

LITERARY TRANSLATION AND ITS COGNITIVE ASPECTS IN THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract: The article implies consideration of cognitive peculiarities of translation as the main mechanism of cross-cultural communication. Translation is distinguished in frames of the research as continuous interpretation of signs and key point of communication for different cultures representatives. Using the example of the Azerbaijani context, it is shown that today it is becoming obvious that no sphere of human activity can do without the widespread use of linguistic resources that have accumulated the experience and knowledge of previous generations of a particular language community.

Keywords: cognitive science; translation; intercultural communication; cognitive model of language.

1 Introduction

At the turn of the 20th-21st centuries, a new set of life circumstances that emerged in the last two decades fundamentally changed the views of experts and the general public on the learning and acquisition of foreign languages. Modern society now needs not only a handful of language experts and translators but also a diverse array of professionals with a wide profile of international and intercultural communication. It extends far beyond foreign language skills.

Since intercultural communication studies is the intersection of the interests of traditional human sciences - sociology, psychology, anthropology, pedagogy, and linguistics, the study of intercultural communication is within the framework of each discipline. However, given that language serves as the primary source of mutual understanding, there is a reason to argue that the language approach is central one.

With a linguistic approach to intercultural communication, cognitive and lingua-pragmatic aspects of research come to the fore. Language is considered as a symbolic system that allows for ambiguity and can be defined using sociocultural and situational contexts. When individuals encounter different cultural and linguistic environments, they may experience a "cultural shock" due to insufficient knowledge of the values and communication norms of other cultures and languages spoken by others. To avoid all misunderstandings, it is essential to possess adequate knowledge about a particular culture.

In the processes of interaction of cultures, the transformation of one culture's situations, qualities, spheres of activity, values, the emergence of new forms of cultural activity, the influence of external impulses, and the spiritual directions and signs of people's lifestyles are of decisive importance. The process of mutual interaction between cultures is generally a long-term one.

2 Method

The specifics of the subject of research determined the need for a broad interdisciplinary approach, which led to the use of various methods, such as the typological method, that made it possible to systematize and generalize historical and cultural material, to construct on its basis a conceptual interpretation of intercultural communication, in accordance with the goals and objectives of the study. The study employed structural-functional analysis of the equivalence of literary translation; comparative method, expressed in comparing the original literary text with its translation.

Axiological, information-semiotic, and communication approaches, elements of which were used in this work, turned out to be essential for the analysis of language and literary translation in the aspect of intercultural communication.

3 Results and Discussion

The cognitive model of language has gradually gained recognition since the 80s of the 20th century, becoming an integral part of cognitive science. In all cognitive sciences, when describing a person's cognitive abilities, on the one hand, it is established that there exists a particular level of mental representations (depictions) that should be studied as an abstraction of both the individual's biological and neurological characteristics and on the other hand, social and cultural characteristics. Developing a unified conceptualization of cognitive science is considered essential, given its interdisciplinary nature and the blurring of boundaries between past disciplines in the near future. E. S. Kubryakova states that "it is necessary to acknowledge the fact that behind the issues facing cognitive science in modern times, there is a huge tradition that started from antiquity" [11, p. 34]. Of all the above-mentioned features of cognitive science, it is considered important as an intellectual activity for the practice and theory of translation. The description of mental images through natural language is considered an interdisciplinary field of cognitive science that includes knowledge mediated by psychological, social, historical, national, and cultural factors. Cognitive science studies mental processes related to human consciousness. Cognitive linguistics is a direction in which the main attention is directed to language as a general cognitive mechanism, a cognitive tool - a system of signs that plays a role in the presentation (coding) and transformation of information [12 p. 53]. As a modern cognitive-oriented discipline, cognitive linguistics currently faces three main problems: the nature of linguistic knowledge, its acquisition and how to use it. The subject areas of cognitive linguistics are: cognitive semantics, cognitive analysis of subject names, cognitive neology, conceptual foundations of semantic innovations, cognitive modeling in vocabulary and phraseology, cognitive lexicography, cognitive word creation, cognitive vocabulary development, non-verbal semiotics, psycholinguistics, cognitive foundations of children's speech, linguistic creative activity, etc.

