

TEACHING TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH AND GERMAN NON-EQUIVALENT VOCABULARY IN MEDIA TEXTS

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Abstract

The paper deals with the English and German non-equivalent vocabulary taught at the translation practice lessons and the English and German language lessons with university students trained as interpreters and translators. The main aim of intercultural communication is the achievement of mutual understanding between representatives of different cultures. Of particular interest is non-equivalent vocabulary, the translation of which may cause difficulties due to the lack of certain concepts, traditions and phenomena in another culture. Non-equivalent vocabulary can be found in media texts often used as a material in translator training. In the context of foreign languages teaching, non-equivalent units and false equivalents are elements that prevent full understanding of the text, as well as the subtext, and lead to mistakes among students. This situation has educational value, drawing students' attention to the historical and cultural characteristics of the target language country. Learning non-equivalent words at the translation practice lessons and the English and German language lessons helps students to identify these units and interpret them correctly. The aim of the paper is to analyze the ways of translating the English and German non-equivalent vocabulary used in media texts into Russian. The authors applied such research methods as descriptive, continuous sampling method and method of contextual analysis. Material for the study was selected from the articles of the German and British media sources, such as Focus online, Der Spiegel, Deutsche Welle, BBC and the Guardian. The analysis showed that the most recurrent types of the English and German non-equivalent words are toponyms, anthroponyms and realia. The main techniques applied to translate the English and German non-equivalent vocabulary under analysis into Russian are transcription, transliteration, calque and half-calque translation.

Keywords: Teaching, linguistics, translation, language education, non-equivalent vocabulary, realia, toponym, anthroponym.

1 INTRODUCTION

Today, the media have a great impact on people's perception of the world, as well as on national languages and cultures. A language used in the media reflects its current state and allows delving into the peculiarities of another culture, non-equivalent vocabulary in particular, which are important for understanding and accurate translation. This problem is relevant, since in linguistics there has been a tendency to pay more attention to the problem of "translatability" and, as a result, scientific interest in the problems of translating non-equivalent vocabulary has increased. The solution of these problems is highly important for practical translators.

The appearance of non-equivalent vocabulary is explained by the presence of cultural gaps, and it is difficult to convert these lexical units in the process of translation due to the lack of stable lexical and sometimes semantic correspondences in other languages. From the point of view of the foreign language teaching, non-equivalent units and false equivalents are elements that prevent full understanding of the text, as well as its subtle implications, contributing to the occurrence of errors in students. However, this situation not only leads to mistakes, but also has educational value, drawing the students' attention to the historical and cultural characteristics of the target language country. The study of non-equivalent vocabulary allows the generalization of linguistic, speech and cultural experience, development of language skills and general linguocultural competence in students. The relevance of studying non-equivalent words in the scientific and methodological aspect is explained by the insufficient development of methodological techniques for teaching and practicing this material and monitoring the students' results. There is no doubt that the culturally marked vocabulary, which reflects the distinctive features of the national culture, serves to form linguocultural competence in students studying foreign languages.

Non-equivalent vocabulary refers to units that are used to express concepts that are not found in another culture. According to L.S. Barkhudarov and L.K. Latyshev non-equivalent units are: realia, proper names, occasional non-equivalents and temporary non-equivalent terms (Barkhudarov, 1975, p. 94; Latyshev, 2005, p. 58). Linguists V.G. Kostomarov and Ye.M. Vereshchagin are of the opinion that non-equivalent units are words whose content plan cannot be correlated with any foreign lexical concepts. Such words are, generally speaking, untranslatable (Vereshchagin and Kostomarov, 2005, p. 77). According to L.K. Latyshev and V.I. Provotorov, non-equivalent vocabulary is understood as stable words and phrases of the source language which do not have the corresponding lexical units in the target language necessary for translation (Latyshev and Provotorov, 1999, p. 52).

The reasons for the emergence of non-equivalent vocabulary are: cultural and historical distinctive features of each linguistic community, which are reflected in realia and temporary non-equivalent lexical units; different articulation of reality by means of different languages, as a result of which occasional non-equivalents are formed; grammatical features of the language, which lead to the emergence of structural exoticisms (Latyshev and Provotorov, 1999, p. 52).

