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The role of the metaphorical language structures in the construction of national identity

Key words: conceptualization, metaphor, national identity, national language, language picture of the world.

In the article the role of metaphorical structures of the Belarusian language in the construction of national identity is analyzed. The metaphors of modern Belarusian social advertising which is focused on the selection and consolidation of certain images and ideas about the nation in its collective consciousness have been chosen as a basis for the analysis.

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Translation strategies through a prism of national mentality and mother tongue

Key words: cross-cultural communication, national mentality, communicative behavior, cultural priorities, mother tongue.

Coupling of culture and communication ensures cross-cultural communication. The nations look at the world through the concepts and categories which are the products of their cultures. Contrastive analysis of different mentalities allows understanding the national priorities of verbal communication. To specify at what stage the native language comes in is vague.

Culture shapes our mentality, models of behavior, priorities and way of life. For this reason to understand people with whom we try to communicate, it is vital to have proper ideas about the culture of our counterparts, which will be present in the process of our communication. It is practically inevitable that our perception and interpretation of the contents of our partner's message will be based on our strongly biased concepts of an alien culture. It is customary that such interpretations are based on our limited knowledge which we derive from literature, films, mass media etc., and we are inclined to perceive an alien culture through our own concepts. In such cases it is worth remembering a remark of G.K. Chesterton: «Modern man is educated to understand foreign languages and misunderstand foreigners» [2, p. 151]. This paper aims at demonstrating some of the typical mistakes the students make while translating English texts being guided by their national mentality and lacking cross-cultural knowledge. We also would like to disclose and explain the mechanisms underlying their actions of which they do not suspect trying to do their best translating the texts.

The dynamic approach to language and culture, as constantly changing and interrelating phenomena, is clearly seen in the present-day cultural and social life of the Belarusian society. Twenty years ago such cultural phenomena as «smart phone», «speaker», «credit card» and many others were perceived by the Belarusians as divergences, not having correspondences or analogues. These diverging lexical units had unique meanings for us because they were prescribed by the world cultural community, but at the same time they initiated a new process, ruining these prescriptions due to dynamic interrelation of cultures and languages. For this reason such words and word combinations as «смартфон», «спикер», «кредитная карточка», «лэптоп» today have become an inalienable part of Belarusian reality, the fact of culture, and converge with the English cultural terms.

The prescribed meaning of a word may go through numerous metamorphoses and interpretations in the minds of the people, who borrowed these objects and corresponding lexical units. For this reason, objects may lose their primary meaning and acquire secondary meanings in a different culture and society. The primary meaning of the object may become a form for the secondary meaning and even disappear under the influence of the secondary active usage associations. This tendency may be traced in the Russian culture where such important British cultural terms as, for example, «cottage» – «коттедж», «boarding school» – «школа-интернат» and many others have acquired new interpretations, though at first glance there were no reasons for divergences. It proves the obvious fact that cultures are deprived of the syntagmatic relations, but readily enter paradigmatic relations. From paradigmatic point of view, the above mentioned lexical units may be considered as potential equivalents, but in the translation process they contradict common sense. In the situation when a wealthy person demonstrates his three-storied country house to his British friend, he usually says a simple and natural for this country phrase: «This is my cottage», but the reaction of the Briton surprises him: «Oh, no, it is not a cottage, it is a proper house! I wish I had one like this!» The reason for this misunderstanding is a sharp difference of the concept of a «cottage» in English and Russian. While in Britain it still denotes countryside one-storey thatched building typical of 17–19 centuries, in Belarus it is usually applicable to a large and expensive suburban house.

A similar situation happened when the students translated the sentence: «The children of Lord Henry go to the boarding school» and gave the following variant: «Дети лорда Генри учатся в школе-интернате». From the point of view of traditional approach to translation, this variant looks quite satisfactory, but we are to bear in mind that there is a huge gap in understanding the real meanings of this word combination in British and Belarusian cultures. For the English it means a public school at which pupils live as well as study, but the Belarusian reader of the text will inevitably identify this type of school with the one we have

in this country for juvenile law offenders. For this reason, the only possible way of translating it into Russian is «привилегированная частная средняя школа по типу пансиона».

These examples prove that linguo-cognitive theory of translation admits the personal character of understanding the text and the asymmetry between extralinguistic knowledge and linguistic meaning. This asymmetry is revealed through conceptualization of knowledge not only by linguistic meaning, but also by images, actions, emotions combined in propositions in man's mind. The translator can apply different strategies and tactics among which the adaptive one can be very useful. The tactic is a particular way to implement the strategy; it is chosen and used depending on the particular communicative task. In terms of the translation strategy and tactics the translator's choice of lexical and grammatical units form a kind of the micro level of the translation process while the strategy itself may be associated with the macro level. Thus, the most challenging for the translator task is to understand, grasp the communicative task correctly and therefore choose the proper translation strategy.

