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Elena V. Shapkina, Danil A. Shapkin

TRANSLATION OF ARCHITECTURAL TEXTS FROM ENGLISH INTO RUSSIAN: TYPES OF TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

Qualitative translation of architectural texts from one language into another is of paramount importance nowadays as it is a means of promoting scientific achievements in the world scientific society and getting information about the latest achievements of other researchers from other countries, it is also the way to start international scientific collaborations. Translation is a process and the result of turning a text from one language into another, which require changes due to the necessity to comply with the lexical, grammatical, syntactic and stylistic norms of the target language. The purpose of this paper is to study English –Russian translations and present the list of the most typical transformations and specifics of their usage. We analyzed lexical and grammatical transformations in translations of architectural texts made during the internship course of the minor program "Translator in the sphere of professional communications". Lexical transformations included concretization, generalization, modulation, antonymy and grammatical ones included replacements of a grammatical form, part of speech, sentence parts, sentence type. The quantitative analyses showed that both lexical and grammatical transformations are widely used, but the correlations between the different types of transformations differs within each group. The most frequent lexical transformation is concretization. The most frequent parts of speech to be concretized are nouns, verbs and adjectives that have non-differential and abstract meanings. The next frequent lexical transformation is modulation, then comes generalization and antonymy. The most typical grammatical transformation is that of a part of speech. The most frequent part of speech replaced in translation were infinitives and adjectives. They were typically replaced by nouns due to the stylistic reasons. We also observed some replacements of verbs and adjectives. There were some other grammatical transformations done: replacements of sentence parts, type of a sentence and a grammatical form of a word. The study shows that the leading transformations are made at a single word level. The results of the study help the translators to work out a specific translation strategy and be prepared to make the most typical changes to ensure a high-quality translation of architectural texts.

Keywords: *architectural texts, translation quality, translation techniques, lexical transformations, grammatical transformations.*

I. Introduction

Nowadays, developing a research in any science is impossible without being acquainted with scientific achievements of other scholars, including the foreign ones. The architectural field is not an exception in this sense as the architectural and landscape environment is the most important component of human social life and spaces. Today, an individual has been totally involved into object and spatial environment accumulating technical and economic achievements of previous generations, their ideals, dreams, emotions, ambitions. Thus, architectural texts reflect working, recreational and social spaces of different nations and cultures [7]. Their qualitative translation into other languages plays an important role to promote the latest scientific achievements and develop other scientific ideas in other countries of the world.

Theoretically, translation is a process and the result of turning a text from one language into another, which means expressing the same by signs of a different language. Bearing in mind that every sign has two planes (plane of expression and plane of content) the essence of translation could be described as changing the elements of the plane of expression while the plane of content remains the same [17]. These changes are due to the necessity to comply with the lexical, grammatical, syntactic and stylistic norms of the target language [3, 6, 12, 13, 21, 22]. They can also depend on the contents and stylistic peculiarities of the translated text, which is provided with a set of transformations that a

translator uses in the translation process [1, 4, 8, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 24, 25, etc.]. Thus, the study of the most typical transformations used in translating architectural texts is of importance today.

Stylistically, architectural texts belong to scientific prose style. According to K. Rice, scientific texts are a type of translated texts focused on transferring primarily the contents of the original text by means of another language. When translating the texts, it is important to focus mainly on transferring their informative or factual contents. The language means of translation must comply with the norms of the target language, and the reader must receive it in the traditional language form [18].

In translation theory textbooks [5, 9, 23] the specifics of translating scientific texts from English into Russian present the list of the following features.

1. The predominant usage of nouns over the verbs, which helps to avoid indicating the time of the action and creates the effect of an abstract narration. Typically, Russian scientific texts use more nouns compared to the English ones. It leads to frequent replacements of verbs, adverbs, adjectives with nouns when translating from English into Russian.

2. The predominant usage of passive constructions over active ones, which emphasizes not «who said», but «what is said in the message.» In English-Russian translations, replacing the active voice with a passive one is quite common when an inanimate noun as a subject of a sentence is used with a verb that in Russian can only be combined with an animate one.

3 The Russian language has a wide use of genitive forms, which needs changing the word order in translation from English, for example: government decision = решение правительства.

