INTERLINGUAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE LITERARY WORK “RUNAWAY” BY ALICE MUNRO

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Abstract. The semantic and structural similarities of the translation to the original text have always been in the prerogative of specialists in the field of linguistics. This equality determines the prerequisites for establishing translation equivalence relations between them, in which the TL unit is regularly used as a translation of the SL unit. The given research is devoted to the study of interlingual transformations peculiarities based on the literary work “Runaway” by Alice Munro. The accumulation of researches on peculiarities of interlingual transformations within the framework of fiction texts translation from English into Russian can help to achieve a high quality of literary translation. The novelty of the given research is in analyzing modes of expression of interlingual transformations in the literary work “Runaway” by Alice Munro from English into Russian. The study can contribute to further development of a general theory of translation studies.

Key words: translation; transformation; mode; equivalence

1 Introduction

Transformation by its nature is a complex and problematic phenomenon in linguistics. Due to a large number of types of interlingual transformations, sometimes translators use quite different transformations, which should be resorted to. Hence, the translator needs to be proficient in two languages, to have a broad encyclopedic knowledge. An adequate interpretation of the literary text is possible while preserving the author’s style and ideological direction. Interlingual transformation is the transformation of source language elements into the target language to achieve an equivalent translation (Minyar-Beloruchev, 1996).

The ability of translation correspondences to be communicatively equivalent is determined not only by the meaning they possess but also by specific features manifested in the speech (Bilyalova et al, 2017). Equivalence of the text is the degree of adequacy of translation to the original text (Chukovskij, 2008). Equivalence is equality in a certain respect. Perfect equality cannot be realized. There is theoretically possible equivalence determined by the correlation of structures and rules of functioning of two languages and optimal equivalence achieved in a particular act of translation (Bazarova & Gilyazeva, 2017).

2 Research Methodology


The given research contains the usage of such types of empirical methods as comparison and description, synthesis, quantitative method of data analysis (Mendoza Velazco & Rivero Padrón, 2019)

3 Study Results And Their Discussion

The analysis of linguists’ works on translation transformations (Albert, 1969) led to consideration of the following main types on the example of the studied work.

The usage of a number of grammatical transformations prevails in the story “Runaway” by Alice Munro. Permutation is one of the most productive methods.

«If he was sitting at the computer, he would have his back to the window and the road» (Munro, 2004, p.6). – «On sedel spinjoj k oknu, rabotaya za kompyuretom tak, chto ne bylo vidno dorogi na ulicu» (Munro, 2014, p.11).

«Carla heard the car coming before it topped the little rise in the road that around here they called a hill» (Munro, 2004, p.6). – «Avtomobil’ eshe ne preodolel pod’em, kotoryj zvalya u nih gorkoj, a Karla uzhe uslyshala» (Munro, 2014, p.11).

In these examples, E.S. Petrova uses permutation. The translator considered it necessary, first of all, to draw the reader’s attention to certain details. For example, in the first case it was important for the translator to emphasize the location of the main character, how his condition influenced the general development of actions. That is “he was sitting with his back to the window”, and because of this he could not see what was happening on the street.

In the second case, it was important for the translator to emphasize that no external circumstances, even overcoming the main lift by the car, could affect the fact that Carla knew that they were going, she heard the sound of the motor of the car.

«Joy was the librarian from town who boarded her horse with them, a quick-tempered little chestnut mare named Lizzie. Joy Tucker, when she was in a jokey mood, called her Lizzie Borden» (Munro, 2004, p.7). – «Dezh oy Taker, gorodskaya bibliotekarsha, privela k nim na soderzhanie svoyu kauruyu loshad’. Kobylka byla norovitaya, zval svet Lizi: kogda u Dezhoy Taker byvalo blagodushnnoe nastroenie, onu nazvala svoyu lyubimicu Lizzi Borden» (Munro, 2014, p.140).

Translators use the method of combining sentences in order not to interrupt information of a long-term nature. If a series of sentences relates to the description of a single event, character, or object, then it is possible to combine them by using conjunctive and paratactic subordinate clauses. This technique does not affect the semantics of the translation, but the stylistic role changes. In a variant heaped up with sentences, the effect on the reader becomes more acute, depending on the context, anxiety, distraction, understatement, and the overflow of emotions increase. In the above example, there is additional information or rather the specificity of the fact that the heroine called Lizzi, being in a complacent mood.


If necessary, the translator resorts to a number of translation transformations to achieve the goal of an adequate translation of the original. However, when this need does not exist, that is, all lexical units are translated by their analogs and a change in the grammatical order of the sentences does not affect the general meaning, the translator has no choice but to interpret the text by means of syntactic comparison. In this example, the concretization technique is given. The word “said” E.S. Petrova replaces by the “on povtoryal (repeated)” lexical unit. For the hero promise of his friend is important, so he repeated the word “promise” again and again.

«Don’t worry – you do not have to answer me» (Munro, 2004, p.21). – «Ne bespokojtya. Ty ne obyazan otvechat’ mne» (Munro, 2014, p.52).

The sentence is used to give the reader a pause to think about what has been said. Dot completes the thought, thus summing up, while the comma heralds a new one, makes us breathe in again to get a new piece of information.

«When Carla opened it, she found the phone bill, a promise that if they subscribed to a certain magazine they could win a million dollars, and Mrs. Jamieson’s letters» (Munro, 2004, p.211). – "Kada Karla otkryla ego, ona nalezla telefonnyj rabochuia kartu, obeshchanie, chto byli oprelsili k nekotiromu magazinu, kotoroe moglo by vnutri minus milion dollarei, i pochtyu iz doma Jane" (Munro, 2014, p.211).
«Когда Карла вдруг открыла дверь, на нее навалился странный шум, какого-то журнала, сулившего миллионный выигрыш, и… Пита не тоссит Джеимсона» (Мунро, 2014, с. 52).

