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TRANSLATION OF RUSSIAN BUSINESS SLANG PHRASEOLOGY IN ITALIAN: FOCUS ON INTERMEDIARY LANGUAGE TO AVOID AMBIGUITIES

ALESSANDRA MARABINI*
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7450-9115>
BELGOROD STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract: In recent years Russia has changed rapidly from a socio-economic point of view. The economic changes have led to the development of slang phraseological units (herefrom, PUs) in the business communication. The Russian jargon PUs are taken from the dictionary *Pochti seryoznyj slovar' delovogo obscheniya* (Pogrebnyak: 2007) and are translated into Italian, mostly via English, functioning as Intermediary Language (herefrom, IL). The materials consist in Russian slang PUs that are ambiguous, as it appears hard to understand, whether they are calques from IL or properly Russian expressions. The study underlines the importance of the IL to avoid ambiguity and of the idiomatic translation to both understand business culture and language. The functional equivalence is also taken into account as an interlinguistic equivalence strategy needed to find a communicative coincidence between Source Language (herefrom, SL) and Target Language (herefrom, TL) contexts. To conclude, the work attempts to facilitate informal business communication between Russian and Italian partners and to mitigate misunderstandings that may arise in the presence of cultural differences between the two countries.

Keywords: slang phraseology; intermediary language; equivalence; ambiguity; informal business communication

1. Introduction

The last twenty-year economic situation in Russia has changed rapidly and globally, bringing to new tendencies in business and communication fields. New interaction forms, coming mainly from the Anglo-American business language, enter the Russian language in the form of slang PUs. Slang PUs contribute to a jargonization of the Russian language and to the creation of elite circles. The business partners become members of a niche, a closed society handling words for 'special uses,' in unofficial contexts of communication, and difficult for others to be understood.

The phraseological semantics is the product of the human linguo-creative activity, where thinking, consciousness, language and speech interact (Alefirenko 2008: 80-82).

* marabini92@gmail.com



The PUs are both ironic and expressive units. Irony and expressiveness are conveyed by the paradoxical nature of the PU itself. Phraseology itself is, by its functional nature, a linguistic paradox (Mokienko 2012: 102) that evokes laughter. The linguistic paradoxes are systemic mechanisms for the formation of PUs that cause a comic effect (Mokienko 2012: 101), associated with the speech strategic intention of the ones engaged in communication. The slang PUs under examination have features of irony due to the contrast between the literal (explicit) and the figurative (implicit) meaning. The literal meaning is strictly related to the Russian language and culture as SL, the figurative one is not of immediate understanding and comes from IL.

The business speakers, by using slang ironic PUs, share a ‘hidden agreement,’ a sociocultural form of communication, related to the, so-to-say, game situation. The sociocultural aspect of using slang PUs is correlated to the origin of slang. According to the *Lingvisticheskij entsiklopedicheskij slovar’* “slang sostoit iz slov i frazeologizmov, kotorye vznikli i pervonachal’no upotrebyalis’ v otdel’nykh sotsial’nykh gruppakh, i otrazhaet tsennostnuyu orientatsiyu etikh grupp” (Yartseva 1990) [slang consists of words and PUs that arose and were originally used in certain social groups and reflects the value orientation of these groups (translation mine, A.M.)]. As argued by Akhmanova, slang is also the set of:

“Elementy razgovornogo varianta toj ili drugoj professionalnoj ili sotsial’noj gruppy, kotorye, pronikaya v literaturnyj yazyk ili voobsche v rechi lyudej, ne imeyuschikh pryamogo otnosheniya k dannoj gruppe lits, priobretayut v etikh raznovidnostyakh yazyka osobuyu emotsional’no-ekspressivnuyu okrasku (osobuyu lingvostilisticheskuyu funktsiyu)” (Akhmanova 1969: 419).

[Elements of speech variation of a professional or social group which, on entering the literary language or, in general, the speech of people with no direct relation to this group, acquire in these language varieties a peculiar emotive and expressive hint (a peculiar linguo-stylistic function)” (translation mine, A.M.)].

This paper aims at exploring the use of mediated language in Indirect Translation (hereafter, ITr) of Russian slang PUs (SL) and its effect on Italian as TL. Usually, the main ways of rendering PUs in the target language are descriptive translation, literal translation, translation by phraseological equivalents (full, partial, and null), translation by phraseological analogues (Mykhaylenko 2019: 70). To these strategies, we would add the translation by using the IL. ITr is interpreted in many ways:

- as ‘a translation of a translation’ (Gambier 1994: 413); thus, it is seen as a retranslation, that is a new translation, in the same language, of a text that had been already translated fully or partially (Gambier 1994: 413);
- as “a chain of (at least) three texts, ending with a translation made from another translation” (Ringmar 2012: 141), the three texts are the original, the intermediary and the end texts;
- as a process rather than a result; in fact, the term ‘relay translation’ used by Ringmar highlights the process contrary to the term ‘indirect translation’ that focuses on the final product (Ringmar 2012: 141).

Then, the terminological apparatus for intermediary translation shows numerous definitions, such as indirect, mediated, mixed, pivot, relay(ed) or second-hand translation (Pięta 2014: 17-18).

The focus of the present paper is on the relationship, both formal and semantic, between ITr and slang PUs. In the practice of translating Russian slang PUs into Italian we follow the principle of the so-called 'idiomatic translation' and the strategy of trying to re-create correspondence between SL and TL, especially when ambiguities arise cause calque or multiple-meaning words. Phraseological calques are the result of an accurate or restructured transmission of lexical components, grammatical structures, and meanings of a PU of one language by means of another language (Solodukho 1982: 136). In literature calques can be semantic or morphological. The semantic calques are phenomena of acquisition of a new meaning in TL, formed according to a foreign language sample (Solodukho 1982: 130). They are a type of semantic borrowings that occur when the nominative meaning coincides both in SL and in TL. The foreign language prototype dictates a new meaning in TL (Solodukho 1982: 130). The morphological or literal calques are translations of the morphological structure of foreign words (Solodukho 1982: 132). They are organized into a phrase in accordance with the norms of TL (Arsent'eva 1989: 116). The literal calques keep the significative-denotative meaning, the evaluative connotation, the structural and grammatical organization of the components, the functional and stylistic connotations. Moreover, the PUs develop as a result of phonetic borrowing, based on the similarity of sound both in SL and TL.

2. Materials and Methods

We proceeded by extracting monomorphemic polysemous PUs from the monolingual dictionary *Pochti seryoznyj slovar' delovogo obscheniya* (Pogrebnyak: 2007). Therein the calques in the Russian language are showed in the dictionary in brackets (*ot angl.* = from English). First of all, we observed the economic information transmitted by the IL in a figurative way that might cause equivocation with the Russian literal meaning. We also found out an appropriate translation into Italian, by examining their cultural adaptation, making reference to the IL. The context is fundamental when we deal with ambiguous polysemous PUs. Thus, we applied the idiomatic translation strategy, with reference to all the implicit elements of the specific the context of communication (Ryabtseva 2018: 89-91).

Since the translation at issue was carried out in a cross-linguistic perspective, we also adopted a functional equivalence as an interlinguistic equivalence strategy that attempts to find equivalencies functional to a context in the TL. Nida's theory of functional equivalence has a great influence on translation. According to the author, "the translator must strive for equivalence rather than identity" (Nida & Taber 1982: 12), which emphasizes the impact of the message on the TL. The functional equivalence is necessary when the translation is likely to result in serious misunderstandings of the associative meaning or in a loss of stylistic features of the original text (Shiflett 2012: 31). Nida and Taber suggested that the equivalence can be

natural, when the translation does not sound like a translation to the target reader, but when it is close to the natural translation (Nida, Taber 1982: 12-13). The typology of equivalence generally distinguishes four types of equivalencies: full equivalents, partial equivalents, zero equivalents and phraseological analogues (Rajkhshtejn 1980; Solodukho 1982; Arsent'eva 1989). Total equivalence occurs when the PUs of the SL and TL bring the same significative and denotative meanings, evaluative, functional-stylistic, emotional-expressive connotations, as well as the same component structure. The morphological and grammatical organization may be the same, although some typological features of each language can be kept in their prototypical form. Regarding partial equivalents, they may have minor differences related to the inner structure or the morphology. Zero equivalence happens when non-correspondence exists between the PUs of the two languages. Phraseological analogues arise when the PUs show some differences in their structural and grammatical organization, in their composition, and deviations in the significative and denotative meanings or in the functional-stylistic connotation (Arsent'eva 1989: 106-115).