4. The syntax of scientific texts can be quite complex. However, the translator can make a number of syntactic changes: divide complex sentences into two simple ones or vice versa, combine two simple sentences into a complex one, if it provides semantic clarity.

We believe that this list is quite limited and the translation features of the texts need more detailed studies. Thus, the purpose of this article is to study English –Russian translations and to present the list of the most typical transformations used to provide an adequate transferring the information presented in scientific texts on architecture. To conduct the study, we used translations of architectural texts made during the internship course of the minor program "Translator in the sphere of professional communications".

The main stages of the research conducted included three stages.

1. Defining the notion of «translation transformation» and their classification that can be used in translation of scientific texts.

2. Statistical analysis of the transformations used in the translation of architectural texts from English into Russian.

3. Presenting the results of the study by describing peculiarities of the transformations used.

II. Theory

Translation theory interprets the concept of "translation transformation" as "a specific operation by which the translator can make the transition from the original to the translation" [10; p.158].

Most researchers distinguish two main groups of translation transformations: lexical and grammatical ones [9, 11, 15, 19]. Lexical transformations involve certain semantic changes. The reasons for lexical transformations are:

– the difference in signs of the same phenomenon or concept, which reflects the vision of the world inherent in a given language;

– the difference in the semantic volume of the word;

– the difference in ways of combining lexical units with each other [2].

There are several types of lexical transformations.

1. Concretization. It is used in translating words with wide and non-differential meaning. It means translating words of source language by words with specified concrete meaning in the target language. When translating from English into Russian they use it very often in the sphere of verbs. The choice of a particular meaning depends on the context.

2. Generalization. It is quite opposite to concretization. It is used when the norms of target language make it unnecessary or even undesirable to translate all the particulars expressed in the source language. Generalization is also used in those cases when in a source language a word with differentiated meaning corresponds to a word with non-differentiated meaning in the target language. Generalization may be caused by purely pragmatic reasons. In the source text there may be many proper names informative for the native speakers of the source language and absolutely uninformative for the readers in the target language. They may be some proper names of small firms, shops etc. [17].

3. Modulation. It involves the creation of a an equivalent by replacing a unit in source language with a translation language unit the meaning

of which can be logically deduced from it and which is just another way of referring to the same object or an aspect of the same situation [11]. It is a semantic development of this situation. The transformation helps to render the sense and to observe the norms of translation language.

4. Antonymy. It means that a certain word is translated not by the corresponding word of translation language but by its antonym. The necessity for this transformation arises due to several reasons: peculiarities of the language systems; contextual requirements; traditional norms of a translation language.

Grammatical transformations include: transpositions, replacements, additions and omissions. In our research we studied replacements.

Replacements can be of several types and made on different language levels.

1. Grammatical form of a word. It usually includes the change of a singular form of a noun into the plural one and vice versa.

2. Part of speech. The most frequent replacements are: nouns by verbs and nouns by pronouns. It is caused by purely stylistic considerations.

3. Parts of the sentence. The most frequent among such replacements is that of substituting an object for a subject and vice versa. It is due to several reasons: wider usage of passive constructions in the English texts compared to the Russian ones; the English subject denotes some place or time and may be replaced by an adverbial modifier.

4. Type of a sentence. It involves using a composite sentence instead of a simple one. It is made by translating participial or infinitive constructions by creating a second predication center (a clause). Sometimes two or more simple sentences may be joined together into a one complex or a composite sentence due to logical or stylistic reasons.

III. Results

Statistical analysis shows that the total number of translation transformations made (both lexical and grammatical) is 223. The largest number of transformations are lexical ones (120 transformations). The number of grammatical transformations is 103. If we express these numbers as percentages, we get the ratio - "54:46". This can be represented graphically in the diagram (Diagram 1).

Diagram 1

Correlation of lexical and grammatical transformations

Grammatical transformations (46 %)

Lexical transformations (54 %)

When translating architectural texts, we made all the lexical transformations (concretization, generalization, modulation, antonymy). Statistic analysis showed that the ratio of their use is also not the same. The most common lexical transformation is concretization (49 transformations). The next frequent transformation is modulation (40 transformations), then comes generalization (27 transformations) and antonymy (4 transformations). Their percentage is as follows: concretization (49%), generalization (22 %), modulation (33 %), antonymy (3 %). Graphically it is presented in the diagram below (Diagram 2).

