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A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES FOR TRANSLATING
POETIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract

Poetry translation is one of the most problematic forms of translation and therefore has specific requirements to address. The purpose of this article is to investigate the translation strategies and techniques applied to poetic texts by professional translators and researchers. A qualitative descriptive research method is followed to provide a brief overview of these translation instruments. This research method enables qualitative data collection with credible and unbiased information. The findings were three commonly used translation strategies and three classifications of translation techniques used by researchers from all over the world for literary translation. These results demonstrated the vast diversity in the usage of strategies and techniques for the translation of poetic texts.

Key words: poetic discourse, poetry translation, poetic text, strategies, techniques, meaning, concept.

ПОЭТИКАЛЫҚ ДИСКУРСЫ АУДАРУ СТРАТЕГИЯЛАРЫ МЕН ӘДІСТЕРІНЕ
ҚЫСҚАША ШОЛУ

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Аңдатпа

Поэтикалық аударма – аударманың ең күрделі түрлерінің бірі, сондықтан ол белгілі бір талаптарды қажет етеді. Осы ғылыми мақаланың мақсаты – кәсіби аудармашылар мен зерттеушілер поэтикалық мәтіндермен жұмыс істегенде қолданатын аударма стратегиялары мен әдістерін қарастыру. Аударма құралдарын қысқаша шолу үшін сапалық сипаттамалық зерттеу әдісі қолданылады. Бұл әдіс сенімді әрі бейтарап ақпарат жинауға мүмкіндік береді. Зерттеу нәтижесінде көркем аудармада бүкіл әлем зерттеушілері қолданатын үш кең таралған аударма стратегиясы мен аударма техникасының үш классификациясы анықталды. Бұл нәтижелер осы кезеңде поэтикалық мәтіндермен жұмыс істеуде қолданылған аударма стратегиялары мен әдістерінің кең ауқымын көрсетті.

Кілт сөздер: поэтикалық дискурс, поэтикалық аударма, поэтикалық мәтін, стратегиялар, әдістер, мағына, ұғым.

КРАТКИЙ ОБЗОР СТРАТЕГИЙ И ПРИЁМОВ ПЕРЕВОДА ПОЭТИЧЕСКОГО ДИСКУРСА

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Аннотация

Поэтический перевод является одним из сложнейших видов перевода и по этой причине имеет определенные требования при работе. Цель этой научной статьи заключается в рассмотрении стратегий и приёмов перевода, используемых в работе с поэтическими текстами профессиональными переводчиками и исследователями. Для краткого обзора данных инструментов перевода используется качественный описательный метод исследования. Благодаря этому методу исследования возможен качественный сбор данных с достоверной и непредвзятой информацией. Окончательными результатами послужили три общераспространённые стратегии перевода и три классификации техник перевода, применяемые исследователями со всего мира для художественного перевода. Данные результаты продемонстрировали большое многообразие использования стратегий и техник при переводе поэтических текстов.

Ключевые слова: поэтический дискурс, поэтический перевод, поэтический текст, стратегии, приёмы, значение, понятие.

Introduction

At all times, translators have been the crucial bridge in effectively transferring the message to the recipient. Using translators, nowadays people are able to discover a new world for themselves, learn about the culture of another country, finding similarities and differences with their own, and begin intercultural communication with each other. Poetry translation is considered one of the most complicated forms of translation so far [1]. Consequently, numerous experienced translators and researchers specializing in this field still debate regarding a vast variety of translation methods and techniques, since poetic discourse is endowed with not only an informational component, but also a certain implicit meaning, which not everyone is capable of understanding from the first reading [1]. Thus, containing its implicit meaning, poetry reaches deeply into the reader's soul, evoking a wide range of unusual feelings. Researcher P. Newmark claims that in poetry translation there is a crucial task to create a new poem thus avoiding literal translation, which is inappropriate in this case [1, p. 70]. Therefore, aiming to convey the poetic work of the author, including its implicit meaning as accurately as possible, translators always tend to apply different approaches.