3. Results and Discussion

As a result of our research, we have detected five ambiguous slang PUs in the SL that belong to the business sphere, to the informal style of conversation. The following examples carry the Russian source PU (sPU), the corresponding translation into the IL, that is in most cases English, and finally our translation proposal of the target PU (tPU).

The triangulation (SL, IL and TL) is applied not only to English, but also to other languages.

Example 1

sPUs: *bukhat*, ' *zabukhat*, ' *probukhat*, ' *perebukhat* '

IL: (from Germ.) *buchen*

tPU: *gestire la contabilità*

The sPUs have the following literal meanings: the verb *bukhat* ' with accent on the first syllable (*búkhat*) means 'to produce a dull sound' and 'to hit and throw something with force and noise' (Ozhegov 2012: 64), that is *to bang* (at the door, for example), in Italian *sbattere*, or *to thump* and *rimbombare*. If the accent falls on the second syllable (*bukhát*'), then the meaning is *to get drunk* and *ubriacarsi*. Here, we deal with a semantic calque that entered the TL via German adding a new meaning to the already existing verb, carrying a phonetic assonance with the Russian verb *búkhat*. ' The German *buchen* 'register, for example, an invoice or a payment' (Collins Dictionary) gives to the Russian verb a new semantics. Moreover, the German borrowing adapts itself to the rules of TL by taking the prefixes typical of the Russian language (*za-*, *pro-*, *pere-*). The ironic aspect is here particularly evident: the Russian business partners create language puns by virtue of the new formation. However, the Italian counterparts can grasp the new business meaning, only through the intermediation of the German language (IL). In the process of translation from Russian to Italian the ironic connotation is lacking in the latter, due to the absence in the TL of a jargon expression

for accountability issues and of phonetic effects that create language puns. Consequently, we have opted for a more neutral translation that belongs to a more formal register. Nida and Taber affirm that though style is secondary to meaning, it is nevertheless important, above all in the case of ‘puns,’ where the meaning of the expression depends on the double meaning of the word or on the allusion (Nida, Taber 1982: 14). Due to their different registers and to the absence of a functional slang equivalent in the TL for the slang source PU, the Russian and Italian expressions are phraseological analogues.

The loan words from English enter the Russian language in different ways, for example changing their grammatical class.

Example 2

sPU: *grabli*

IL: (from En.) *to grab*

tPU: *grabbare*

The English source grammatical class is a verb, the Russian calque is a noun. Being a noun, the Russian form can be declined according to the case needed in the sentence, as reported in the dictionary ‘Ne kopiruetsya? Togda grablyami’ (Pogrebnyak 2007: 28). *Groblyami* is the instrumental case of the noun *grabli*. The change of the grammatical category makes the direct translation from Russian into Italian an even more difficult task. *Grabli* is translated into English with *rake* (Wordreference) and into Italian with *rastrello* (Kovalev 2007: 169). If the translator attempts to translate this directly and literally, he will have the following translation *‘Non si copia? Allora con i rastrelli’ that sounds awkward. The reliance on the IL to get across the slang business meaning is fundamental: the verb *to grab* means in the computer science and in economics ‘to capture the screen.’ In the attempt to find an appropriate functional equivalence to this context, we opted for the Italian neologism *grabbare* which is also a calque from English, more specifically an adaption to the Italian language due to the verb infinitive suffix *-are*. Therefore, the previous sentence can be translated into Italian ‘Non si copia? Allora grabbiamo.’ The PUs of the SL and TL are partial equivalents because of the use of a noun in Russian and a verb in Italian.

PUs can be polysemic and can belong to different jargons. The following example concerns the word *kasha* and its uses in Russian that differ from the English original form.

Example 3

sPU: *kasha*

IL: (from En.) *cash out*

tP: *incassare*

Firstly, the word *kasha* indicates *porridge* (Italian, *pappa*). Secondly, it is used in the colloquial register in a figurative way to indicate confusion (Ozhegov 2012: 267) (‘u neyo v golove kasha’ – ‘she is a mess’ – ‘ha un gran casino in testa’). Thirdly, the word has acquired a new meaning under the influence of English. The cultural adaptation into Italian requires a reference to the English language to avoid a wrong translation with *pappa* or *confusione*. The correct equivalent form in this specific context is the verb *incassare*. While in the SL *kasha* is a noun, equivalents in both IL and SL languages are verbs. The dictionary gives the following example: ‘chto za

kashu vy tut ustroili na stekol'nom zavode?' (Pogrebnyak 2007: 46) which can sound as *‘what kind of mess did you make at the glass factory?’ and *‘che casino avete fatto alla vetreria?’, but actually means ‘what did you cash out at the glass factory?’ and ‘cosa avete incassato alla vetreria?’. The PUs *kasha* and *incassare* can be considered as phraseological calques due to the noun and verb choice, but also due to their different connotations.

The following example has a double meaning: in the literal Russian meaning the term is a zoonym, while in the figurative one it indicates ‘losses in the stock exchange.’

Example 4

sPU: *los'*

IL: (from En.) *loss*

tPU: *perdita*

The first literal meaning is that of *moose*, *alce*, the second figurative meaning recalls the English stock exchange term of *loss*. The translation of the translation is carried out to facilitate the resulting product. Examples like ‘slovit' losya,’ ‘rezat' losej, zabivat' losej’ and ‘pasti losya’ can only be understood by Italian business partners thanks to the mediation of English. ‘Slovit' losya’ means ‘to suffer a loss,’ ‘soportare una perdita’ and not *‘acchiappare l'alce.’ ‘Rezat' losej, zabivat' losej’ means ‘to sell a stock at a loss,’ ‘vendere azioni in perdita,’ instead of *‘tagliare alci, macellare alci.’ Lastly, ‘pasti losya’ cannot be translated with *‘to graze the moose’ and *‘pascolare l'alce,’ but rather with ‘anticipation action’ and ‘azione di anticipazione.’ All these examples are phraseological analogues, as the register changes in the translation process. These expressions show in the SL a lower register level with respect to the TL.

The next example is the case of a sheer transliteration from English.

Example 5

sPU: *orekh*

IL: (from En.) *opex*

tPU: *opex*

The source English form is the abbreviation for *Operative Expenses*. This form enters the Russian language without any change, that is through ‘transliteration’; however, the phonetic alphabets of English and Russian are different. Therefore, a translator engaging himself to translate *orekh* from Russian into Italian, will face a problem linked with its primary meaning, that of *nut* (En.), *noce* (It.). The reference to the ITr reduces the distance between the SL and TL and simplifies the translator’s job.

4. Conclusion

The main goal of the current study was to determine how the IL facilitates the translation of business informal slang PUs from Russian into Italian. The analysed examples confirm that the reference to the IL avoids ambiguities, and it allows the translators to expand their own vocabulary to polysemantic expressions. The starting point was, indeed, that slang PUs acquire new meanings from English. We hope this first work will be of interest for translators in terms of the development of their creative

skills. As a matter of fact, translating slang PUs requires a combination of linguistic, cultural, and original abilities, as the slang PUs are, by their nature, products of linguo-creative thinking. By referring to the IL, translators should try to capture the intent and meaning of the SL to find appropriate equivalents in the TL.

One of the challenges of slang translation lies in the fact that many times the slang economic PU cannot be translated literally, sometimes neither directly. This issue brings forth the functional equivalence hypothesis. In our study, functional equivalence is related to the ITr: the translator understands the concept in the SL thanks to the IL and discovers how to express the same concept in the TL in order to convey the same meaning and intent as the original. Therefore, the translation strategies adopted are directly related to the respective degree of assimilation of the PU in the TL.

The study has identified the type of equivalence of the source and target PUs. We have noticed how it is subject to change by means of the IL support. Indeed, most of the PUs were phraseological analogues or partial equivalents, but after an explanatory translation they became full equivalents due to the identity of meaning and the denotative reference. Therefore, the mediated translation shortens the gap between the phraseological analogues or between the partial equivalents, bringing the SL and TL closer.

However, it is important to note that using an IL can also have some disadvantages, such as the loss of stylistic traits in the target text that leads to a less precise and natural translation.