A more detailed analysis showed that the most frequent parts of speech to be concretized are nouns (61 %), verbs (28 %) and adjectives (20 %). As we can see the verb concretization is not the most typical transformation if compared to the average in translation from English into Russian. It can be explained by the reason that the nouns used in architectural texts are more polysemantic, i.e. they have more non-differential and abstract meanings than in other fields.

The analysis of the generalization also shows that it is used mostly for nouns (62 %). The transformation was used for five verbs (22 %) and two adjectives (7 %) only. The noun frequency both for concretization and generalization can be explained by purely stylistic reasons as scientific

Diagram 2

Correlation of lexical transformations

Antonymy 3 %
Generalization 22 %
Concretization 40 %
Modulation 33 %
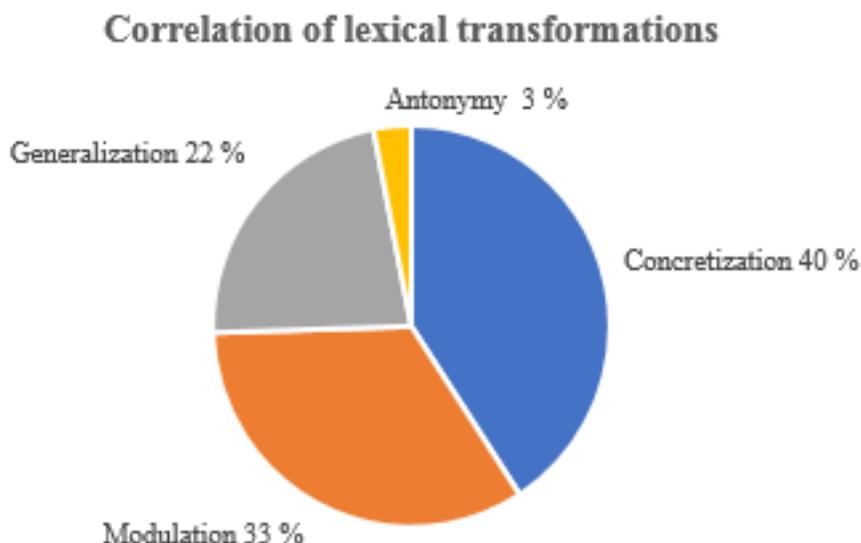
texts use more nouns compared to verbs or any other parts of speech.

The modulation transformations were done on all the syntactic levels: a word, a word combination and a part of a sentence. The most frequent level is that of a word. Here the verbs and nouns are mostly transformed due to stylistic and speech norms reasons.

The antonymic translation (antonymy) was done by changing the positive form into negative one. In all the cases observed, antonymy was a contextual transformation and a way to render the source meaning precisely.

All kinds of grammatical transformations are made in translating architectural texts, though to a different extent. Parts of speech (38 transformations) are the most frequent ones. Then come replacements of sentence parts (26 transformations), type of a sentence (21 transformations) and a grammatical form of a word (18 transformations). They have the following percentages: replacements of parts of speech – 38 %, replacements of sentence parts – 26 %, replacements of type of a sentence – 21 %, replacement of a grammatical from – 18%. Graphically it is presented in the diagram below (Diagram 3).