Alongside with the objective factors determining the degree of text translation quality, there exist such subjective factors as an ability to interpret the source text, reflect and transfer implicit information into the target text.

But there is another aspect to be considered: the comparison of languages, and, in particular, the comparison of the foreign language with the mother tongue. There are different points of view on this question. Some teachers are convinced that one should pay no attention to the learner's mother tongue; that one should keep one's gaze firmly on the foreign language throughout. There are of course cases where no use can be made of the mother tongue, for example if one has a class of twenty students with twenty different native languages. However, given the right conditions one can make positive use of the student's mother tongue; and in such cases to neglect it may be to throw away one of the tools best adapted to the task in hand.

What is the nature of the equivalence between two languages? We take it for granted that there can be equivalence; that in some sense at least, and despite the Italian proverb «traduttore – traditore», an utterance in language 1 may be translated into language 2. If we take two texts in different languages, one being translation of the other, at what rank (among the grammatical units) would we be prepared to recognize 'equivalence'? In general, this would be at the rank of the sentence, this being the contextual unit of language; it is the sentence which operates in situations. In other words, as could be expected from what is said about the way language works, it is generally the case that (1) a single sentence in language 1 may be represented by a single sentence in language 2: if we have an English text consisting of forty-seven sentences, the Russian translation could also consist of forty-seven sentences, divided at the same points; and (2) a particular sentence in language 1 can always be represented by one and the same sentence in language 2.

But this equivalence of units and of items is lost as soon as we go below or above the sentence; and the further up (the text level) or down (the morpheme level) of the rank scale we go, the less is left of the equivalence. Hence, it is very rarely we can say that a particular joint syntactic unit in language 1 can always be translated by one and the same joint syntactic unit in language 2. The nearer we come to the sentence, the greater becomes the probability of equivalence; yet it remains true to say that the basic unit of translation is the sentence.

It is impossible to specify at what stage the native language comes in; the answer depends on the pedagogical principles adopted. On the one hand, one might attempt to make an overall comparison of the grammatical and lexical structure of the foreign and native languages; on the other hand, one might take account only of cases of equivalence, cases where there is a high probability that an item in the native language will always be translated by one and the same item in the foreign language. In any case, whatever the stage of teaching at which is proposed to use the mother tongue, valid methods of comparison are needed.

Professional competence of the translator is based on the ability to interpret cross-cultural information and reflect it in the target language. It is an obvious fact that ambiguity imposes restraints on understanding and translation. On the other hand, it provides leeway in interpretation which can lead to the unexpected results for the students because the teaching process is a creative one and at the same time constructive. The crucial role for the text interpretation and comprehension is played by the cognitive component because the target text usually includes the results of translator's cognition arranged in a form of his personal vision of the system of concepts of the source language.

Here is one more passage of the text about English character where we clearly saw how helpless the students were in understanding the conceptual meaning of it: «The characteristic English pose involves keeping the head held high, the upper lip stiff and the best foot forward. In this position, conversation is difficult and the intimacy of any kind almost impossible» [3, p. 129]. Due to absence of the background knowledge of the atmosphere of Victorian Britain and the role of British Empire in the world, which made the majority of Britons feel superior in comparison with other nations, it is difficult to understand the contents of the source text. The students concentrated their attention mainly on the physical aspects of the text and saw the main problem in finding out which foot was considered to be the best one and why. They also could not tell whether this definition was appropriate for the present day and how much the position of the country and the nation has changed. This example demonstrates that the process of reconstruction of the source text contents depends on objective and subjective factors. The former include the type of the text, the type of communication and the type of cognition. The latter include professional competence of the interpreter implying, apart from foreign language proficiency, an ability to understand and interpret the source text, awareness of the cross-cultural differences, forms of their representation, mentality of the nation and an ability to modify and arrange the source text contents in accordance with the target language norms.

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Стилистическая градация и ситуативная актуальность использования приветствий и обращений

Ключевые слова: речевой этикет, обращение, приветствие, стилистическая и ситуативная маркированность единиц.

В статье предложена классификация этикетных формул приветствий и обращений, представленных в словаре русского речевого этикета. Показана связь, прослеживаемая при вычленении тематических групп по ситуативному признаку со стилистической доминантой, а также экспликации номинации.

Русский речевой этикет, представленный ситуативно-вариабельным многообразием выбора церемониальных формул, отображающих взаимодействия культур, традиций, мировосприятия; дифференциацию социальных ролей, коммуникативных страте-