Firstly, it is necessary to explain what poetic discourse is. P.A. Kovalev defines the concept “poetic discourse” in modern science as “a complex, non-linearly organised system of poetic texts, the figurative and speech elements of which represent an integrative and systemically connected unity of their linguistic, pragmatic, sociocultural, psychical and paralinguistic properties of their linguistic, pragmatic, socio-cultural, psychic and paralinguistic properties” [2, p. 45]. Functional features of poetic discourse provide an opportunity for the aesthetic representation of meanings in the process of poetic communication.

Researchers have cited many translation strategies in their recent findings that now translators are able to apply when working with poetic discourse. For instance, Istifani Mauladiana and Yudi Juniardi conducted a systematic literature review based on nine journal articles and identified sixteen translation transformations directly relevant to poetry translation [3]. In addition, the classification of translation strategies proposed by A. Levefere has received much attention among scholars to this day [4]. As a result, these findings reinforce the

significance of this type of translation, including the necessity for translators to master a number of strategies and techniques to express aesthetic and emotional meaning in a holistic manner.

Theoretical significance of this study involves the opportunity to fill the gaps of the pre-existing scientific literature on the different approaches of translating poetic texts. The practical significance of the research is that the results of the article will later provide a background knowledge for conducting new scientific works in the field of philology and translation studies, as well as this data can be practically applied by professors and students of philological specialties during classes. The purpose of this article is a detailed demonstration of the existing theoretical knowledge regarding the strategies and techniques of translating poetic discourse. Consequently, the main objectives include reviewing the various strategies and techniques of translating poetic texts proposed by famous scholars.

Research Methods

Qualitative descriptive analysis was applied as the research method, considering the specificity of the purpose and objectives outlined previously. This approach was selected with the aim of obtaining a brief overview of translation methods as effective and accurate as possible. The research object is various classifications of translation strategies and techniques by well-known scholars, which are still practiced today. Data collection is based on a review of existing books, manuals and research articles related to this field.

Research Results

The reason why translators adopt translation approaches in literary translation is the first thing that should be noted. The fact is that re-creating the translation of all the specific elements of style and form by means of language is the primary task for every poetry translator [4]. Therefore, the most accurate expression of the narration communicated in the source text becomes the second priority. In most cases, however, the source text and the target text are different in their internal structure. As a result, such difference prevents not only an accurate translation but also a translation that takes into account all the aspects of poetry, including lexical and stylistic features. With the purpose of solving this problem, translators rely on diverse strategies and techniques proposed by researchers from all over the world [4]. Such instruments contribute to achieving an effective transition from the original units to the translated ones.

Translation strategies can involve the main principles that are common to every professional translator [4]. As an example, at the beginning it is important to identify the main and secondary concepts and to be fully aware of all the conceptual and semantic parts in the text [4]. Subsequently, in this type of translation, paraphrasing what the author has expressed and avoiding words used in the source text are required. Thus, strategies primarily contribute to the systematic search for a solution to translate the linguistic units in the poetic text. However, the solution can not be accomplished without the application of various techniques that will further affect the result of the translation [4]. Hence, two aspects are of prime consideration in the process of translating poetic texts, namely the application of specific strategies and the application of techniques that have an impact on the target text.

Despite the fact that the Belgian linguist A. Lefevere's classification was developed a half century ago, it remains in demand among researchers in modern times. The scholar clearly presents seven strategies for translating poems in his classification [4, p. 14].

1. Phoneme translation. This is a method of translation where there is a necessity to preserve the unified sound of the source text while providing a sufficient representation of the meaning. This approach may not always be completed successfully and is possible only for experienced translators.

2. Literal translation. In this type of translation the word order and structure of the text are preserved, thereby losing all the cultural and aesthetic features of the text, which affects the equivalence of the translation and distorts the whole meaning.

