names.

The use of archaisms in the texts can cause difficulties in translating them into another language. "Rare", "forgotten", "little used" words can complicate the perception and understanding of the text, and, consequently, the translation. This forces the translator to search for an unfamiliar word in specialized dictionaries. The problem may also lie in the fact that even native speakers often do not understand the meaning of obsolete words. This happens for several reasons. For example, there may be an increase in the number of obsolete lexical units in the language. Another possible reason is the reduction of the general language culture of the population and, as a result, a lack of interest in the history of the language. The speakers of some languages, such as Tatar, do not know archaisms due to the opposition of the colloquial speech, as a special system within the literary language, to the codified literary language. Thus, a significant part of native speakers uses colloquial speech and has superficial knowledge of the literary language, which greatly affects the understanding of obsolete vocabulary. Colloquial speech is more dynamic and archaic units are rarely used. The native speakers encounter archaisms mainly when reading works of literature of past centuries. Thus, the majority of the Tatar speakers does not know the meaning of archaisms, and even has no need to recognize them.

However, there are cases when archaisms function in the language not only within the framework of historical novels, poetry and folklore. For instance, archaic vocabulary is often used in the lyrics of the German folk groups, which suggests that a significant part of native speakers know and understand the meaning of archaisms.

Thus, the attitude towards archaisms in different languages largely depends on the state of a language and on the national identity of the people speaking this language. In each language, there is a set of factors that affect the functioning of archaic vocabulary in it. This can cause many problems when translating obsolete words into another language. As a result, there is a need to determine some strategies and techniques for translating archaisms into another language and to teach them to students trained as translators and interpreters.

2 METHODOLOGY

The term "archaism" first appeared in 1751 in the Dictionary of the Russian Language of the Century. Linguistic interest in archaisms has been demonstrated since the 1950s. At that time classification of archaisms was one of the main subjects of research. The founder of the most common approach to the typology of archaisms is N.M. Shansky, who in 1954 in the article "Obsolete words in the vocabulary of the modern Russian language" offered his own classification of obsolete words (in addition to the existing classification of obsolete vocabulary into historicisms and archaisms), based on the fact that a word as a linguistic sign can also be archaized in the plane of expression (form) and in the plane of content (meaning). Later, this principle formed the basis of the classifications developed by A.C. Belousova, I.B. Golub, N.G. Goltsova, F.K. Guzhva, A.V. Kalinin, L.P. Krysin, T.G. Terekhova and others, presented in textbooks on lexicology (Shestakova, 1999, p. 18).

In recent decades, extensive studies on archaisms have appeared (E.G. Mikhailova, T.G. Arkadyeva). A number of specialized dictionaries have been published, including "Explanatory dictionary of obsolete words

and phraseological units of the Russian literary language” by Fedorova A.I., “Dictionary of the Russian historicalisms” by Arkadyeva T.G., “Dictionary of obsolete words of the Russian language” by R.P. Rogozhnikova and T.S. Karskaya.

The aim of the paper is to analyze such phenomenon as archaism and the ways of its translation into another language, as well as to determine effective methods of teaching the translation of archaic vocabulary into other languages. To achieve the aim the authors analyzed the features of archaisms, the German obsolete words, in particular, and offered methodological recommendations for teaching the translation of archaisms (on the example of the German and Russian languages).

The authors applied such research methods as descriptive, continuous sampling method, method of comparative analysis and the modeling of methodological tools for teaching the translation of archaisms. The materials of the paper may be used in the practical courses of the German language, lexicology, theory and practice of translation, in teaching the lexical aspects of translation.

3 RESULTS

3.1 German Archaisms: Linguistic Aspects

In this paper the linguistic phenomenon of archaism was analyzed primarily on the example of the German language. Material for the study was selected from the electronic resource “Kunstworte” and online dictionaries of the archaic words of the German language. In the German lexicology, as well as in the Russian linguistics, archaisms are understood as words and concepts that are obsolete for certain reasons, but are still present in the minds of native speakers and used in modern texts. The famous lexicologist Thea Schippan divides obsolete vocabulary into historicalisms, semantic and phonetic-morphological archaisms (Schippan, 1992, p. 248).