Based on the definition of the word "equivalence" according to Ya.I. Retsker, one can come to the conclusion that non-equivalence refers to a group of lexical or phraseological units that do not have a stable correspondence in the target language and do not depend on the context. In addition, non-equivalent units are realia that are inherent in the country of the source language and uncharacteristic of the culture of the target language (Retsker, 2006, p. 58). In the sociolinguistic dictionary non-equivalent vocabulary is defined as vocabulary that has no analogues in other languages or in other subcodes of a given language, and is untranslatable into other languages. They occur as a result of differences in the habitat, lifestyle and culture of different peoples (Kozhemyakina, 2006, p. 29).

K. Henschelmann also studied problems of non-equivalent vocabulary. He classifies realia into ethnographic objects (architectural monuments, traditional dwellings, etc.), everyday realia (food, drinks, clothes, etc.), geographical objects, historical, social, legal and religious concepts (Henschelmann, 1999, p. 143).

Thus, the study of the problems of non-equivalent vocabulary and their translation is undoubtedly relevant. Non-equivalent units reflect the identity of the national culture, and are an important object of study for many scientists who considered this linguistic phenomenon from different points of view, offered various classifications of non-equivalent vocabulary and identified different sources of these lexical units.

2 METHODOLOGY

The aim of the paper is to analyze the ways of translating the English and German non-equivalent vocabulary used in media texts into Russian. The authors analyzed the definitions and types of non-equivalent vocabulary, studied the peculiarities of the non-equivalent lexical units used in the media texts in English and German, identified translation transformations that are most often used to convert them into Russian.

The authors applied such research methods as descriptive, statistical, continuous sampling method and method of contextual analysis. Continuous sampling method was used to identify 220 corpus examples of non-equivalent vocabulary (110 English and 110 German). Material for the study was selected from the articles of the German and British media sources, such as Focus online, Der Spiegel, Deutsche Welle, BBC and the Guardian.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Non-Equivalent Vocabulary in the English and German Media Texts

The article analyzes 110 lexical units of the non-equivalent vocabulary used in the media texts in English, 58% of which are proper names (*Vietnam, Middlesex University, Temple of Heaven, Google Drive, etc.*), 25% – temporary non-equivalent words (*soundtrack, smartphone, network, laptops, etc.*), 12% – realia (*Namibian fruit festival, dragon dance, American diner folklore traces, Thanksgiving day, etc.*) and 5% – occasional non-equivalents (*afternoon, Internet savvy, fortnight, etc.*).

Proper names prevail among non-equivalent vocabulary selected from the British media texts. They include toponyms (48% of all proper names): *Korea, Peru, Romania, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Greek island of Tinos, Manila, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Sahyadri mountains, western India, Rhode Island, Latin America, Europe, Lavasa, Portofino, Italian Riviera, Ireland, California, Beverly Hills, Compton, South Africa, Canada, San Francisco, Silicon Valley, Missouri, Lebanon, Seattle, the British Raj*; anthroponyms (27% of all proper names): *Alex Mullen, Emma Ward, Dean Burnett, Gary Small, Sherlock, Susan Greenfield, Winston Churchill, Bill Gates, Richard Branson, Kalena Bruce, Jerry Kimrey, Josh Tetrick, Karen Wickre, Steve Jobs, Vivek Wadhwa, Saritha Rai, Vinod Khosla*; names of companies, organizations, institutions, departments, societies, newspapers (22% of all proper names): *UNESCO, Middlesex University, The World Health Organization, China's Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Temple University in Pennsylvania, US Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration, The Cattlemen's Association, Apple*; proper names relating to literature, art and entertainment (*Temple of Heaven, Sydney Opera House*). The analysis of proper names was based on the classification developed by Superanskaya A.V. (Superanskaya, 2007, p. 178).

As for the temporary non-equivalent words found in the English media texts (*display, laptop, gadget, tweet, startup, messaging, network, lobby, lab-grown hamburger*), their non-equivalence can be explained by the uneven distribution of achievements in science, technology and social sphere in the world. As a result, a word denoting an innovation and familiar to native speakers of the source language is practically unknown to speakers of the target language. However, this inequality is leveled when a corresponding term appears, often through transliteration or transcription, in the target language. In their specificity temporary non-equivalent words are close to realia words.

Among realia found in British media texts there are such lexical units as *Namibian fruit festival, Marble craftsmanship* (the tradition of creating marble sculptures), *Lunch wagon* (roadside food wagons), *Hill stations* (mountain stations – small villages built in the mountains specifically for colonial officials, who were tired of the noise and bustle of the Indian cities). These units are unfamiliar or alien to other peoples, as they express national or temporal features, and do not have exact equivalents in other languages.