Future studies should consider a wider number of business slang PUs, in consideration of the fact that company slang always changes together with new people in the company, who give rise to new slang formations.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

CHALLENGES OF INTERMEDIARY TRANSLATION: ANALYZING INACCURACIES IN THE ARMENIAN TRANSLATION OF NANSEN'S WORK 'ARMENIA AND THE NEAR EAST'

ANOUSH AYUNTS*

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4653-7841>

YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY

HASMIK MKHITARYAN**

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1198-3750>

YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract: Intermediary translation is a mode of translation that involves the usage of an intermediate language. In this process, the original source language is translated into an intermediate language, which is then translated into the final target language. This approach is used when the translator is not proficient in both the source and target languages, but is proficient in the intermediate one. In this case, an intermediate language can be used as a “bridge” to facilitate the translation process. However, intermediary translation also has its drawbacks. One major issue is that it can lead to inaccuracies in the final translation. When using an intermediate language, there is a risk of losing some of the semantic nuances and subtleties of the original text. This can result in a translation not entirely faithful to the original meaning. The case under study are the translations of F. Nansen’s work *Armenia and the Near East*. Through a comparative analysis of the English, German and Armenian versions some significant inaccuracies were revealed.

Keywords: intermediary translation; source language; intermediate language; target language

1. Introduction

Translation may be considered a metaphorical “bridge” that connects diverse cultures and languages. In the realm of translation studies, one fascinating area of exploration is intermediary translation. This specialized field involves multiple phases in the translation process, where an intermediary language is used as a stepping stone between the source and target languages. Intermediary translation, often referred to also as ‘relay’ or ‘pivotal translation,’ occurs when a source text is translated into an

* anayunts@gmail.com

** hasmik.mkhitaryan87@gmail.com



intermediary language before being translated into the final target language. This modality is employed for various reasons, including the absence of a qualified translator for a direct translation between source and target languages, or when multiple languages are involved in a translation process.

According to Toury, there should be certain preliminary norms which determine the accuracy of a translation. In this respect, “the threshold of tolerance for translating from languages other than the ultimate source language,” i.e. the levels of acceptability and precision of mediated translation, is taken into account as well. In the present article, this is the case with the translation made from English into Armenian through German (Toury 1978, 2000: 202).

There are many controversies about intermediary translation, which has often been subjected to a lot of criticism, as in many cases it is considered a coarse imitation of an original source text that lacks a number of details. In fact, this may further lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations and, eventually, to the distortion of the general message. However, intermediate translation is a widespread phenomenon in translation practice, especially in cases when there is no availability of the original text, or when the translator is unaware of the original language, but is proficient in the intermediate one. On the other hand, it is easy to come across such cases when a text translated from an intermediate language results in “impending catastrophes,” e.g. inaccuracies in the message and divergences from the original text in terms of semantic, syntactic, as well as stylistic peculiarities, since the translation was carried out from an intermediary source.

In the present paper F. Nansen’s *Armenia and the Near East* (1928)¹, which was written in English, is the original text, while the German translation acts as the intermediate language between English and the Armenian language, which is the target one². The study aims at evaluating the fidelity of the final translation to the English source text, highlighting some of the most problematic deviations which have affected the content of the original work semantically, syntactically and stylistically, bearing in mind that it is the result of an intermediary process of translation.

¹ *Armenia and the Near East* is a significant work by the renowned Norwegian explorer, scientist, and diplomat Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930). The book was published in 1928 and is a first-hand account of Nansen’s experiences in the aftermath of World War I, especially in the context of the Armenian Genocide and its impact on the Near East. Nansen was appointed as High Commissioner for Refugees for the League of Nations, and his work provides a detailed account of his efforts to provide relief and support to refugees in the Near East, with a particular focus on the Armenian population. In *Armenia and the Near East* Nansen not only documents the dire conditions faced by the refugees, but also discusses the political and diplomatic challenges of the time. This book is not only a historical account, but also a testament to Nansen’s dedication to humanitarian causes and his efforts to alleviate the suffering of those affected by one of the most devastating events of the 20th century. It remains an important source for understanding the history of the Armenian Genocide and the broader humanitarian response in the Near East during that period.

² The translations of important works like Nansen’s book help to disseminate historical knowledge and contribute to a broader understanding of significant events and humanitarian efforts in different parts of the world. They also make such works accessible to individuals who may not be proficient in the original language of the original text.

In this study the original source (English), the intermediary source (German) and the final target (Armenian) texts are studied applying the method of comparative analysis. This approach aims to unveil the linguistic, cultural, and stylistic deviations between the original source and the final target. It enables us to explore how the meaning of the source text is interpreted and conveyed in the respective target language through intermediate languages. This methodology is functional to a better understanding of the nuances of translation, and it may contribute significantly to the improvement and progress of translation theory and practice.

2. Literature Review

It goes without saying that translation has immensely guaranteed the communication and spreading of knowledge and information for centuries. The history of translation has evolved with the blooming and development of humanity and civilization. Thus, the inevitable socialization needs of peoples speaking in different languages gave rise to the necessity of translation. Initially it occurred in the form of oral translation, and it later developed into the written one. Thus, the earliest samples of written translations were mainly treaties that were signed by communities, as well as their written records. Gradually, the process of socialization between different communities and cultures increased, and as a result the translation process began to develop as a science. Translation science does not necessarily presuppose a mechanical transfer of the original text into a given language. It is actually a creative process, demanding linguistic skills and a deep cultural background. As Fischbach states,

“Translation was the key to scientific progress as it unlocked for each successive inventor and discoverer the mind of predecessors who expressed their innovative thoughts in another language.” (Fischbach 1998: 194)

Owing to the real endeavours and hard work of such distinguished linguists, scholars, interpreters and translators, today there is much progress in a constantly developing world where academic achievements are now available in a great number of languages. As Jacobson puts it, “Languages differ essentially in what they must convey and not in what they may convey” (Jacobson 2015: 236). Consequently, it may be concluded that the richer the context of the message is, the smaller the loss of the information can be. As far as translatability is concerned, there are different opinions mainly concerning the possible success and fulfilments or failures of translating certain texts from one language into another. Some linguists think that the differences between languages are a marginal issue, because they are only “practical,” concrete barriers for translation, while the main problems connected to translatability may be caused by their typical nature and linguo-cultural background. Still people all over the world are endowed with a unique ability of reasoning. As it is stated in Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies,

“Different languages may package meaning differently, but ultimately all languages are able to convey all possible meanings... In the universalist perspective, language is

typically seen as comprising two layers, a surface and a deep structure. Ideas and meaning are generated at the deeper layer and can be represented by a variety of surface linguistic structures. This view was held in the medieval period by Roger Bacon and dominated Early Modern and Enlightenment thinking; it is echoed in Noam Chomsky's transformational grammar of the 1960s. The idea of language as two-layered promote a dissociation between form and meaning, or, in Saussurean terms, signifier and signified. Form is material and perceptible, and varies from language to language, while meaning is invisible and can be extrapolated from the form that carries it." (Baker&Saldanha 2009: 300-301)

As we already said, translation from an intermediate language is the process of translating not directly from an original source language, but from an already translated text in the target language into another language. In other words, the translation is made with the help of an intermediate language. As a rule, this process presupposes at least three languages. In some cases two intermediate languages, or even more, may be implied, depending on how many languages are employed in the translation process³. So the main idea underlying mediated translation is the intermediary language that serves as a multi-faceted "link" between two different languages, namely the original source language and the final target one. The actual intermediate translation is the final outcome and represents the "reconstruction" of a text via another language in case of the shortage of the original text, or in case of the translator's higher competence in the intermediate language rather than the original. As the target reader is not supposed to know the language of the original work, the translator may have difficulties transferring the *intention* of the original author and work, although he himself may express the intent in his own estimation. And if a translation is confined to certain limits in the original context, the target reader has the opportunity of interpretation and may have a different perception of the source material. As Liddicoat states in his survey, "Mediation is fundamentally an interpretive act" (Liddicoat 2015: 354). To be more precise, it is worth mentioning that interpretation is the basis of any mediation. As Liddicoat adds,

"The translator as mediator stands between the reader and writer and rewrites the text for an audience that is not the audience imagined by the writer and does not share the language, knowledge, assumptions, etc. that the writer has assumed of the imagined audience for the text." (Liddicoat 2015: 356)

The main problem here may be caused by the number of languages involved; depending on the number of languages used in conducting a translation a great number of deviations might occur in the translated product, since translation is not the direct outcome of the original text, but of an already translated text that serves as an intermediate source for the translator, which may ultimately lead to manifold distortions and ambiguities.