In modern times, cognitive linguistics is applied to all fields of linguistics. The principles and methods of cognitive linguistics are used in the study of phonetics, lexicology and phraseology, textual studies and word creation. G. Mahmudova, who talks about word creation using the morphological method, writes: "The history of the development of the theory of word creation shows that initially an inventory of word formation models was compiled, then logical rules were established for creating words, and subsequently, these rules were linked to human mental activity. Currently, the modeling theory of word creation studies the possibility of deriving conclusions about the nature of mental activities, such as comparison, analogy, inference, derivation, and the formation of concepts related to the structure of complex words" [14, p. 28]. As we can observe, the principles and methods of cognitive linguistics are applied in learning about word creation. Moreover, cognitive linguistics is also used in literary translation and translation analysis.

The cognitive model of language is of great importance for translation theory. The translator's brain can work in various modes: from the most pragmatic to the most intense situations facing the translator in extreme circumstances. Understanding the conceptual basis of mental images of the world and creating semantic innovations in the literary text are criteria that contribute to the creation of new translation works. The latter are transformed into a part of different national cultures, mentalities, and consciousnesses.

Translation process can be characterized in several ways. In the first mode, translation follows a sequence of formal-logical operations, while in the second mode, these operations are accompanied by intuitive-heuristic movements, <...> experience unexpected "insights" [18, p. 98-99]. Both the first and second

modes of translation activity are based on the cognitive competence of the translator. G. Chernov, talking about simultaneous translation, noted that lack of time and information discrepancies are compensated by an advanced understanding mechanism — probability prediction [3, p. 127–129]. This mechanism can be elucidated from a cognitive perspective in terms of the theory of frames. In modern cognitive science, frames, schemas, and plans are information packages stored or created from components in memory. They affect the adequate cognitive processing of standard situations. Such structures play a significant role in the functioning of language: they help establish the coherence of the text, draw necessary conclusions, provide contextual expectations, and predict future events based on past similar occurrences.

The art of translation has a very ancient history. *“The Aswan inscriptions, dating back to ancient times and reaching our modern era, which talk about translation, show that the princes of Elephantine in the Nile River island of the Egyptians were also translators. In that border area, where Nubians and Egyptians lived side by side, bilingualism was developing, which was the foundation of translation activities. The people of the copper mines of Sinai, where the Egyptians and the Semites lived, had interpreters. Interpreters took part in military campaigns and traveled together with trade caravans”* [4, p. 6]. Although traditional translation works have a known historical background in Azerbaijani translation, topics such as cognitive approach to translation and cognitive translation itself have yet to be fully developed in Azerbaijani translation studies. The understanding of cognitive translation and the conceptualization of translation have been investigated and studied for the first time in our article.

The history of the art of translation in Azerbaijan also goes back to ancient times. Academician Mohsun Nagisoylu writes that the historical formation of the art of translation in Azerbaijan, which is an important branch of literature, is related to the Holy Quran. The scholar states that there is a literary translation of the sura “Ikhlās” in the “Book of Dede Korkut”. Furthermore, he points out that *“considering that the 1300th anniversary of the “Book of Dede Korkut” was celebrated in 1999, it can be concluded that the history of the art of translation in Azerbaijan is more than 1300 years old”* [16, p.62]. As mentioned above, Azerbaijani translation primarily develops in a traditional direction.

Therefore, in order to comprehend the translation from the perspective of cognitive science, it can be considered that the cognitive processes of the translator become relevant in creating the target text through a sequence of formal logical operations and in a creative manner.

For different fields within the translation activity, there will be varying proportions of these types. Taking into account the characteristics of fiction literature, it can be noted that the translator's cognitive processes also pertain to the fields of literary studies and poetics.

In exploring the cognitive differences in translation, it is possible to approach it from the perspective of discourse analysis, considering the specific features of various levels of discourse: *phonostylistics, semantics, and grammar*.

Modern translation studies are characterized by various theoretical concepts and research methodologies. As a result of interest in the phenomenon of translation, numerous directions and schools of thought have emerged. As noted by S. Bassnett, we are currently witnessing a kind of “translation boom” (*boom-artificial revival*), because “translation, previously a marginal object of research, is now being recognized as a process that forms the basis of human communication and mutual understanding. There has never been such a great interest in translation as it is today, it has never been studied so intensively” [1, p. 1].

Indeed, it should be specifically noted that when analyzing the current state of translation, we mainly focus on Western

translation studies. This is due to the existence of a certain gap in understanding translation between Azerbaijan and the West regarding the concept of translation. Local Azerbaijan translation studies are based on the linguistic theory of translation developed in the 60s of the 20th century and is characterized by relatively few fundamental studies of a non-linguistic nature.