Historisms are obsolete words denoting various concepts, objects and realia related to different historical periods of Germany: *der Kurfürst*, *das Turnier*, *der Frondienst* are archaic words from the Middle Ages; *die Hitlerjugend* is from the Third Reich period; *die FDJ*, *die SED*, *die Volkskammer* are historicalisms from the GDR. Other examples of historicalisms include *Minnedienst*, *Minnesänger*, *Kirchenzehnt*, *Ablasshandel*, *Hanse*, *Gutsherr*, *Dienstmagd*, *Knecht*, *Pedell*, etc.

Semantic archaisms are obsolete words replaced by the new, modern synonyms, for example: *das Gestade* – *die Küste* (shore), *die Minne* – *die Liebe* (love), *das Gewand* – *das Kleid* (dress), *die Muhme* – *die Tante* (aunt), *der Born* – *die Quelle* (spring), *das Geziefer* – *das Ungeziefer* (pest). They also include poetic archaisms: *Aar* (eagle), *Leu* (lion).

Phonetic-morphological archaisms are defined as words and expressions whose grammatical and phonetic forms have undergone some changes, for example: *Turnei* instead of *Turnier*, *Odem* instead of *Atem*, *Quell* instead of *Quelle*, *Jungfer* instead of *Jungfrau*, *begunnen* instead of *begannen*, *ward* instead of *wurde*, *auf Erden* instead of *auf Erde*, *sich freuen* followed by a noun in the genitive case instead of *sich freuen über/auf* followed by a noun in the accusative case, *Bedingnis* instead of *Bedingung*, *kräftlich* instead of *kräftig* (Olshansky, 2005, p. 87).

According to this classification semantic archaisms are understood differently in comparison with the Russian lexicology, in which semantic archaisms are understood as obsolete word meanings, rather than obsolete words. Semantic archaisms in German are identical to lexical archaisms in Russian, when a word is not replaced by a new synonym in the modern language, but continues to be used by native speakers in a different meaning. As you can see, the classifications of archaisms are different, so the authors of this paper used the classification of the German archaisms developed by the Russian linguist S.M. Khantimirov. He distinguishes 4 types of archaisms in German: historicalisms, semantic archaisms, phonetic-morphological and lexical archaisms. Lexical archaisms include, for example, the word *die Zunge*, which in modern language denotes a part of the body, and earlier it was also used in the meaning of “*language*”. According to this classification, phonetic-morphological archaisms are divided into three groups: phonetic-morphological archaisms (*Jungfer* – *Jungfrau*), grammatical archaisms (*begunnen* – *begannen*) and derivational archaisms (*Bedingnis* – *Bedingung*, *kräftlich* – *kräftig*) (Khantimirov, 2002, p. 34).

The analysis of 200 archaic words selected from the German lexicographic sources showed that the majority of them are semantic archaisms (63%), while historicalisms (21,5%) and phonetic-morphological archaisms (13%) are less numerous. Only 2,5% of the analyzed obsolete words are lexical archaisms.

Other examples of the German phonetic-morphological archaisms are: *trutz* – *trotz*, *Melodei* – *Melodie*, *Junker* – *Junger*, *Bedingnis* – *Bedingung*, *Empfindnis* – *Empfindung*, *artlich* – *artig*, *auferwachsen* –

erwachsen, Endschaft – Ende, Handelschaft – Handel, Ratschlagung – Ratschlag, stund – stand (Prät.), Emse – Ameise, Cobalt – Kobalt, Corps – Korps, Burgeoisie – Bourgeoisie, ratzig – krätzig, selbdritt – zu dritt, selbander – zu zweit, Hinkebein – Hinkende.