³ As already said, the material of the present case-study was originally written and published in English. Later Nansen translated the book into Norwegian himself, and it was also translated into German by Theodor Geiger in 1928 with the title *Betrogenes Volk*. In 2009 this German version served as an intermediate source for Evelina Makaryan, who translated it into Armenian.

3. Methodological Background

Comparative studies of the original and target languages are often used in the field of translation studies, because they involve a systematic analysis and evaluation of the two languages. This type of analysis helps assess the choices made by translators and their impact on final translations. The comparative study method can also be applied to intermediary translations, typically to the ones with an intermediary language between the source and target languages. Comparative study plays a pivotal role in understanding the intricacies of intermediary translation and its significance in facilitating communication across linguistic boundaries. The method of comparative analysis in intermediary translation studies is based on a systematic examination of the source, intermediary and target languages.

Numerous scholars in the field of translation studies have contributed articles on the method of comparative analysis⁴. When exploring this methodology, the consultation of the works of these scholars can provide a solid foundation for understanding the theoretical frameworks and practical applications of the approach in translation. The analysis in the present essay follows Toury's (1995) methodology for descriptive translation studies (DTS), by comparing the original source and the final target texts for shifts, by discussing the acceptability of the final text, and by making generalizations about the causes that may have generated the deviations. The method of comparative analysis of source, intermediate and target languages in this essay is a research paradigm that attempts to identify the deviations between the source and target languages resulting from the intermediary one.

4. The Comparative Analysis of the Original Source, the Intermediary and the Target Texts

"Armenia and the Near East" is a significant work authored by Fridtjof Nansen, a renowned Norwegian explorer, scientist, and humanitarian. The book, published in 1928, falls into the genres of travel literature, historical commentary, and political analysis. Nansen wrote the book in English, a language he was proficient in, although not necessarily bilingual. His choice of English may have been influenced by its status as an international language, making the work accessible to a broader audience beyond his native Norwegian readership. Additionally, English was widely used in diplomatic and scholarly circles at the time, particularly in discussions concerning geopolitical issues in the Near East. His writing style is likely clear, authoritative, and informed by his extensive research and first-hand experiences in the region. Translations of the work into languages such as German and Armenian would have facilitated access for

⁴ Among some prominent authors whose works delve into this subject are L. Venuti (2000), an influential figure in translation studies, who has explored the politics of translation and often employs comparative methods in his studies. Another relevant theorist in translation studies is S. Bassnett (2002), who has written about the challenges and nuances of comparative analysis in translation. Also A. Chesterman's (1997) works often involve the comparative examination of translations and the development of translation norms.

readers in those respective cultural contexts, providing insights into Nansen's perspectives on the region's history, politics, and humanitarian challenges. However, the accuracy and nuances of these translations may have been subject to scrutiny, as evidenced by the comparative analysis mentioned earlier, revealing significant inaccuracies in some versions. Overall, "Armenia and the Near East" remains a valuable primary source for understanding the historical and geopolitical dynamics of the region during the early 20th century.

The analysis of the examples resulting from the comparative study provides invaluable insights into the nuances of intermediary translation and into their impact on the final metatext. Through the meticulous examination of the original, the intermediary and the final translated texts the following deviations were discerned:

a) As a first example, the comparative analysis of the three languages revealed the following notable difference. The word 'Thursday' in the original source is translated into German as 'Dienstag' (Tuesday). Consequently, in the final translation, that underwent an intermediary language transmission, it is translated as 'երեքշաբթի' (Tuesday), which affects the clarity and coherence of the original source (see Figure 1).

"It had been arranged that on Thursday morning (June 16th) we were to drive out and see the work that was being done on the new Kura power-station, about fifteen kilometers north of Tiflis." (Nansen 1928: 73)

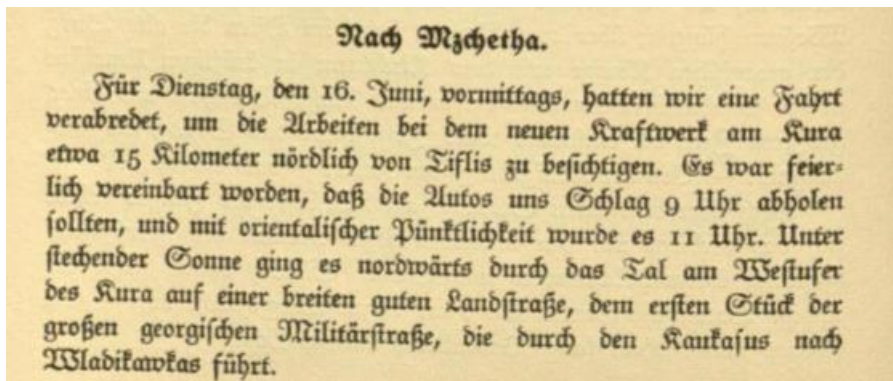


Figure 1.

«Նախատեսված էր երեքշաբթի (հունիսի 16-ին) կեսօրից առաջ այցելել Կուրի ափին կառուցվող էլեկտրակայան, որ գտնվում էր Թիֆլիսից մոտ 15 կմ հյուսիս»: (Nansen 2009: 73)

b) The second example presents remarkable and multifaceted findings. In the original source the author uses the word 'Mongols,' which is translated into German as 'Mohammedaner' (Muslims). Consequently, in the target language stemming from the use of an intermediary language the word 'Mohammedaner' is translated as 'մահմեդականներ' (Muslims), leading to a subtle shift in linguistic and cultural elements from the original source (see Figure 2). This results in a translation which distorts the source language's idiosyncrasy. Moreover, in the same sentence we can see

another discrepancy between the three languages. In the original source the author mentions King George VI. The comparative study reveals a complete adherence between the source and first target (German) languages. However, in the Armenian language through the filter of the mediated language it is translated as ‘Գեորգ Չորրորդ թագավոր’ (King George IV), which is an obvious deviation from the original source. We dare to assume that this deviation must have occurred as a result of misinterpretation of the Roman numeric symbols VI and IV (see Figure 2).

“The church has been destroyed over and over again by ruthless enemies, and its fortunes reflect the history of Georgia. In 1318 it was wrecked by an earthquake. King George VI rebuilt it, but it soon fell a prey to the fierce Mongols” (Nansen 1928: 81).

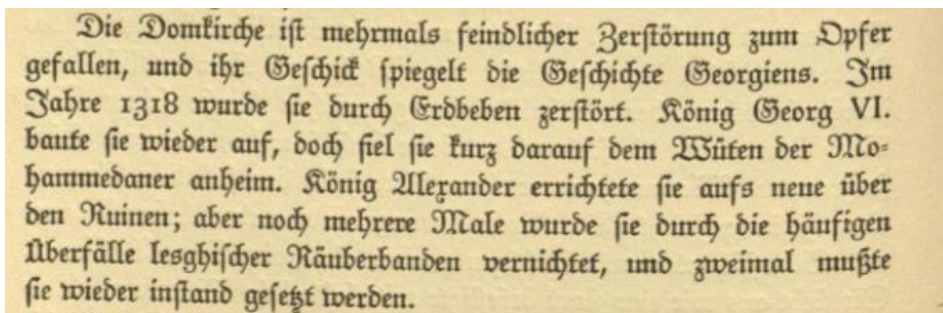


Figure 2.