Occasional non-equivalents are also met in media texts. A common explanation for occasional non-equivalence is a reference to the theory of linguistic relativity, according to which different languages form linguistic view of the world in different ways for people who speak them (Latyshev, 1999, p. 178). For example, in Russian there are no special words for periods of time which in English are denoted by such words as *fortnight, every other day, the other day*.

The analysis of 110 non-equivalent lexical units selected from the German media texts showed that 69% of them are proper names (*Nico Mutters, Birgit Wehner, Leibniz-Institut für Troposphärenforschung, das Robert-Koch-Institut, das Pergamonmuseum, etc.*), 26% – realia (*das Richtfest, Rosenmontag, Fastenzeit, Bundesländer, Bundesregierung, Frankfurter Kranz, etc.*) and 5% – occasional non-equivalents (*Plattenbau-Wohnzimmer, Datenbrille, multikulturellen Schulen, Migrationshintergrund*).

As well as in the English media texts, proper names are most frequently used non-equivalent lexical units in the German articles. 47% of the are anthroponyms, (*Nico Mutters, Kekulé, Birgit Wehner, Alfred Messel, Ludwig Hoffmann, Clément Beaune, Annick Girardin, Angela Merkel, Olaf Scholz, Horst Seehofer, Frank Vandenbroucke*), 25% – toponyms (*Ostsee, Insel Jersey, Insel Rügen, Hamburg, Großbritannien, Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland, Sachsen, Schleswig-Holstein, Magdeburg*), 20% – names of companies, organizations, institutions, departments, societies, newspapers (*Leibniz-Institut für Troposphärenforschung, Institut für Hygiene und Öffentliche Gesundheit am Universitätsklinikum Bonn, das Robert-Koch-Institut, der Naturschutzbund Deutschland, das Bundesamt für Seeschifffahrt und Hydrographie, Facebooks unabhängiges Aufsichtsgremium Oversight Board, Frankfurter Universität, Bundesagentur für Arbeit*), 8% – proper names relating to literature, art and entertainment (*Pergamonmuseum, Ishtar-Tor, Museum für Islamische Kunst,*

das Vorderasiatische Museum, Speyerer Dom, Tiergarten).

Words denoting cultural realia were found in the articles about the traditional German carnival held before Lent and called *Fastnacht* in the southwestern regions of Germany, *Fastelovend* or *Fastleer* in Cologne and *Fasching* in Bavaria. The carnival season begins on November 11, and the street carnival begins on one of the Thursdays in February or March, when *Bützchen* (kisses) are distributed. Carnival ends on *Aschermittwoch* (Ash Wednesday). Some realia are associated with celebration of the May Day in Germany. In many regions of Germany, young people put up the *Maibaum* (Maypole) in front of their friends' houses at night. In addition, the *Maikönigin* (May Queen) and the *Maikönig* (May King) are elected. In the German media texts on political, economic and social topics words denoting social and political realia are often used: *Bundesrat*, *Bundesregierung*, *Bundesländer*, *Bundeswehr*, *das Eiserne Kreuz*, *Kaiser*, *Reichstag*.

Occasional non-equivalents were also identified in the German media texts. For example, in the Russian language there is no word for schools where children of different nationalities study, while in German this phenomenon is denoted by the lexical unit *multikulturelle Schulen*.

3.2 Translation of the Non-Equivalent Vocabulary into Russian

The term “non-equivalent vocabulary” is used in case of the lack of equivalent of a lexical unit in the vocabulary of another language. It should be noted that if a concept does not exist in the target language, it does not mean that this concept cannot be expressed by the means of this language. According to the theory of translation the following methods of translating non-equivalent vocabulary are used: transcription, transliteration, calque translation, explanatory translation and approximate translation.

Transliteration, the method of representing letters or words of one alphabet in the characters of another alphabet, and transcription, copying the sound form of the word in the source language by the characters of the target language, are often applied to translate realia words and proper names.

In the following example, the lexical unit *burgers* was translated using the transliteration, and the name of the eating establishment, *All American Diner*, was translated using the transcription: The *All American Diner* plays 1950s rock'n'roll through a tinny speaker, the retro booths are traditional red and the *burgers* are suitably oversized. – В Ол Американ Дайнер из динамика, издающего резкий металлический звук, играет рок-н-ролл 50-х годов, здесь стоят традиционно красные диванчики в ретро-стиле и подают по-хорошему огромные бургеры.