They are characterized by the following features: reduction of suffixes in nouns, which is associated with the shortening of cumbersome word forms (*die Endschaft – das Ende, die Handelschaft – der Handel, die Ratschlagung – der Ratschlag*); changes in the suffixes of adjectives and nouns, followed by the change in the gender of nouns (*artlich – artig, das Bedingnis – die Bedingung, das Empfindnis – die Empfindung, das Melodei – die Melodie*); voicing of a voiceless consonant in a word (*Junker – Junger*); graphic assimilation of borrowed words (*Cobalt – Kobalt, Corps – Korps*); grammatical changes in verbs (*ward – wurde, begunnen – begannen, stund – stand* (in Präteritum)).

It is difficult to explain many of these changes in the German words, since this continuous process might be caused by various intralinguistic and extralinguistic factors. From the linguistic point of view, such changes are common because the language is a living system, and any changes in it reflect the peculiarities of a certain human society, its culture and results of interaction with other peoples.

It should be noted that the archaisms under analysis are predominantly compound nouns consisting of two and more stems, e.g.: *das Herrenbrot (historism); die Hilfsschule – die Förderschule; das Lichtspielhaus – das Kino; das Bombenwetter – klarer Himmel ohne Wolken; das Bratkartoffelverhältnis – außereheliche Liebesbeziehung; der Handlungsreisender – der Handelsvertreter; die Kartoffelferien – die Herbstferien; der Zivildienstleistender – der Zivi; Scheelsucht – Neid; Volkskammer (historism); Brautwerber – Heiratsvermittler..* The stems in a compound archaism sometimes are not obsolete words.

Among archaisms there are also borrowings, which were subsequently replaced by the native German words, mainly compound nouns: *Viktualien – Lebensmittel; Boudoir – Schminkzimmer; Trottoir – Fußsteig; Chaussee – Fahrstraße; Libertin – Freigelassener; Latrine – Donnerbalken.*

As for the lexical archaisms, the noun *Scherge* was previously used in the meaning of “an executioner or executioner’s assistant”, and today it has the meaning “a policeman or security guard”. The denotative meaning of the word *Scherge* is preserved, although with some changes. However, the meaning of the word *Rock* (“a skirt”) has nothing in common with its old meaning “a jacket”. Thus, due to the disappearance of certain concepts and objects or their change in the course of time, some meanings of words go to the periphery of the language, and words acquire new meanings.

Semantic archaisms make up the majority of the German obsolete words under analysis, namely 63%. This can be explained by the fact that the phonetic system, grammatical and word-formation structures of a language are not subject to rapid changes in comparison with the lexical units. The life of the speech community does not stand still, it constantly develops and improves. New words appear in the language and subsequently replace the words and concepts existing in it. The latter, in their turn, pass into a passive vocabulary and become obsolete words. In different historical periods the German language borrowed a large number of words from other languages, which prompted the German linguists to take measures to preserve the originality of the German vocabulary and eliminate foreign language units. The first purist linguistic communities appeared in Germany as early as the 17th and 18th centuries. Defenders of the national language sought to protect the German language from the penetration of borrowings. Thanks to this movement many foreign language units were substituted by the German equivalents. For example, the semantic archaism *Viktualien*, derived from the Latin “*victualis*” (food), was replaced by the German word *Lebensmittel*. The word *Viktualien* remained in the German language as an archaism and can be found today in the name of a food market in Munich – *Viktualienmarkt*.

Many semantic archaisms borrowed from the French language were replaced by the original German words: *Boudoir – Schminkzimmer, Trottoir* (pavement) – *Fußsteig, Cochonnerie* (from “*cochon*” –pig) – *Schweinerei, Chaussee* (highway) – *Fahrstraße, Plumeau* (featherbed) – *Federbett, Chapeau claque* (top hat) – *Zylinder, Camouflage – Tarnung; gentil* (nice, kind) – *nett, freundlich; parleren* (from “*parler*” – speak) – *sich unterhalten*. The larger part of the French words which belong to the obsolete vocabulary in German were borrowed by many languages, Russian in particular. These French words in most cases belong to the active vocabulary and serve as the only names for objects and phenomena. That is why Russian speakers easily identify the archaisms of the French origin in the German texts.