3. Metric translation. The main objective of this method is matching the size of the source text and the target text. This procedure is complicated to apply, as the translator again faces the risk of losing equivalence.

4. Presentation of poetry in prose. This is the case where the very meaning and content of the text needs to be preserved. Nevertheless, the form and stylistic features undergo significant modifications.

5. Rhymed translation. The primary priority in this type of translation is to preserve the size and the rhyme of the source text written by the author. In the end, this translation depicts the aesthetic features of the poetry, thus distinguishing itself by its uniqueness.

6. Black verse translation. This translation strategy implies the greatest accuracy and literalness. At the same time, the lack of rhyme enables the translator to have creative freedom and the ability to express all the cultural, aesthetic and conceptual features of the poem.

7. Interpretation. The translator subjects the form to various adjustments while aiming to preserve the full message of the author's text. It is necessary to have exceptional skill in adapting the text while preserving all the distinctive features.

The work of literary scholar N. I. Balashov deserves much attention as well. He managed to identify three possible strategies for translating a literary text, which are still in demand in modern time [5].

1. Philological translation. This is a type of translation where the translator's main purpose is only to fully render the factual material, thus omitting the poetic communication with the reader, including rhyme, form and various lexical and stylistic means. Moreover, in this translation there are often translator's comments that facilitate complete dialogue between the author and the reader. In this way, aesthetic and conceptual information may be lost, whereas factual elements are fully reproduced by the translator. Despite certain shortcomings of this translation, this is the approach of the translator to reproduce as many details of the original poetic text as possible.

2. Verse translation. Applying this type of translation, the verse style is the first priority in transferring the factual data and concepts in the text, which provides the translator with the opportunity to maximize the accuracy of the work as close as possible to the original poetic work. At the same time, it is worth considering the fact that aesthetic and conceptual elements of the text may be omitted or partially distorted in the translation process.

3. Poetic translation. This is the most common approach to poetic translation, as it allows three features to be conveyed simultaneously, namely the conceptual, factual and aesthetic features. This leads to the most effective communication between the author of the work and the reader.

Most of the researchers and professional translators widely apply linguist M. Baker's classification of strategies for translation of literary texts [6]. In his work, M. Baker elaborates on eight strategies, which contribute to the effective poetic translation demonstrating all the aspects of the texts [7, pp. 26-42].

1. Searching for the most general word during translation

According to M. Baker this strategy is one of the most prevalent since the semantic meaning of a word can always be modified for the purpose of preserving the meaning of the text and its aesthetic component.

2. Searching for a better neutral word in the translation process

This strategy also has a direct relation to the transformation of the semantic domain. In some cases, the translator has to employ this strategy both to preserve the style and to avoid distortion of meanings.

3. Cultural Substitution Strategy

The effective impact on the target reader requires, in some cases, the substitution of cultural expressions. As a result, the literary text remains more comprehensible and organic to the target audience.

4. The strategy of borrowed word usage

In this strategy, clarification is acceptable due to the number of times the word on which the transformations will be performed may occur. Once a detailed clarification is provided to the reader, the translator is able to apply the word without any additional information.

5. Paraphrasing with the application of related words.

This strategy is practiced by translators when abstract words and expressions in the original literary text, expressed by related words, are transformed into particular words or expressions of the target language, providing a more effective and accurate translation for the target audience of readers.

6. Paraphrasing with the application of non-related words.

This type of paraphrasing is applied by translators when abstract words and expressions in the original literary text, expressed by non-related words, are not transformed into particular words or expressions of the target language.

7. Omission

Omission often seems unnecessary and inappropriate during translation, although in specific cases the omission of a word or expression may have a positive effect and contribute to the maintenance of rhythm and structure within poetic texts.

8. Illustrative strategy

In the process of translation, the illustrative strategy can be resorted to in order to express brevity and precision. The fact is that the equivalent element of the translation does not cover all aspects of the original elements. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the selected physical element should be a physical object that can be illustrated by the translator.