«Գեորգ Չորրորդ թագավորը կրկին կառուցում է եկեղեցին, սակայն շատ չանցած այն բաժին է դառնում մահախնայանների վայրագություններին»:
(Nansen 2009: 80)

c) In the third example, the comparative study of the original source and the final text revealed evident semantic and syntactic deviations. The expression ‘*the Roman victory over Antiochus the Great*’ is translated into Armenian as ‘*կործանում են հռոմեացիները Անտիոք Մեծի գլխավորությամբ*,’ which literally translates as ‘*the Roman victory under the leadership of Antiochus the Great.*’ The meaning of the original source is therefore totally distorted, particularly if we take it into consideration that this is a violation of a historical fact. It should be observed, however, that in this case the deviation is not stemming from the intermediary language, which fully corresponds to the original source. The German phrase ‘*Sieges der Römer über Antiochus den Großen*’ translates into English as ‘*Victories of the Romans over Antiochus the Great.*’

As far as the syntactic deviation is concerned, it should be mentioned that the latter comes directly from the intermediary version. The original sentence was split into two phrases in the intermediary language, thus resulting into the same deviation in the target language. Acting as a linguistic bridge, the intermediary translation introduces a different syntactical phrasing, which is therefore reflected in the final language (see Figure 3). Leaving aside the peculiarities of the German language, we may assume that

the translation shapes the perception and the effectiveness of communication, by fulfilling the communicative purpose of the target language:

“When the power of the latter was crushed by the Roman victory over Antiochus the Great in 189 b.c., the two satraps seized their independence, Zariadres in Little Armenia on the Upper Euphrates, and Artashes (Artaxias) in Great Armenia and the Ararat country around the Araxes.” (Nansen 1928: 247)

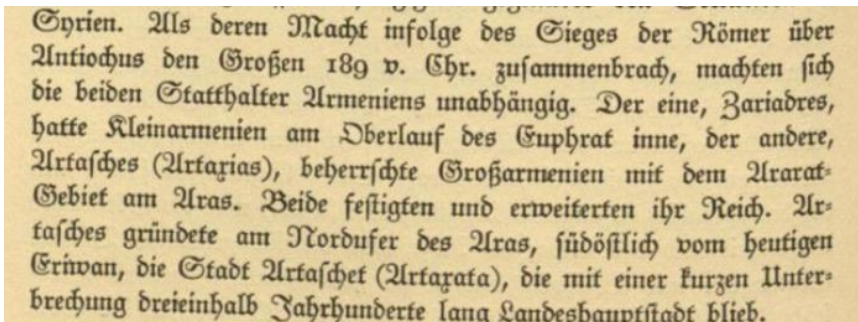


Figure 3.

«Երբ վերջիններիս պետությունը Ք. ծ. ա. 189 թ. կործանում են հռոմեացիները՝ Անտիոք Մեծի գլխավորությամբ, Հայաստանում իշխող երկու փոխարքաներն իրենց հռչակում են անկախ: Նրանցից մեկը Ջարեհն էր, որի իշխանությունը տարածվում էր Եփրատի վերին հոսանքի շրջանում ընկած Փոքր Հայաստանի վրա, մյուսը՝ Արտաշեսը (Արտաքսիաս), որ իշխում էր Մեծ Հայաստանում՝ Արազի հովտով, Արարատ լեռան շրջակայքով»: (Nansen 2009: 224)

These examples serve as focal points that illustrate the discrepancies encountered by the translator during the intermediary language phase, and how these discrepancies reverberated through the final text. Such a granular analysis not only allows for a better understanding of the role of the intermediary language, but also sheds light on the broader implications for translation practice and theory, enhancing our comprehension of the complex dynamics at play in multilingual and multicultural translation processes.

In the following examples, however, the disparities between the source and final texts do not originate from the intermediary language. For instance:

d) In the fourth example, the comparative analysis of the original source and the final text uncovered a clear semantic divergence. The expression ‘*where the sun has access*’ is translated into Armenian as ‘*ուր մայր է մտնում արևը*,’ which literally translates as ‘*where the sun sets*.’ The explanation that the abundance of foliage is due to the setting sun is highly illogical and disrupts the coherence of the text. As a result, the original meaning is completely changed. It’s worth noting, however, that in this instance, the discrepancy doesn’t originate from the intermediate language, which accurately mirrors the original source. In the intermediary text, the German phrase ‘*die Sonne Zugang hat*,’ which translates as ‘*the sun has access*,’ faithfully corresponds to the source equivalent (see Figure 4).

“The trunks are festooned with vines, ivy, and honeysuckle, and the ground is thickly covered with rhododendrons, azaleas, various kinds of ilex, nuts, camellias, tall ferns and much beside, while in the glades, where the sun has access, there are the most glorious, brilliantly coloured flowers.” (Nansen 1928: 58)

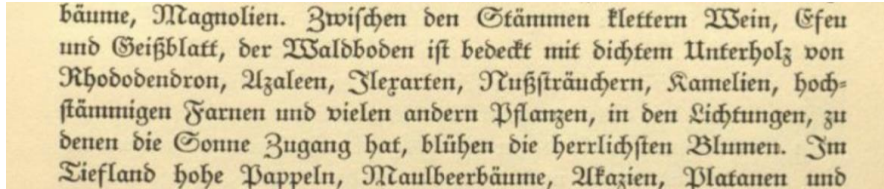


Figure 4.

«Անտառի հողաշերտերը նույնպես ծածկված են խիտ բուսականությամբ՝ մրտավարդի, լեռնավարդի, փշարմավի, ընկուզենու, կամելիայի, բարձրաբուն ձարխտոսի և շատ այլ բույսերի թփերով, իսկ բացասներում, ուր մայր է մտնում արևը, աճում են հիասքանչ ծաղիկներ»։ (Nansen 2009: 60)

e) In the fifth example, the comparative analysis between the original source and the final text revealed a significant semantic and grammatical disparity. The conjunction ‘Moreover’ is translated into Armenian as ‘Այդ պատճառով,’ which literally translates as ‘therefore / as a result.’ Due to mistranslation, the distinctive attributes of the rivers in the Caucasus are interpreted as a consequence rather than an addition. Consequently, the original meaning is entirely distorted. It’s noteworthy, however, that in this case, the disparity does not stem from the intermediary language, which faithfully reflects the original source. In the German language, the conjunction ‘Dazu’ signifies ‘in addition’ or ‘moreover’ (see Figure 5).

“As a rule, the rivers in the Caucasus do not flow through lakes where the mud can settle, thus clearing the water. Moreover, these rivers, at least in their upper reaches, usually fall sharply and dash headlong through narrow canyons and gorges, carrying with them, if the rocky bottom is loose, large quantities of mud and gravel.” (Nansen 1928: 74)

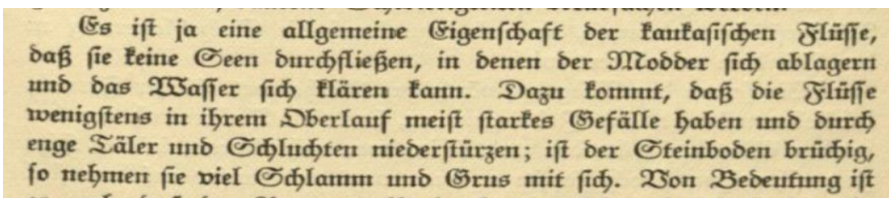


Figure 5.

«Կովկասի գետերը իրենց ճանապարհին չեն անցնում լճերով, ուր թողնելով նստվածքը, կմաքրեին ջրերը: Այդ պատճառով գետերը միայն վերին հոսանքներում ունեն որոշ թեթույթուն և ցած են հոսում նեղ հովիտներով ու կիրճերով»։ (Nansen 2009: 74)

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of intermediary translations within the context of comparative analysis unveils fascinating layers in the intricate world of translation. When applying the comparative study method to mediated translation, it is crucial to consider the unique challenges and dynamics involved in this particular type of process. Acting as a linguistic and cultural bridge between the source language and a final target language, this practice presents both advantages and challenges in the realm of translation studies. On the positive side it can facilitate communication across diverse linguistic landscapes, making the translation of works accessible to individuals who may not be proficient in the original language of the text. In this way, it may help to disseminate knowledge and information influencing communicative efficacy.

However, the intermediary phase introduces potential semantic drifts, where subtle nuances may be lost or altered, impacting the fidelity of the final product. The analysis of some of the selected examples showed vivid deviations caused by the influence of mediated translation. This is especially important when dealing with documentary and historical texts, where every bit of information should be true to facts. When reading one and the same work in two different languages we can come across some instances of translating a text via an intermediate language which resulted in adverse effects, for the simple reason that the final outcome was achieved through another translation rather than the original text itself. It goes without saying that “natural” translation is not possible without hard work on reproducing equivalence and by relying on the translator’s expertise and individual style. Meaning shifts and misinterpretations are definitely inevitable because we become aware of certain facts and concepts in the natural text through a different language, which in its turn may imply or incur in some deviations from the original intent.

As we navigate the terrain of intermediary translation, a nuanced awareness of both its benefits and drawbacks is crucial for practitioners and researchers seeking to unravel the intricacies of translation in diverse and dynamic linguistic environments. Perceiving the nuances of intermediary translations not only enriches our grasp of translation processes, but it also contributes to a deeper comprehension of the complex intercultural dynamics inherent in the art of translation. Understanding how intermediary drafts impact the final product can be valuable for improving translation quality and efficiency.