In contrast, Western translation studies presents a different picture. More interdisciplinary works emerge there: M. Snell-Hornby's concept of integration; interpretation theory of D. Seleskovitch and M. Lederer; cognitive psychology of V. Vilss, H. P. Krings, D. Kiraly, D. Dansett, E.-A. Gutt's theory of relevance, “skopos-theory” of J. Holz-Mänttari, etc.

For a long time, most of the research in the field of translation was conducted purely within the framework of linguistics, but from the beginning of the 80s of the 20th century, some scientists attempted to understand what happens in the mind of the translator between the perception of the main text and the creation of the translated text on paper, turning to the latest achievements in the fields of psychology and cognitive science.

A number of researchers studying the translation process (A. Neubert, G. Schrif, D. Ketan, J. Holmes) use the concept of virtual translation and thus emphasize that the image of a potential translation of the text begins to form in the mind almost instantly. “While translating, we have in mind the image of the source text and at the same time the image of the text we want to create in the target language” [7, p. 96].

While some researchers consider translation as a virtual process, others (R. Bell, E. Gutt, C. Dunsett) use the concept of semantic representation and discuss the existence of a mental model in the translation process. Semantic representation refers to “mental representation attributed to linguistic expressions on the basis of their linguistic features” [6, p. 25].

In the translation process, a similar text exists only in a cognitive image, and the translation process itself takes place “decoding the source text and encoding the translation text in both short-term and long-term memory through the semantic representation of the source text” [2, p. 29].

Semantic representation contains three types of information - pragmatic, syntactic, and semantic information, and reflects the stages of the source text analysis process. The first stage is syntactic analysis, that is, the decomposition of a linear chain of symbols into syntagms. The second stage is semantic analysis or the selection of concepts. The third stage is pragmatic analysis, which involves determining the communicative type of the sentence and the function of functional operators. As a result of further processing, the semantic representation takes the form of thought with proportional content under the influence of the context. Proportional forms have certain logical properties, however two proportional forms can have common logical features. The similarity of mental images based on common logical properties is called “similarity of interpretation”. Thus, translation is “an interlingual interpretation activity, as a result of which the translated text has an interpretative similarity with the source text” [6, p. 27].

Proponents of cognitive psychology (V. Vilss, H.P. Krings) consider the translation process as a problem-solving operation. Since problems are of an individual nature and each translator solves them in their own unique way, researchers focus on the translator's cognitive activity.

According to V. Vilss, the activity of the translator in the translation process goes through three stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the results. In the preparation stage, the translator carries out three types of search when selecting a translation variant: random, systematic, and heuristic. V. Vilss (cited in Komissarov, 1999) believes that “heuristic search is the main, decisive one, as this type of search results in the creation of a cognitive schema, which corresponds to the step-by-step solutions of problems” [9, p. 87].

Within the framework of cognitive psychology, the "thinking aloud" method is widely used, which implies that the translator verbally expresses the ideas that arise while working on the text as much as possible (H.P. Krings, D.Kiraly, J.Dunsett, P.Kassmol, A.G. Minchenkov, etc.).

Everything the translator says is transcribed using an audio recorder. These recorded verbalizations, known as "thinking aloud protocols", are subsequently analyzed by researchers. The use of this research method was first introduced by H.P. Krings and extensively described in his monograph *"What happens in the translator's mind?"* (1986). The central concept in the scientist's research is the concept of "problem of translation", for which two criteria are put forward. The primary set includes core criteria (direct or indirect expressions of difficulties faced by the translator, references to dictionaries, etc.), while the secondary set involves second-degree criteria (discussion of two or more alternative translation options by the translator, textual revisions made during translation, presence of pauses, etc.). Komissarov emphasizes that, among the translation problems, H.P. Krings highlights comprehension problems, transfer difficulties, challenges stemming from insufficient linguistic competence of the translator, and shortcomings in his own translation competence. The resolution of translation problems is achieved through "translation strategies", which are understood as "potentially conscious plans of the translator aimed at solving a specific translation problem within a certain translation work" [10, p. 92].

According to D.Kiraly's observation, the linguistic stimulus creates relevant schemes in the user's mind that enable the user to draw conclusions about the meaning included in the text by the author. These inferences activate long-term memory schemas and, along with them, gradually modify expectancy structures called "revised anticipation structures" as new information is introduced by stimulus. Understanding mainly occurs in the subconscious space, and only when problems arise with the combination of stimulus and expectations, a small amount of information is transferred to conscious processing, which the user can focus regarding the problem, and is transferred to conscious processing, also using cognitive strategies [9, p. 65].