As for the semantic archaisms of the Latin origin, they were also substituted by the German words: *ponderabel* (from the Latin *ponderabilis*) – *berechenbar* (weighty), *Diarium* – *Tagebuch* (diary), *Animosität – Befindlichkeit* (state of mind), *Charivari* (from the Latin *caribaria* – “headache”) – *Mischmasch* (confusion), *suszeptibel* (from the Latin *susceptibilis*) – *empfindlich* (sensitive); *luzid* (from the Latin *lucidus*) – *klar, hell*

(bright, clear), *Libertin* (from the Latin *libertinus*) – *Freigeist* (freethinker), *fulminant* (from the Latin *fulminans*) – *großartig* (brilliant); *Latrine* (from the Latin *latrina*) – *Donnerbalken* (lavatory), *Fiduz* (from the Latin *fiducia*) – *Vertrauen* (trust), *spoliieren* – *berauben*, *stehlen* (to rob).

Thus, these examples prove the tendency in German to replace borrowings from other languages by their own words, and this replacement is quite successful, since foreign words gradually passed into a group of obsolete words. Among archaisms under study there are many borrowings, predominantly nouns, from French and Latin, which highlights the strong influence of these languages on German. However, there are rare cases when German words are substituted by the borrowings: *Lichtspielhaus* – *Kino*, *Ferngespräch* – *Telefongespräch*, *Gammler* – *Hippie*.

The semantic archaisms represent different thematic groups, such as: family and interpersonal relations (*Oheim* – *Onkel*; *Base* – *Cousine*, *Tante*; *Muhme* – *Mutter*; *Buhlin* – *Freundin*; *Brautwerber* – *Heiratsvermittler*; *Amme* – *Kinderfrau*; *Eidam* – *Schwiegersohn*), clothes (*Gewand* – *Kleid*, *Rock-Anzugjacke*, *Skaphander* – *Schutzanzug*, *Liebestöter* – *Unterhose*, *Chapeau claque* – *Zylinder*, *Ärmelschoner* – *Schmutzärmel*, *Gamaschen* – *Knopfstrumpf*, *Camouflage* – *Tarnung*), abstract notions (*Minne* – *Liebe*, *Künftigkeit* – *Zukunft*, *Scheelsucht* – *Neid*, *Kabale* – *Intrige*, *Huld* – *Gunst*, *Charivari* – *Mischmasch*, *Drangsal* – *Bedrückung*, *Fiduz* – *Vertrauen*, *Zeugemutter* – *Natur*, *Odium* – *Feindschaft*), technology (*Telespiel* – *Konsolenspiele*; *Flimmerkiste* – *Fernseher*, *TV*; *Ferngespräch* – *Telefongespräch*; *Lichtspielhaus* – *Kino*), words describing people (*Kokotte* – *Halbweltldame*, *Schalk* – *Spaßmacher*, *Freundenmädchen* – *Prostituierte*, *Rindvieh* – *Dummkopf*, *Lunatiker* – *Schlafwandler*, *Lotterbube* – *Drohne*, *Lorbass* – *Spaßmacher*, *Gammler* – *Hippie*, *Libertin* – *Freigeist*, *Firlefanf* – *dummes Zeug*), professions (*Gendarm* – *Polizist*, *Straßenfeger* – *Hoffeger*, *Schultheiß* – *Gemeindevorsteher*, *Kesselflicker* – *Wanderhandwerker*, *Potentat* – *Machthaber*).

Historisms, as a type of archaisms, are connected with the history of the nation and refer to the military sphere, politics, way of life, names of household items, clothes, etc: *Volkskammer* (Parliament of DDR), *Kurfürst* (electoral prince), *Gutsherr* (landlord), *Dienstmagd* (maidservant), *Kemenate* (women's chamber), *Postillion*.