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Conflict of Interests

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Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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CATEGORIES OF SHIFTS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE ENGLISH HOLY BIBLE (NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION) INTO DHOLUO BIBLE: MUMA MALER MAR NYASAYE (1976)

COLLETA AKOTH OWINO**

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-7987-8179>

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

BENARD MUDOGO**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4290-8706>

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DAVID BARASA***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7144-7772>

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ROSE AUMA****

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4982-7335>

MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Abstract: This paper describes the categories of shifts in the translation of the English Holy Bible; *New International Version* (NIV) into Dholuo Bible *Muma Maler mar Nyasaye* (1976). The aim is to evaluate the relevance of the translator's style in rendering a religious text into the target language and the overall implication on the translation theory and practice. The data is collected through document analysis and Focus Group Discussions. We analyzed forty rank shifted segments purposively from six books from the source and target text based on the Relevance Theory by Sperber & Wilson (1986). The analysis is limited to rank-shifting at the level of clauses utilized in the source language which is translated into the target language. The data is analyzed using content analysis and descriptive method. The following categories of shifts are identified; structure shifts, unit shifts, class shifts and intra-system shifts. This study offers insight to bible translators to understand that since shifts are unavoidable in translation, they should aim to produce a target text that is as accurate and precise as possible to guard against loss of meaning. To do this, translators must understand the original source text and

* colletaakoth@gmail.com

** dmudogo@mmust.ac.ke

*** davidbarasa@mmust.ac.ke

**** rauma@mmust.ac.ke



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transfer it faithfully and accurately. Moreover, bible translators must understand the context of both the source text and the target text since context plays a great role in rendering translation.

Keywords: English Holy Bible; Dholuo; categories of shifts; religious texts

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to describe the categories of shifts in the translation of the English Holy Bible; *New International Version* (NIV) into Dholuo Bible *Muma Maler mar Nyasaye*. The investigation focuses on the shifts in clauses that are identified in the source text and the target text. Reiss (1989) places emphasis on equivalence at the communicative level stating that the transmission of the predominant function of the source text is the determining factor by which the target text is judged. In the same vein, available evidence reveal that a relevant translation should aim at “describing the many shifts and transformations that translations produce” (Pym 2010: 120). Thus, we set to evaluate the categories of shifts that emerges in the data when translating the English Holy Bible (NIV) into the Dholuo version (*Muma mar Nyasae*). This is because, translations of religious texts have played a significant role in the historical dissemination of the divine message, (Gazar & Tajari 2020). It must therefore be in line with sound belief and be as exact and precise as possible, as it is a potent tool for missionary work. The original Source Text (ST) must be understood by translators in order to faithfully, accurately, and completely translate it into the Target Text (TT) without changing or deleting any of the original information. However, when translating religious materials from English to Dholuo, translators may frequently run into problems. This is because, these two languages belong to very different language families; the former an Indo-European, and the later a Nilo-Saharan language. In this paper, we investigate whether the translator of the RL maintains the relevance of the ST message in the rank shifted clauses.

2. Dholuo Language

Dholuo is a Nilotic language spoken by the Luo people in the Nyanza region of Kenya. The Southern Sudan is thought to be the cradle land of the Nilotic group of linguistic communities, which includes the Luo Languages like Turkana, Samburu, Kipsigis, and Nandi spoken in Kenya; Dholuo and Maasai spoken in Tanzania and Kenya; Padhola and Acholi spoken in Uganda; and Dinka Pari and Nuer spoken in Sudan are all part of the Nilo-Saharan language group (Odoyo 2013; Adhiambo 1990; Okombo 1997). The Luo community in Kenya is bordered by Kuria and Abagusi on the south, Nandi and Kipsigis on the east, and the Luhya group on the north shore of Lake Victoria. Although the Luo people are geographically dispersed throughout several parts of Nyanza, they are organized into numerous clans, including Joka Jok, Joka Owiny, Joka Omollo, and Luo Abasuba.

For starters, Nida (1964) notes that one of the most important issues in religious translation is locating the precise or appropriate lexical term with the same cultural

element. Translators are compelled to make adjustments in the process of translating in an attempt to attain equivalency, which may result in meaning gain or loss. This may be due to the linguistic differences between the ST and the TT. Furthermore, the cultural disparities between the speakers of the two languages could cause meaning to be distorted during the translation process. In order to determine if the shifts cause meaning gain or loss, we outline the categories of shift that arise during the translation process of the English Holy Bible NIV into Dholuo Bible *Muma Maler mar Nyasaye* (1976).

3. Shift in Translation

A translation shift occurs when a textual equivalency is not formally parallel to its source (Machali 2012). As a result of the translator's efforts to determine translation equivalence between two distinct language systems, shifts ought to be positively reinterpreted. Shifts are all the necessary steps that a translator must take and intentionally employ in order to translate a text from one language to another. According to Newmark (1981), changes involving both specific and generic meaning are among the most frequent meaning shifts observed during the transfer process. These changes could occur in either way. A shift could be the outcome of the different systems of two languages. There may be a vocabulary or structural difference. Meaning changes as a result of language changes. Thus, it may be concluded that there are two types of meaning shifts that frequently result in inaccurate translation.

Translation shifts can originate from two main sources; shifts that are text-centered in the source language and those text-centered in the destination language (Machali 2012). In addition, the text-centered shifts cause three types of changes, these are; changes in grammar, changes in coherence, and changes in the text. The fundamental issue pertaining to establishing efficacy, pragmatic appropriateness, and referential explicitness is caused by the target language's text-centered shift. Machali (ibid) further categorizes the translation shifts into two types: required shifts and voluntary shifts. One type of shift that happens when there is no formal correspondence in the translation is called an obligatory shift (Newmark 1981). It's the kind of shift where grammar controls when it occurs. The optional shift comes next. It's the kind of change that results from a translator's judgment. This shift is said to as optional because there were more equivalent clauses that the translator might have selected based on the reader's orientation within the target language text. Furthermore, every language has a unique framework. During the translation process, the rules of one language do not always translate to their equivalent in another (Sipayung 2018; Itieba et al. 2023a). Every language uses different linguistic methods to express ideas. The existence of disparate rules and structures among languages causes the translation shift.

Therefore, a translator may enhance clarify by the use of their linguistic skills, leading to a gain in meaning. According to Machali (2012), a translator's wisdom leads to discretionary alterations in translation, and the translator may have selected a more equivalent sentence. Conversely, changes in translation can sometimes cause the meaning of the original language to be lost or distorted. According to Sipayung (2018),

changes in translation can have an impact on the degree of translation accuracy. Because Dholuo and English are from distinct language families, there will probably be a translation shift that could lead to either meaning gain or meaning loss.

4. Methodology

The primary data from this study came from key informant interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) while the secondary data was gathered through document analysis, library research and internet search. We collected 120 rank shifted clauses using Machali's (2012) classification of translation shifts. Thereafter, systematic random sampling was used to select 40 clauses for analysis by picking every third clause. The data collection tools used generated qualitative data from 30 native speakers of Dholuo who were sampled through snowballing method. These research tools were considered necessary for gathering in-depth and relevant data. Moreover, these instruments helped ensure that the data obtained was not subjective. Data was analyzed using content analysis. Presentation of data was done systematically based on the different categories of shifts that were identified. This was followed by a descriptive narration.

5. Findings and Discussion

The aim of this paper was to describe the categories of shift that emerge in the data when translating from the ST into the TT. From the collected data, the following four categories of shifts were established: unit shifts, class shifts, intra-system shifts and structure shifts.

Unit shifts

Unit shifts are rank alterations in which the translation equivalent of a unit in the ST is a unit in the TT of a different rank. According to Machali (2012) unit shifts are deviations from formal correspondence in any TT grammatical category that is considered to hold the same place within the TT system. The following extracts on unit shifts were identified for analysis.

Extract 1: Proverbs. 6:24

ST: *Keeping you from your neighbour's wife*, from the smooth talk of a wayward woman; (p. 640)

This is a clause that translates into a sentence that expresses a complete thought.