The researches on strategies and techniques by Russian linguists have also received a lot of academic attention. The famous Russian scientist and linguist Ya. I. Retsker distinguishes merely two types of transformations in the translation of literary texts, including grammatical transformations and lexical transformations [8]. By the grammatical transformations, the scientist represents the substitution of sentence components or parts of speech [8, p. 84]. The lexical transformations refer to such techniques as semantic development, integral transformation, generalization of meaning, concretization of meaning, differentiation of meaning, antonymic translation and loss compensation [8, p. 84].

The scholar V. E. Shchetinkin presents a similar classification of translation transformations, where he introduced his own subtypes and distinguished three types of transformations in the classification:

1. Lexical transformations (concretization, antonymic translation, amplification, generalization, semantic matching, adaptation, compensation, explication);
2. Stylistic transformations (modulation);
3. Grammatical transformations (transpositions, omissions, substitutions, additions) [9].

Spanish researchers L. Molina and H. Albir in their research article synthesized all preliminary data on the problem of translation of literary text and proposed their universal classification based on the collected qualitative data. The classification included seventeen different translation techniques [10]. These techniques included:

- Adaptation;
- Amplification;
- Borrowing;
- Calque;
- Compensation;
- Description;
- Discursive creation;
- Established equivalence;
- Generalization;
- Linguistic amplification;
- Linguistic compression;
- Literal translation;
- Modulation;
- Concretization;
- Reduction;
- Substitution;
- Transposition [10].

Nowadays these techniques are the most commonly used by researchers when reviewing and translating poetic discourse. For instance, Y.A. Terayanti, F. Mu'in, and N. Nasrullah applied this classification in their scientific article to conduct a qualitative descriptive analysis of selected poems [10]. Ultimately, L. Molina and H. Albir's classification is distinguished by its uniqueness and relevance compared to others, thus revealing a huge number of effective translation strategies. These techniques are successfully applied in a vast number of textbooks, academic articles, and theses contributing to further development in the field of poetry translation.

Discussion

This brief review of the translation strategies and techniques developed by several scholars and linguists highlighted the fundamental approaches that translators apply to perform poetic translation. Thus, in recent research works on this field, as well as in the practical works accomplished by translators, special emphasis is directed to A. Lefevere, N.I. Balashov and M. Baker's translation strategies. In addition, scholars such as Ya.I. Retzker, V.E. Shchetinkin and L. Molina and H. Albir distinguish prevalent poetic translation techniques. As a result, the qualitative descriptive analysis demonstrates that the selection of translation strategies and techniques depends on a number of key factors, including the communicative purpose of translation procedures, aesthetic and cultural characteristics of the poetic work.

Comparison of a range of approaches indicates that literal translation, which is quite often applied in other types of text, is rarely effective for conveying poetic content, while also losing all the special aspects. Thus, translators rely on a variety of strategies or techniques to interpret the original text in a particular way. The above-mentioned approaches serve to preserve the rhyme, rhythm, figurative and emotional impact of the original text.

In summary, the results of the study confirm the fact that translation of poetic discourse requires both linguistic accuracy and a certain creativity of the translator. The selection of strategy and technique needs to be based on the peculiarities of a particular poetic text and the target audience.

Conclusion

Basing on the results of the research it is necessary to conclude that there are a large number of strategies and techniques for translating poetic discourse. Over the years, researchers have discovered new classifications and varieties of techniques that contribute to an

increasingly effective translation of the key aspects of the poetic text. In addition, an analysis of the literature on translation theory allows us to summarize the existing views of scientists on the essence of translation strategies and transformations. Despite the fact that the classifications of translation tools are being updated, the main task in translating poetry remains the same. Preserving the poetic form of the original is primarily a priority for the translator, although not all components of the content can be translated into another language. For this reason, we can observe completely different versions of the translation of the same poem, where everyone saw fit to apply one approach or another. As a result, the implicit meaning of the work is the same, but it can be conveyed in different variations.

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