Transliteration is used to translate the German realia words (*Berliner* and *Pfannkuchen*) into Russian as well: Eine typische Leckerei ist daher der Faschingskrapfen – in manchen Regionen auch „Berliner“ oder „Pfannkuchen“ genannt. – Поэтому типичным деликатесом является карнавалый кrapfen, который в некоторых регионах также называют “берлинер” или “пфаннкухен”.

Explanatory translation is often applied to translate realia words and occasional non-equivalents. I.S. Alekseeva believes that explanatory translation is a lexical substitution with generalization, accompanied by lexical additions. Explanatory translation causes the expansion of the text volume. This can make it difficult to achieve equivalence in some types of text (Alekseyeva, 2004, p. 169). The authors often use explanatory translation due to the fact that non-equivalent vocabulary is often incomprehensible for representatives of another culture, and there is a need for its interpretation. Explanatory translation, which allows revealing the meaning of a lexical unit that has no equivalent, is used in the following examples:

Marble craftsmanship practised on the Greek island of Tinos was recognised as part of the island's cultural identity which draws from “a shared symbolic system of religious, magical and oral traditions”. – Традиция создания скульптур из мрамора на греческом острове Тинос признана частью культурного наследия острова, основанного на «общей символической системе религиозных, магических и устных традиций».

Im Mai 2019 wurde auf der Museumsinsel Berlin feierlich das *Richtfest* für den Nordflügel und den Mitteltrakt der Grundinstandsetzung und Ergänzung des Pergamonmuseums begangen. – В мае 2019 года на Музейном острове в Берлине состоялась торжественная церемония по случаю завершения реконструкции северного и центрального крыла и расширения Пергамского музея.

So the English non-equivalent lexical unit *marble craftsmanship* (традиция создания скульптур из мрамора) and the German word *Richtfest* (торжественная церемония по случаю завершения реконструкции) are translated into Russian using explanatory translation.

Lexical addition can be observed in the translation of the non-equivalent unit *Namibian fruit festival*: Other customs that made the cut include classical horsemanship in Austria, folk dances in Peru and Romania and

a *Namibian fruit festival*. – В список также вошли австрийская традиция верховой езды, фольклорные танцы Перу и Румынии, а также *намибийский фестиваль фруктов* урожая.

Calque and half-calque translations are the ways to render non-equivalent vocabulary as well, compound words in particular: Höhepunkt des Karnevals ist der *Rosenmontag*. – Изюминкой карнавала является *Розовый понедельник*.

The examples of half-calque translation are *Insel Jersey* – *остров Джерси* and *Dodger Stadium* – *стадион Доджер*:

Großbritannien entsandte zwei Kriegsschiffe in das Seegebiet vor der *Insel Jersey* im Ärmelkanal. – Великобритания отправила два военных корабля в морской район у *острова Джерси* в Ла-Манше.

Disneyland, which has been closed since March, is now being turned into a massive vaccination centre, along with *Dodger Stadium*, in the hopes of controlling what's become a super surge. – Диснейленд, который был закрыт с марта, теперь превращается в крупный центр вакцинации вместе со *стадионом Доджер* в надежде контролировать то, что превратилось в супер-всплеск.

4 CONCLUSIONS

When translating media texts students studying linguistics encounter different translation problems, first of all in translating various lexical units, non-equivalent vocabulary in particular. It is important to teach students how to develop a correct translation strategy. The non-equivalent vocabulary used in media texts include proper names (toponyms, anthroponyms, names of companies, organizations, institutions, departments, societies, newspapers, proper names relating to literature, art and entertainment), temporary non-equivalent words, realia words and occasional non-equivalents. The main techniques applied to translate the non-equivalent vocabulary from English and German into Russian are transcription, transliteration, explanatory translation, calque and half-calque translation. However the problem of translating non-equivalent vocabulary is more complex. It requires the translator to know the specifics of the national culture and traditions.

The non-equivalent vocabulary is a bright illustration of the diversity of languages and cultures. The study of the English and German non-equivalent lexical units and ways of translating them into Russian allows students not only to significantly enrich their vocabulary, but also to form linguocultural competence, which, in the light of the competence-based approach in modern education, is undoubtedly relevant. The study of the non-equivalent vocabulary expands the knowledge about different cultures and world history, contributes to the development of a tolerant attitude towards the values of a foreign country, and enables student's immersion in the process of intercultural communication.

The results of this study can be used both directly in translation and as recommendations for teaching translation as part of the educational process in various educational institutions, and can also serve as the basis for further scientific research on the problems of translating non-equivalent vocabulary.

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