В этом случае, переводчик использует разделение фразы, поскольку в этом примере это позволяет показать последовательность всех событий, находясь, тем самым, как будто бы репортер. Однако, этот прием облегчает понимание переводчика, поскольку переводчик упомянула не только слово «внешность» в переводе, но и слова «иметь значение», что является важным фактором.

Но в то же время, переводчик может представлять автора, если он считает это приемлемым. Однако, в этом случае он может сделать переводчику более непонятным, поскольку переводчик не знает, что автор не просто использовал два параллельных грамматических конструкции – «это не имеет значения» и «это не имеет смысла». Они являются двумя совершенно разными синтаксическими элементами. В свою очередь, в этом случае они могут быть использованы для передачи смысла, который может быть неясным для читателя, не говорящего на английском языке.

E.S. Петрова говорит о том, что «мне не понято» конструкция, «что не понято» и «что не важно» и как это может быть эквивалентным в другом языке, говоря, «дела». Однако, в этом случае это может быть уместно использовать синтаксическую ассимиляцию, переводя этот пример как "I'm afraid the car can't move through the rut and puddles the wheel to wave, she didn't spot Carla" (Мунро, 2004, с. 56). – «Mrs. Jamieson turned her head once, quickly – she had all she could do to maneuver her car through the rut and puddles the rain had made in the gravel – but she didn't lift a hand off the wheel to wave, she didn't spot Carla» (Munro, 2004, p.5). – «Missis Dzhejmison povernula golovu, bystro – ona byla v sostoyaniyani manevarirovat' avtomobilem cherez luzhi i zazory, obrazovannye dozhdem v gravii – no ona ne ubrala ruki s rulya, choby pomahat' Karle, kotoryuyu ne zamietaasu» (Мунро, 2014, p.11).

Текст этого примера, переводчик решил использовать для метода перевода без утраты смысла, используя личное имя. Описание переводчика и начало синтагматической части предикативного выражения высвобождает высокую форму значения, который характеризует героиню как человека, который несомнен и надежен.

«He had been an attendant in a mental hospital, a disc jockey on a radio station in Lethbridge, Alberta, a member of a road crew near Thunder Bay, an apprentice barber, a salesmen in an army-surplus store» (Мунро, 2004, с. 15). – «On v raznoe vremya podvizhilsya sanitarom v psihiatricheskoj lechebnice, vedushhim na radioistancii v Lethbridge, chto v provincii Alberta, dorozhnym rabochim vblizhi Tander-Bej, uchenkom parikmahera, prodavcom v magazine voennogo snaryazheniya» (Munro, 2014, p.11).

A small number of proper names are translated through transliteration. The material under study contains a small number of proper names, so the percentage of use of phonetic transformations in the general system of modifications is insignificant.

«A life, a place, chosen for that specific reason: that it would not contain Clarkson» (Мунро, 2004, с. 16). – «A ved takaya zhizni,
takoj gorod vybirali's kak raz po etom principu: chtob tam ne bylo Klarka» (Munro, 2014, p.41).

Of the stylistic transformations, the material under study is characterized by remetaphorization and demetaphorization.


In the original text the author compares the birds with the singers who sing their songs in the area at the dawn of the day. In translation, the lexical unit “sing” is expressed by means of “vozveshchavshih (proclaimed)”, as a result of which metaphorical unit is given on a different meaning. In the translation, the birds are compared with the messengers, who say that the new day is coming. The use of this technique by the translator can be explained by the fact that the reader's attention to the translator wanted to focus on the fact that a new day began and this means new worries, new alarms, and new events.

«The goat had stopped a yard or so away from them, had turned shy, and hung her head» (Munro, 2004, p.19). – «Koza ostanovilas’ na rasstoyaniy vtyanutoj ruki, zasmushchalas’ i potupilas’» (Munro, 2014, p.47).

The expression “to hung the head” should not be translated as “povesit’ golovu”. The metaphoric nature of this phrase lies in the figurativeness of the hero’s state – the translator clearly and correctly finds the equivalent in TL, in particular, he uses “potupit’”, since the person “povesivshij golovu (hanging his head)” is experiencing at the moment a feeling of sadness, a sense of hopelessness. In this example, it is necessary to show the internal state of the character.

4 Results

It should be noted that types of interlingual transformations are quite diverse in the translation of the literary work “Runaway” of Alice Munro by E.S. Petrova:

1. grammatical transformations – 40 %;
2. complex transformations – 25%;
3. lexical transformation – 18%;
4. variable transformations – 10%;
5. stylistic transformations – 6%;
6. phonetic transformations – 1%.

The change of a lexical unit can lead to a modification of the whole structure, and not only from the grammatical aspect, but also stylistically.

5 Conclusion

Grammatical transformations, as in the study of the peculiarities of the translation of interlanguage transformations in the translations of other works, occupy a dominant position. Many translational transformations are based on the transformation of the grammatical structure of syntagmas. Consequently, this interaction relates the resulting transformation to the category of the complex.

In the lexical transformations, the most important and most frequent is the use of modulation, which is characterized by the individuality of the translator's style, which, despite the author's order, can change its structure (Bazarova & Gilyazeva, 2017). Modulation, like many other transformations, belongs to the category of complex, since often the semantic development of a lexical unit requires a change in the syntactic order of the sentence.

The smallest use of phonetic transformations is used in the translation. This result is characterized by a small number of proper names in the original.

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