TT: *Ginyalo miyo ibed maber gi mon maricho* kendo itangi gi weche mamit mag mond jomoko nono. (p. 563)

The clause *keeping you from your neighbour's wife* does not express a complete thought, however, when translated into the target text it becomes *Ginyalo miyo ibed maber gi mon maricho* which expresses a complete thought. The source text extract does not express a complete thought because it does not have the subject and therefore begins with the verb. One would therefore ask what it is that keeps one from the neighbour's wife. The target text extract however begins with the pronoun **Gi** which means **they**. This pronoun acts as the subject therefore making it express a complete thought. This is therefore an upward unit shift. The translator's style helps the TT audience in comprehending the ST message with additional explication features in the rendered version. Another example of unit shift is analyzed in extract 2 below;

Extract 2: Psalm 41:10

ST: . . **b u t** **may you have mercy on me, LORD**; raise me up, that I may repay them. (p. 567)

TT: *A Ruoth Nyasaye, kecha, kendo changa mondo achulnigi kuor.* (p. 482)

In this extract, there is an upward unit shift where a clause translates into a sentence which is higher above in the rank scale than the clause. The source text extract does not express a complete thought because it begins with the conjunction **but**. Moreover, the subject **LORD** comes last. However, the target extract expresses a complete thought because it begins with the subject *A Ruoth Nyasaye* and not a conjunction. There is therefore an upward unit where a clause translates into a sentence which is higher above in the rank scale than the sentence. This style requires the translator to "consider the way in which individual sentences form part of the total structure" (Bassnett 2002: 115) and hence achieve the relevance of the TT product. However, it was revealed that the downward shift led to meaning loss in the TT as analyzed in extract 3 below;

Extract 3: Songs of songs 2:5

ST: **Strengthen me with raisins.** Refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love. (p. 681)

TT: *Hera nega, omiyo duog chunya gi gik mamit.* (p. 606)

In this extract, the sentence, *strengthen me with raisins* translates into a clause *omiyo duog chunya gi gik mamit* in the target text. There is therefore a downward unit shift since a sentence that is higher in a rank-scale translates into a clause which is lower than the sentence in the target text. The source text extract expresses a complete thought. The source text extract has an assumed subject that that explains why its meaning is complete. However, the target text extract does not express a complete thought because it begins with the conjunction *omiyo* which simply means **therefore**. The failure by the translator to explain the sentence led to meaning loss. As observed by Mudogo (2017) the individual translator's selection of lexical items from a host of alternative possibilities plays a significant role in attaining the relevance of the TT product. Given this, improper selections can result in the distortion of the ST message. Data from the Focus Group Discussions showed that the respondents failed to get the meaning from the translated version.

Intra-System Shifts

A break from formal correspondence is known as an intra-system shift, where a system in the source language has a distinct, non-corresponding system in the target language as its translation equivalent (Itieba, et al, 2023b). This change takes place on an internal system level. When there is a formal equivalent in both languages for a translation, there is an intra-system shift. Therefore, the system in every language consists of one or two terms, which can either be plural or single and have formal correspondence, but the formally equivalent terms in the system have different functions in different contexts. From the analyzed data we identified the following extracts on intra system shifts:

Extract 4: Songs of songs 7:8

ST: I said, I will climb the palm tree, I will take hold of it's **fruit**. (p. 684)

TT: *Emomiyo abiro idho yadhno mondo apon **olembene***. (p. 610)

In the above extract, the singular noun **fruit** translates into *olembene* which is the plural of fruit. This type of shift did not lead to significant deviation of the TT message hence the extract was easily comprehended by the respondents. A similar trend is inferred from extracts 5, 6 and 7 as analyzed below;

Extract 5: Ecclesiastes 2:22

ST: What do **people** get for all the toil and anxious striving with which *they* labour under the sun? (p. 671)

TT: *Ere ohala ma **ngato** yudo kuom tich matek duto ma **obarorego** ndasi e pinyka?* (p. 599)

In this extract, the plural item **people** and the pronoun **they** translate into their singular forms *ngato* and *obarorego* in the target text.

Extract 6: Psalms 91:14

ST: ... I will protect **him** for he acknowledges my name. (p. 600)

TT: ... *Kendo nakony **jogo** mang'eya*. (p. 518)

In this extract, the singular pronoun **him** in the source text translates into the plural form *jogo* in the target text.

Extract 7: Psalms 116:15

ST: Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of **his faithful servants**. (p, 616)

TT: *Mano kaka lit ni Ruoth Nyasaye ka **ng'ate moro** otho*. (p. 536)

In the source text, the plural noun **his faithful servants** translate into the singular form *ng'ate moro* in the target text.

The data revealed that plural linguistic items in the source text translated into singular linguistics items in the target language and singular linguistics items in the source language also translated into plural linguistics items in the target language. Although the plural items translate into singular items and vice versa as shown in the extracts above, the message of the source text which is key in translation work is communicated

in the target language message. Machali (2012; Itieba et al. 2023a) asserts that meaning is the main component in translation work. In their analysis of the intra-system shifts and the quality of translation in ‘the Maze Runner Novel,’ Kur'Anna, & Haryanti (2017) observe that though there are many intra-system shifts that occurred in the translation of the novel, the text belonged to good translation because the translation was dominated by acceptable level of accurate and readable data. Translation is considered to be relevant and applicable when it meets three criteria; accuracy, acceptability and readability (Itieba et al. 2023b). Accuracy means that meaning of the source text is transferred to the target text correctly and this involves choosing the correct words in order to reveal the same idea in the target language. Based on the above arguments, one would conclude that although intra-system shifts occur, the idea of the source text is transferred to the target text. One would therefore argue that the translators were mainly concerned with ensuring that the message of the source text is communicated in the target text without necessarily translating the singular and plural linguistic items as they are in the source text.

Class shifts

Class shift is a shift that occurs when the translation equivalent of a source language item is a member of a different class from the original item. It means that source language has a different class with target language. It can occur from a noun to an adjective, a verb in to adjective, and adjective into a verb. The study identified class shifts as indicated in extracts 8, 9 and 10 as analyzed below;

Extract 8: Psalms 15:2

ST: ... who **speaks** the truth from their heart. (p. 549)

TT: *Bende ma **wechene** gin adier kendo ma onge miganga.* (p. 463)

In this extract, the verb *speaks* in the source text translates into a noun *wechene* in the target text.

Although the source text verb translates into a noun in the target text, no meaning loss has been realized. This is because the message of the source text is reflected in the target text.

Extract 9: Psalms 20:7

ST: Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the **name** of the LORD our God. (p. 553)

TT: *Ji moko ogeno kuom gechegi mag lweny. to moko kuom faresegi. Wan to wageno kuom **teko** mar Ruoth Nysasye!* (p. 467)

In this extract, the noun the **name** in the source text translates into an adjective *teko* in the target text. This brings about loss of meaning. This is because whereas the source text noun talks of God’s name, the target text adjective talks of *teko* which means God’s power. This brings about loss of meaning since there is a difference between God’s name and power. In this extract therefore, the shift in class has resulted into meaning loss.

Extract 10: Psalm 47:3**ST:** He subdues nations under **us**. (p. 571)**TT:** *Kendo omiyo ogendni bedo e bwo lochwa*. (p. 486)

Here, the pronoun *us* in the source text translates into an adjective *lochwa* in the target text. The shift in class from the pronoun in the source text into an adjective in the target text in this extract results into meaning gain. This is because if the translator retained the class of the source text in the target text, the meaning that would be presented would be quite ambiguous.

For instance, the literal translation of the source text would have been; *kendo omiyo ogendni bedo e bwowa* which is ambiguous. In order to avoid the ambiguity, the translator therefore opted to shift the class. Paraphrasing is a translation strategy that not only eliminates ambiguities in the translation but also help the target audience get the source language meaning (Mudogo, 2017, Newmark, 1981). However, one would still argue that the translators should have transferred the source message as it is in the target message to achieve equivalence. Moreover, context played a great role in the translation process. This is because if literal translation was done then pronoun *us* would mean something different under different context. The translator therefore opted to shift the class into the adjective *lochwa* which would mean our power. The principles of the relevance theory by Sperber & Wilson (1986) therefore played a key role in these translations. This theory suggests that the process of communication succeeds because of the principle of relevance. Sperber & Wilson (1986) define relevance in terms of the following conditions; an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that it's contextual effects in this context are large and an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that the effort required to process it in this context is small. Therefore, relevance is dependent on the interplay of the two factors: contextual effects and processing effort.

Structure shifts

When there are two languages—the ST and the ST—that have distinct structural components but formal correspondence, structure shifts take place. Therefore, a structure shift happens when the target structure has distinct element classes or the same class of components but in a different arrangement. Changes in structure can happen at any rank in grammar. The study identified the structure shift as analyzed in extracts 11 to 15;

Extract 11: Ecclesiastes 7:1**ST:** A good name is better than **fine perfume**. (p. 674)**TT:** *Nying maber be molooyo mo mang'ue ng'ar*. (p. 601)

In this extract, the modifier **fine** comes before the noun **perfume** in the source text while in the target text, the noun *mo* comes before modifier *mang'ue ng'ar*.

