

ԼԵԶՎԱԲԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

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ON SOME ISSUES OF NEWS MEDIA TEXTS TRANSLATION

*“Without translation, I would be limited
to the borders of my own country.
Translator is my most important ally.”
Italo Calvino*

Today media and translation have become two inseparable fields that play an integral role in international news reporting. They not only convey information to the reader, but also facilitate this flow of information to a wide range of audiences.

The paper makes an attempt to reveal the common challenges and difficulties in news media text translation. We specifically focus on some linguistic and stylistic features of media texts and propose certain strategies for their appropriate translation from English into Armenian which will make the translation culturally acceptable for the target reader.

Key words: *news media text, translation strategies, linguo-stylistic features, clichéd expressions, standard journalistic terms*

Today, that the world is becoming a global village, mass communication plays a vitally important role in spreading information among people. It is well known that the primary tool of communication is language. Hundreds of languages transfer information to different corners of the world.

The language of mass communication refers to different texts produced by the mass media and distributed to the public. Mass media refer to various technologies that reach a wide range of people through mass communication. There are four main types of mass communication – print, broadcast, transit or outdoor media and digital media. The role of news media or so-called traditional media which include

newspapers, magazines, journals, radio and television is to inform, educate and entertain. The language of media has a great influence on the audience.

Media texts of all genres possess two functions – to transfer information and to influence the audience. “The genre of news reports has its own discourse created by institutions. Each genre forms its discourse structure which is realized in texts. This genre reflects events happening in the world; therefore, social and political knowledge and beliefs are gained through these reports” /Van Dijk, 1991: 110/.

Main Functions of Media Texts

In spite of the fact that the way information is presented in the media has changed drastically over the years, it is still true that the language of media has its invariable power to influence the consciousness of the audience. Journalism derives a great deal of its power from the postulate that it is able to present true pictures of reality. Concepts such as “truth” and “reality” cannot be separated from the concept of objectivity. Though the main function of news media is considered to be the transfer of objective information, almost never it is completely neutral.

Very often media texts together with their main function to spread information using linguistic means or speech techniques give evaluation to encourage the audience to a certain reaction, to draw the public attention to a certain point of view expressed in the message. In different genres of media texts different expressive, stylistic and linguistic means are used to influence the public.

All politicians, political parties and governments realize the significant role that media can play in supporting to achieve their goals. “Governments attempt to induce the news media to support their authority and policies through promoting positive media coverage and flooding media representatives with information supporting the government’s view and perspective” /Danziger, 1997: 250/. According to specialists, there are three major functions of mass media: surveillance, interpretation, and political socialization. Graber /2006/ adds a fourth one - manipulation.

Surveillance is the act of reporting the current events happening in the world, it also involves shedding light on selected stories, individuals and organizations. Surveillance determines what political demands and actions should be covered and what should be hidden, which affects politicians’ attitudes to the public’s decisions and responses to certain issues. “The mass media are especially significant in drawing people’s attention to some political phenomena rather than others - a situation termed agenda setting” /Danziger, 1997: 244/.

The news media’s attention to events and people gives them more influence with decision makers. Thus, the notion of ideology brings distortion and manipulation of the truth in pursuit of specific interests. The media play an

important role in the production of ideology. This ideological nature of the media is visible in the construction of news texts and thus determines their contents to a large extent. How things are said is as important as what things are said, as ideology is continuously expressed in the elements of linguistic structure. Leon V. Sigal said, “News is not what happens, but what someone says has happened or will happen” /http://mason.gmu.edu/~progers2/Sources_Chapter.pdf/.

Linguostylistic Features of Media Texts and Their Translation

The newspaper is the most readable source of information throughout the world. The facts in the newspaper should be presented objectively and fairly. The language should be clear and acceptable.

According to R. Fowler, “the news media select events for reporting according to a complex set of criteria of news worthiness; so news is not simply that which happens, but that which can be regarded and presented as newsworthy. In other words, news does not have to be just simple description of events, but also has to be meaningful” /Fowler, 1991/.

Today people can't let language barriers drive them apart. Thus, it is quite normal that translation plays the role of the main factor in mass communication. In this context, one of the most important fields of translation is media translation. Its main function is to provide accurate information in different languages which will help to reach different people all over the world.

The role of the news media translator is not only that of a translator of words, he/she must be the interpreter of ideas and messages of the source text and should be very accurate not to distort the meaning of the original. A really professional translator should not only accurately translate the exact information but he also should recreate the stylistic and linguistic expressive means of the source text in his translation.

Bielsa and Bassnett write, “ information that passes between cultures through news agencies is not only ‘translated’ in the interlingual sense, it is reshaped, edited, synthesized and transformed for the consumption of a new set of readers” /Bielsa, Bassnett, 2009: 2/.

To achieve success in their role of media translator translators should thoroughly study and understand the role of linguo-stylistic devices in media texts, as the language of media texts is a special, separate discourse with its own vocabulary rules and style.