The attribution of historicisms to archaisms can be explained by the fact that linguists, when studying obsolete words, develop a narrow or broad understanding of archaisms. In the first case, the group of archaisms is limited to the actual archaic vocabulary, and in the second case, they include historicisms, obsolete and rarely used words. German linguists prefer a broad consideration of archaisms, while in the Russian linguistics, on the contrary, a narrow understanding of archaisms is considered more justified. However, there are Russian linguists, like Vinokur G.O. and Komissarov V.N., who classify historicisms as a subtype of archaisms (Vinokur, 1991, p.15).

The analysis of the German archaisms revealed that the largest group of obsolete vocabulary is semantic archaisms. In most cases foreign borrowings were substituted by their native German synonyms, which positively affected the preservation of the purity of the language vocabulary. Phonetic-morphological archaisms are not numerous, which indicates a resistance of the phonetic and morphological systems of the German language to changes.

3.2 Translation of Archaisms from German into Russian: Methodological Issues

Translation is a complex process during which many difficulties are dealt with. As for archaisms, a translator may face such problems as understanding of a text, identifying the obsolete vocabulary, conveying not only the meaning of archaisms, but also the cultural and historical features of the source language, as well as the problem of an accurate interpretation of archaism into the target language.

All these problems are solved at different levels of the text. Of course, you should start with the lexical level. Accordingly, the first group of exercises and tasks should be aimed at developing the skills necessary for dealing with archaisms as a layer of the language vocabulary. To find an equivalent of a word in the target language is the most elementary task. The students should learn to work not only with standard bilingual dictionaries, but also with specialized ones, with various thesauri, lexicographic corpora, etymological dictionaries and dictionaries of synonyms. For example, ask students to find an archaic equivalent to an archaism, to match archaisms with their modern synonyms, or to find modern synonyms of archaisms in the dictionary. It may also be useful to analyze the interlinguistic and extralinguistic causes of semantic and structural changes in a word.

As for phonetic-morphological archaisms, a structural and morphological analysis of archaic words and their comparison with the modern synonyms is useful. In this way students have the opportunity to understand the

nature of the structural changes in the word in the course of its historical development, which in itself is an additional channel of information that allows students to consolidate useful knowledge in the form of the vocabulary that is new to them.

The next stage of work on archaisms is on the syntactic level, where students focus on the use of archaisms, their compatibility with other lexical units, and, consequently, their functioning in the language. Here students can do various tasks: matching, gap filling, multiple choice tests, etc. The final tasks at this stage could be to translate the phrases with archaisms from German into Russian and vice versa.

The last stage of work on the translation of archaisms is the text level, where it is not enough just to identify an archaism, but to make an adequate translation of the text. At this stage, it is necessary to carry out a pre-translation analysis of the text in order to choose the translation strategy and the most appropriate way to render the text into the target language. The translator should pay attention to many factors, such as the time when the text was written, the purpose (explicit and hidden) of writing the text by the author, the style and genre, the topic of the text, the target reader and the socio-cultural peculiarities of the target language.

In the course of this study, a trial group consisting of 13 students trained as translators was offered to do a set of exercises aimed at the development of skills necessary for translation of archaisms. The questioning after completing the tasks showed that 11 students were interested in doing these exercises. 10 students said that the exercises helped them to understand the text better, which later affected the quality of the translation of the texts using archaisms. It is obvious that a trial group of 13 people cannot show real results of work on the proposed methodological recommendations. But this study did not aim at the conducting an experiment. However, the study of the problems of translating archaisms has shown a wide range of issues that may become the subjects of further research, including experiential learning involving more students.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This study showed that archaisms in the language, the problems of their translation and teaching the translation of archaisms are relevant issues. The authors consider it necessary to conduct further research, including experiential learning, and describing its results in articles.

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