In the process of translation, the translator's mind has the image of two texts at the same time, and the image of the translated text is built gradually, piece by piece. That is, receptive and productive processes go parallel. The translation process is interactive (meaning not only from the source text to concepts, but also from concepts to this text). Within this model, translation is defined as a heuristic process of objectifying the mental structures formed in the mind based on the source text through the language of translation.

In translation studies, A.G. Minchenkov has employed the technique of the above-mentioned "thinking aloud" to develop and prepare the cognitive-heuristic model of translation. Within this model, translation is defined as "the heuristic process of objectifying mental structures formed in the mind based on the source text through the language of translation" [15]. The cognitive-heuristic model considers the factor determining the point of connection between the two languages involved in translation and the fundamental possibilities of translation to be the cognitive factor.

In translation, the concept is characterized as a permanent, fixed entity. At the same time, when necessary, when signs are distinguished from the structure of the concept, these signs also become full-fledged concepts. The concept also emerges as the object of translation, i.e., the mental essence that the translator tries to objectify through the target language.

In the translation process, the source text remains unchanged, and certain concepts, initially, serve as sources for actualizing concepts that are objectified as the prototype meanings of the words entering the text. These concepts are interconnected and, along with initial information and knowledge about the entire context, are transformed into meanings that form specific semantic structures in contemplation.

The conceptual structure that includes particular concepts, when fully or even partially aligned with the concepts constituting the meaning of a word in the target language, generally does not lead to specific issues. Sometimes, however, difficulties arise when the meaning in the source text does not correspond to the meanings of known units in the target language, or when there is no direct alignment. In this case, the translator has to perform mental operations with concepts. In this stage, non-verbal concepts from the language of thought are used. It is much wider than the natural language, and, therefore, the possibilities of the language of thought are limitless, both in principle, in terms of what it can represent in the human mind, and in terms of choosing the combination methods and configurations of concepts. When translating into the language of thought, the translator literally breaks down the given idea by combining concepts to match the meanings of the units of the target language. The following operations are distinguished for the recombination of concepts: segmentation, combination, displacement, assimilation of the concept with the general concept of the proposition, modification of the conceptual schema, and conveying the concept through its own sign.

Hence, two important stages of translation - formation of a conceptual structure and its objectification by means of the target language - and two facultative stages of translation (cognitive search and autocorrection) have been identified in the translation process. Concept recombination was selected as an optional stage of the translation process, which is used when the search for means of translation is required within the framework of cognitive search.

Thus, the review of some approaches developed within the framework of cognitive linguistics allows concluding that the cognitive direction in translation studies, which is intensively developing in modern science, lends new impetus to the scientific comparison of original and translated texts and enables the exploration of essential details of translation technology. Today, the main attention of the researcher is directed from the details of the translation technique to the semantic and mental compatibility between the original text and its translation, as well as to the analysis of the translator's creative activity.

Through translation, languages influence and transform each other, and simultaneously translation activity serves as a powerful stimulus for the development of languages. With the help of translation, the vocabulary and phraseology of the languages in contact are enriched, new lexical elements and models emerge, a number of toponyms and anthroponyms, words expressing different realities of other language communities and cultures spread widely.

Cognitive studies cannot be left out of the theory and practice of translation, because one of their tasks is to study the ways of structuring the flow of information in the transformation of the content of the text into the target language. The study of providing an optimal translation, in our opinion, should be based on a detailed analysis of the expression (of the original text) in order to determine the cognitive parameters of the presented conceptual foundations in the target language, taking into account the specifics of its linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural characteristics. Reconciliation of the cognitive parameters of the original text and the translation ensures their conceptual and semantic equivalence. It is evident that such cognitive compatibility will also contribute to achieving the same pragmatic effect in translation.

The cognitive organization of the original text ensures the transfer of information based on the activation of the mental structures of verbal information present in the human brain. Such an approach to verbal information presupposes the need for conceptual understanding of the original text and not only knowledge of the source language, its grammatical and lexical system (i.e., the linguistic competence of the translator) – it is also encompassing the cognitive models of the information basis used by the representatives of the linguistic and cultural community in the language in which the original is produced. In other words, the translator should not only possess knowledge of

the source and target languages but also “think” in these languages, adequately connecting their cognitive models.