According to Hatim and Mason, translation is an act of communication which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication (which may have been intended for different purposes and different readers or hearers) /Hatim, Mason, 1997: 1/.

The main task of the translator of an informative text is to convey to the reader its *content* in the clearest, comprehensive form, as media texts are distinguished by stylistic restraint.

In this article we'll discuss the ways of translation of those stylistic devices used in news media which need careful interpretation in the process of translation.

Firstly we'd like to mention stable, clichéd expressions, standard journalistic terms. These devices make one of the main features of news material, they help to create the impression of objectivity. For the translation of these terms and expressions translators most often apply the technique of equivalent translation.

1. *Equivalents* are mainly applied, as it is not difficult to find semantic and stylistic correspondences for many journalistic clichés, expressions, terms among the same kind of expressions in the Armenian language, which are typical of Armenian media texts.

For example:

a working visit – աշխատանքային այց

bilateral talks – երկկողմանի բանակցություններ

on a final leg of the visit – այցի վերջում

UN Security Council – ՄԱԿ-ի Անվտանգության խորհուրդ

US Secretary of State for Defence – ԱՄՆ Պաշտպանության նախարար

2. *Equivalents* are also applied for the translation of a wide variety of realities of social, political and cultural life.

For example:

The Upper House – Վերին պալատ

The Carribean Crisis – Կարիբյան ճգնաժամ

The House of Lords – Լորդերի պալատ

3. The same principle should be applied, if possible, when translating figurative, idiomatic expressions and other expressive elements of the text. So, if it is possible to adequately convey the idiom in the source text using an idiom in the target language similar in structure, lexical composition and in its communicative function there is no reason not to do this.

For example:

The Party leader burnt all the bridges with his recent speech. – Կուսակցության առաջնորդն իր ելույթով այրեց բոլոր կամուրջները:

First let them think, then speak – Առաջ թող մտածեն, հետո խոսեն:

Eagles don't catch flies. – Արծիվը ճանճ չի բռնի:

4. In the absence of close relevance at the phraseological level, the translation should be realized by other techniques of translation such as *paraphrases, calques or analogies*.

For example:

They simply kill time. – Նրանք պարզապես ժամանակ են սպանում:

People at last should understand *all that glitters is not gold*. – Վերջիվերջո մարդիկ պետք է հասկանան *ամեն պսպղացող բան ոսկի չէ*:

Proverbs and sayings are also translated via their *analogies* in the target language.

Make hay while the sun shines. – Երկաթը տաք-տաք կծեճեն:

Let bygones be bygones. – Անցյալը անցած է:

Specifics of the translation of media texts are most clearly expressed in the headlines, that is why it is necessary to consider them in more detail.

The headlines of articles and information messages, most often, serve to attract the attention of the reader, inform him about the content and tone of the text, to organize the reader's perception in the process of reading the text. In other words, a headline must prepare the reader for the article to follow. It must be short and appeal to the tastes and interests of the intended reader.

To achieve this communicative purpose reporters use simplified grammar – words may be shortened, where it is possible abbreviations are used, prepositions are avoided, only certain verb forms are used.

E.g. FA Angry – The Football association is angry. – Ֆուտբոլի ասոցիացիան վրդովված է:

Former MP freed – Former Member of the Parliament has been freed. – Նախկին պատգամավորը / պառլամենտի անդամը ազատվեց կալանքից:

The above given examples show that in Armenian translation this tendency is not observed. Surprisingly enough, Armenian headlines tend to contain full sentences.

To make the headline more attractive and inviting reporters use different stylistic devices and descriptive language. It is obvious that such headings cannot be translated literally. The translator here again should find an expression or idiom in the target text that will express the same meaning in the translated text (see examples *a, d* given below). If the translator cannot find a solution to such a problem (which happens quite often), it is better to change the headline completely, making it neutral, but comprehensive in meaning and related to the topic of the text (see examples *b, c, e, f* given below)

Idioms

- a. The Russians Sweetened the Pill – Ռուսները **փափուկ բարձ են դնում** հանրության գլխի տակ
- b. Sher Steals the Balmain Show in Paris Fashion Week – Շերը՝ Փարիզի նորաձևության շաբաթվա Բալմենյան շոուի ամենաշողջողուն աստղ
- c. Where the Grass is Greener – Այնտեղ, որտեղ ավելի լավ է
- d. Putin Says “Ball ‘s in EU’s Court” Over the Gas Supply – Պուտինն ասում է. «Ինչ վերաբերում է գազի մատակարարմանը, **գնդակը ԵՄ դաշտում է**»

Metaphors

- e. Cliff-Top Ordeal – Տիեզերական փորձություն
- f. Dying Words convict Killer – Մեռնողի բառերը դարձան մարդասպանի հանցանքի ապացույցը

Allusions, Quotes

To translate allusions and quotations which are also typical features of headlines, translators need to have background knowledge of literature and erudition. To understand how to translate such headlines, as for example “The Taming of the Shrew”, the translator must have an idea where the quote or allusion comes from, but if he doesn’t know its origin he should at least recognize that it is a quotation and look it up in dictionaries of quotations or encyclopedias, then turning to the existing classic translations he will get the equivalent of the given phrase:

- a. The Taming of the Shrew – Կամակորի սանձահարումը
- b. To Be or Not To Be – Լինել, թե՞ չլինել

However, there may be cases much more complicated than these famous ones. Even the most experienced translators will have difficulty recognizing the hidden quote in the media text. In such cases they should use dictionaries or reference books.