Diagram 3

Correlation of grammatical replacements

Grammatical forms 18 %
Parts of speech 38 %
Types of sentences 21 %
Parts of sentence 26 %
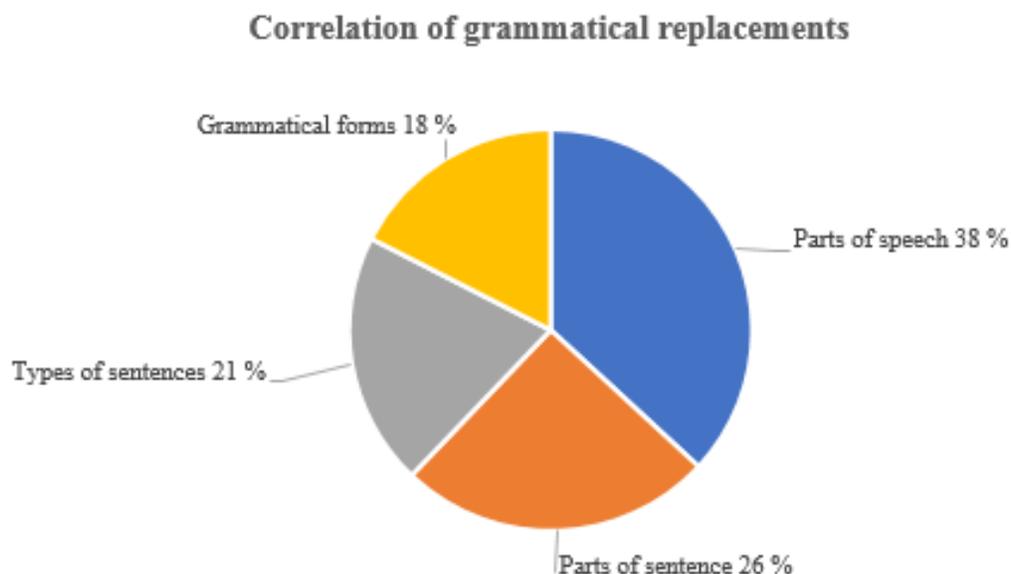
The most frequent part of speech replaced in translation were infinitives (28%) and adjectives (21%). They were typically replaced by nouns mainly due to the stylistic reasons – Russian

scientific texts use more nouns compared to the English ones. We also observed some replacements, like «infinitive – verb» and «noun – verb».

The most frequent parts of sentences replaced were: «object – subject», «subject – object» and «subject – adverbial modifier». All these replacements is due to the fact that the subject in the source sentence is an inanimate noun that denote place or time and it is used with the verb of action which is normally used with animate nouns in Russian. For example, the sentence «The scalpel had permitted anatomists to study …» is translated as «С помощью скальпеля анатомы могли изучать …». Here the subject «scalpel» is used as an adverbial modifier of manner «С помощью скальпеля» and the object «anatomists» is used as a subject.

The replacements of sentence types include the change of a simple sentence into a complex one (52%). It is usually done when gerundial or participial or infinitive complexes are used in the source text. We also observed the opposite change when a complex sentence was replaced by a simple one (23%). It was caused by syntactic ambiguity and semantic redundancy. These replacements are the result of dividing a complex sentence into two sentences. There were two more changes done: combining simple sentences into a compound one and changing a personal sentence into an impersonal one. But they were not typical, only 9 % for each.

As for the grammatical forms, only two types were observed – changing the voice and number. The most typical change of number was a singular form into a plural form of nouns (44%). It is explained by the speech norms of the Russian language. Example: …physics aimed at improving building performance … – исследования физических свойств зданий, направленное на улучшение их характеристик.

IV. Conclusion

Our study showed that in translation of architectural texts, all types of lexical transformations (concretization, generalization, modulation, antonymy) and grammatical ones (replacements of a grammatical form, part of speech, sentence parts, sentence type) are used. The quantitative correlation of lexical and grammatical transformations is not significant, but it can be quite different within each group. The most common transformation is the concretization. This indicates that the semantic volume of words in English architectural texts is wider than in Russian ones. The most common grammatical replacement is that of a part of speech, which is a consequence of difference of speech norms in the source and the target language, in particular, the increased number of nouns in the Russian scientific texts. These replacements prove that the leading transformations are made at a single word level. It also indicates that idiomatic expressions and emotional expressions are not used in the architectural texts, as these elements require changes at the level of a part or the whole sentence. A detailed study of the transformations used in translation helps prepare the translator to make the necessary transformations of the text, work out a specific translation strategy and thus ensure a high-quality translation of the text from one language to another./

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Shapkina E.V.,
assistant Professor, South Ural State University, c. Chelyabinsk, Russia, E-mail: eshapkina@mail.ru

Shapkin D.A.,
student, Department of Architecture, South Ural State University, c. Chelyabinsk, Russia, E-mail: shapkin-99-99@mail.ru