Recent studies show that the conceptual structure (system) of consciousness is closely related to the structure of language, as it is formed both in the process of processing the results of different types of perception (visual, auditory, sensory, kinesthetic) and as a result of linguistic assimilation of experience. As a mental level of consciousness, conceptual structure is a collection of individual meanings, knowledge quanta of concepts forming and reflecting information about the world in the process of perception.

Concepts provide processing of subjective experience by applying new information about certain categories and classes developed by society. Concepts are encoded in language and directly reflected in the grammatical structures of various languages. Thus, the grammatical classification of any language serves as a kind of mental foundation based on lexically expressed conceptual material.

According to R. Jackendoff's perspective [8, p. 72], the constituent parts of the conceptual structure are the main concepts - the object, its parts, movement, activity, place (space), time, ideas about its signs. Basic concepts are present in all languages because they are associated with grammatical categories and indicate the division of words into speech components. “The concept shows a more actual understanding of this or that area of reality in society. An important objective indicator of the relevance of this or another area of reality for a concrete society is the concept of nominative density. If this sphere of reality has many names, then that sphere is more important for the practical activity of the people; therefore, that field has been more comprehensively perceived” [17, p. 192].

In the context of the transmission of the text from one culture to another, the reproduction of the value perspective of the original text becomes prominent in the translated text, which implies the reflection of each original concept by keeping conceptual, figurative, and evaluative components, as well as the place which concept occupies within the conceptual system of the original.

Since not only the conceptual component of the concept, but also the set of figurative and value elements are subject to translation, the translator is not given the role of a “verbal transcoder”, but the role of a translator of the semantic code embedded in the source text. Additionally, when translating the content of the concept, its meaning, the ratio of depth and volume of information is preserved. Z. Aliyeva writes: “*Concept is a mental process, directly occurring in consciousness, and without its manifestation, assessment is not possible. Studying the manifestations of a specific concept provides clarity both about the concept itself and the set of meanings it carries. The products of intellect and contemplation remain inaccessible until they materialize in concrete forms. At this time, we cannot perceive them as they are*” [5, p. 13].

Since each concept is culturally situated within its own national-cultural context, the fact that the conceptual component of the concept has a common verbal meaning in two different languages does not guarantee that the speakers of these languages will understand the information at the level of concepts and conceptual systems.

When a certain language unit quotes a part of the corresponding concept and this language unit “takes root” in the recipient culture, the latter assimilates only the upper, actual layer of the corresponding concept. Concepts included in the concept sphere of representatives of two different linguistic and cultural communities, even if the conceptual side is completely the same, will differ significantly in their depth, which can in turn have no impact on the translation process.

When the translated text is perceived as a representative of the recipient culture in the recipient's mind, first of all, the upper layer of the concept - the conceptual layer - is activated. This

means that the received concept, as a rule, without actualizing additional factors that form a unique denotative-figurative-value unity for a specific culture, its functional properties occurs as a result of transmission.

Therefore, the translation process demands a unique artistic way of thinking from the translators, allowing them to orient themselves towards the mental cultural space of the original. This can be a challenge for the translator. In the value picture of the world of each nation, it is possible to distinguish the shared core and the distinct nuances of linguistic-cultural entities with the rich inner life and peripheral aspects.

What is especially difficult is that the main concepts of the national picture of the world are rarely understood by people native to this cultural space [13, p. 30]. Analyzing such concepts is not easy for non-native speakers. The primary task of the translator is to establish equivalence at the level of concepts, which implies the actualization of the meanings set by the author of the original, that is, conveying the translation of the image existing in the conceptual system when the author created this original in the target language.

4 Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that each culture is based on its own system of social stereotypes, images and cognitive schemas, and behind each cultural concept, there is a fragment of the image of a specific cultural world. Therefore, the text perceived by the translator will never be one hundred percent the same as the author's idea. Although the translator may not fully grasp the deep structures of the text created by the author, according to his professional level, he must recreate the conceptual framework of the text as close as possible to the author's intention. To achieve this, it is essential to thoroughly study the literary text, the historical context in which it was created, the worldview that reflects the values of a certain nation, and only then engage in the direct reproduction of concepts during translation.

It can be stated that the creative aspect of translating literary works (both prose and poetry) indicates the translator's ability to more fully reflect the mental imagination of the literary work's author. The connotative level of an expression is the most challenging process to be comprehended and subsequently processing in the target language.

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