It is impossible to know or memorize all the literary texts, titles, quotations, here translator’s professional intuition and educational background should come to help him.

The translator should translate the headlines after reading the whole text, taking into account all the indicators of the interaction of the title with the text. At first, the translator must determine the main ideas, attitudes, identify the connections of the text with extratextual aspects, taking into account the broad context including the extralinguistic one. The translator should also determine the style, the register of speech and the target audience.

A. F. Arkhipov distinguishes the pre-translation stage and the stage of the actual translation of the titles. The first includes identifying the actual content of the title in connection with the content of the text, determining its more specific functional orientation, the degree and nature of its expressiveness, the role of the title in the organization of the text. The second includes the fullest possible transmission or partial compensation of the identified features of the headline, taking into account the regularities of the design of the titles of similar texts in newspapers and magazines published in the Russian language. Headings are divided into classifying, informative and intriguing /<https://study-english.info/media-language-translation.php/>.

Another typical feature of the headlines of media texts are **neologisms**. They are widely known as new words or new meanings of words already existing in the vocabulary which have not yet entered into the common use. Thus, most of them are not included in dictionaries yet. The task of the translator is to transfer the meanings of neologisms into the target language. It means that either they have to coin new words following some word-building patterns (see examples *d, e* given below) or explain English neologisms using the descriptive method (see examples *a, b* given below), or sometimes they may use transliteration to achieve this aim (see example *c* given below).

For example:

- a. mouse potato – մարդ, որ ամբողջ օրն անց է կացնում համակարգչի դիմաց
- b. to netmeet – ծանոթանալ համացանցում
- c. Netspeak – Նեթսփիկ
- d. Netizen – Նեթիզենցի
- e. Instagrammer – Ինստագրամցի

To sum up, it must be said that media translation plays a vital role in informing people and shaping their opinions. To make translation culturally acceptable for the target reader translators must be well acquainted with the social, political, cultural traditions of the nation and the mechanisms of the media addressing the target audience. Therefore, translators should follow news translation strategies like equivalents, analogies, substitutions to make the translated text comprehensive and worth reading.

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Ն. ԹՈՎՄԱՍՅԱՆ, Ռ. ՂԱԶԱՐՅԱՆ – Լրատվական մեդիա տեքստերի թարգմանության խնդիրների շուրջ. – Այսօր մեդիան և թարգմանությունը դարձել են երկու անբաժան ոլորտներ, որոնք կարևոր դեր են խաղում լրատվական հաղորդակցության մեջ: Նրանք ոչ միայն տեղեկատվություն են փոխանցում, այլ նաև նպաստում են տեղեկատվության հոսքը առավել լայն լսարաններին հասցնելուն: Հետևաբար, թարգմանության և թարգմանիչների դերը գնալով ավելի է կարևորվում մեդիա ոլորտի ընկերությունների համար: Սույն հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվում են մեդիա տեքստերին բնորոշ մի շարք լեզվաոճական առանձնահատկություններ՝ եզրույթներ, դարձվածքներ, բառախաղեր, անդրադարձներ, փոխաբերություններ, և

դրանց՝ անգլերենից հայերեն թարգմանության ընթացքում առկա մարտահրավերներն ու դժվարությունները:

Մասնավորապես քննարկվում են որոշակի ռազմավարություններ, որոնք նպաստում են թիրախային ընթերցողի համար անգլերենից հայերեն թարգմանությունները մշակութային առումով ընդունելի դարձնելուն:

Բանալի բառեր. մեդիա տեքստ, թարգմանության ռազմավարություն, լեզվաոճական առանձնահատկություններ, կլիշե արտահայտություններ, լրագրողական եզրույթներ

Н. ТОВМАСЯН, Р. КАЗАРЯН – О некоторых проблемах перевода медиатекстов. – В условиях сегодняшней глобализации средства массовой информации и перевод стали двумя неразделимыми областями, которые играют важную роль в освещении международных новостей. Они не только передают информацию, но и способствуют широкому распространению этого потока информации. В статье делается попытка выявить общие проблемы и трудности перевода медиатекстов. Представлены наиболее оптимальные методы и приемы, используемые при переводе англоязычного медийного текста на армянский язык с учетом лингвостилистических особенностей медиатекста.

Ключевые слова: медиатекст, переводческие стратегии, лингвостилистические особенности, клише, речевые штампы, журналистские термины

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