Extract 12: Ecclesiastes 10:1**ST:** As **dead flies** give perfume a bad smell so as little folly outweighs wisdom and honour. (p. 677)

TT: *Kaka lwang'ni motho nyalo ketho mo mang'we ngar mi dum tik marach, e kaka fuwo matin nono bende nyalo ketho rieko maduong.*' (p. 603)

In the source text, the adjective *dead* comes before the noun *flies* while in the target text the noun *lwang'ni* comes before the adjective *motho*.

Extract 13: Songs of Songs 2:10

ST:	<u>Before</u>	<u>them,</u>	<u>the earth</u>	<u>shakes.</u> (p. 681)
	Adverb	Object	Subject	Verb
TT:	Piny	yiengni	e nyim	gi. (p. 606)
	Subject	Verb	Adverb	Object

In this extract, the adverb comes first then the object then the subject and the verb last in the source text while the subject comes first followed by the verb then adverb and the object last in the target text hence showing a difference in structure.

Extract 14 : Lamentation 1:4

ST: ... her young women grieve and she is in **bitter anguish**. (p. 828)

TT: ... *kendo nyige isando malich, mano kaka engi thagruo malich*. (p. 741)

In this extract, the adjectival phrase **bitter anguish** has the adjective + noun pattern. However, in the translated version **thagruo malich**, the pattern is noun + adjective.

Extract 15: Proverb 12:7

ST: she makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in **fine linen and purple**. (p. 646)

TT: ... *ochueyo lewni ma ipedho e kitendni; ka achiel gi lewni ma nengo gi tek*. (p. 570)

In the extract above the ST the phrase 'fine linen' has the order Noun and adjective, but the equivalent ST *lewni ma nengo* has the order of adjective and noun.

It should be noted that the structure shifts lead to significant distortion of the ST meaning in the TT. This is possibly due to what Mudogo (2017) the obligatory linguistic differences between the languages involved in the translation process. Nida (1964) argued that since no two languages are identical either in their meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the way in which such symbols are arranged in phrase or structure, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute equivalence between English and Dholuo because of their structural differences. Aji, et al., (2000) also note that translation shift is seen because of the existence of different rules and structures between languages.. Since English is an Indo-European language while Dholuo a Nilo-Saharan language, their structures are therefore very different. As such one can conclude that this is the reason for the occurrence of structure shifts.

6. Conclusion

There are different category shifts, namely, unit shifts, class shifts, structure shifts and intra- system shifts. Since English and Dholuo belong to two different languages

families, translation shifts occur and this results into both meaning loss and meaning gain. In this study however, more loss was experienced than gain. This conforms to Sipayung (2018) assertions that shifts in translation may influence lack of accuracy of translation level. To prevent meaning loss therefore, the translator can use the compensation translation technique to compensate for the translation loss and to achieve a compensational translation gain. Effective translation involves devising techniques for making up for the loss of the ST effect by recreating a similar effect in the TT. In doing so, relevance to the TT audience should be given prominence. In doing this, the message should be maintained. Venuti & Baker (2000) urge that in religious texts, the content is more important than the form and translators should give priority to the message.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

TRANSLATION PROPERTIES OF VULGAR AND INVECTIVE VOCABULARY IN POLITICAL MEDIA DISCOURSE

GAYANE GASPARYAN*

<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3353-8512>

BRUSOV STATE UNIVERSITY

MERI ISHKHANYAN**

<http://orcid.org/0009-0003-1487-645X>

BRUSOV STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract: The present research is an attempt to specify vulgar and invective vocabulary in modern political media discourse and to determine their translation properties (from English into Russian and Armenian, from Russian into English and Armenian, from Armenian into English and Russian) within the frames of pragmatic and socio-cultural discourse analyses. The article aims at indicating the language code differences in terms of cultures. Such analysis fosters also the determination of ways and methods of transmitting discrepancies between positive and negative connotations of various language units and to create the balance of emphatic equivalence when translating from source languages (SLs) into target languages (TLs). Invectives contain universal cultural values, they indicate aggression, anger, hostility and indignity. To translate invective proverbs, aphorisms, jargon, obscenities, the translator uses various transformations to pragmatically adapt them for the target cultural environment, since the source culture cognitive principles do not always coincide with those of the target culture.

Keywords: political media discourse; vulgar and invective vocabulary; cultural code; pragmatic adaptation

1. Introduction

Public speeches as a variety of political discourse have always been widely considered by scholars in cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, rhetoric, political discourse analysis. The chief parameters of the modern communicative environment and extralinguistic factors specifying the verbal component of political communication, are the technological innovations, creating a total information space, which brought to significant changes in the field of mass communication. The combination of political

* gasparyan.gayane@yandex.ru

** ishkhanyanmeri111@gmail.com



communication and new media predetermines the vectors of linguistic and cognitive processes taking place in such a dynamic segment of the modern information space as political discourse. Political events have always been a considerable component of mass media, but their significance has currently increased, due to the new aspects of communicative interaction. As an integral part of the contemporary information environment, the political language is partially losing its elitism and adapts to the communicative and pragmatic challenges of the new millennium.

The need to ensure effective political communication in modern discursive conditions leads to the activation of linguistic and creative processes (the use of a large number of semantic innovations and neologisms proper), the identification of political terms and implementation of hybrid genre-style forms. Linguocognitive mechanisms, initiated by extralinguistic factors, determine political language as a flexible, multifunctional system that creates new conceptual content: compact and expressive indications of changing political realities, indirectly transmitting information, ensuring relative simplicity in decoding implicit content to regulate the manipulative impact on the audience, if necessary.

Modern politicians, regardless of their nationality and the country they represent, create specific properties of modern public speaking style (brevity, definiteness, coherence). Simultaneously, they skillfully combine their speech with colloquial, sometimes rude/invective idioms and terms atypical for traditional rhetoric, which cause significant difficulties in the translation process. To eliminate these complications and produce an adequate and equivalent translation, the translators use various transformation techniques to pragmatically adapt the text of the source language(s), based on cognitive models and national characteristics of target cultures.

Any translation (verbal), presupposes both linguistic and ethnic barrier. People usually face difficulties associated with the concept of ethnicity, the so-called cultural codes: differences in cultures and national psychology, awareness of the current life of a foreign country, etc. (Latshev 2005: 17). Usually, unexpected difficulties arise with how to transfer the meaning of words which are unfamiliar to another culture (Pavlova, 2020: 66). The cultural codes represent all the symbols used to convert messages into signs, as well as the rules governing the relationship between these symbols. These codes represent the ways of communication and characteristics that distinguish one culture from another. (Tilepova 2024). Therefore, extralinguistic factors also have a great influence on the nature of transformations when translating texts of political discourse, public speeches in particular. The analysis of extralinguistic situation is necessary for specifying the speech genre and selection of translation strategies, to keep the impact value of phraseological units and idioms, vulgarisms and slang, the structure and composition of the text etc. Such features of public speeches very often cause certain difficulties in the translation process, since the world of politics deals with different cultures. The speech of politicians is full of culturally specific elements. To overcome these difficulties and to achieve the adequacy and equivalence of translation, the translator uses various methods of translation transformations in order to pragmatically adapt the text of the source language(s), taking into account the cognitive models of their cultures, which may be completely different from those of the transmitting cultures.

The present research is an attempt to specify vulgar and invective vocabulary in modern political media discourse and to determine their translation properties (from English into Russian and Armenian, from Russian into English and Armenian, from Armenian into English and Russian) within the frames of pragmatic and socio-cultural discourse analyses.

The article aims at indicating the language code differences in terms of cultures. Such analysis fosters also the determination of ways and methods of transmitting discrepancies between positive and negative connotations of various language units and to create the balance of emphatic equivalence when translating from source languages (SLs) into target languages (TLs).

2. General Characteristics of Vulgar and Invective Vocabulary

Linguists have recently turned their focus on the study of invective vocabulary. The reason for such interest is the evident decline in speaking style of politicians. Cultural decline and the use of invective vocabulary is predominantly a consequence of socio-political events, which leads to the loss of generally established moral values, a change in the culture of communication and the leveling of accepted norms of behavior and intolerance.

Invective can generally be defined as a manifestation of verbal aggression, recognized in a definite social group (subgroup) as harsh or taboo. An invective can also be specified as a verbal violation of an ethical taboo, conducted by uncodified (prohibited) means (Jelvis 2001: 13).

There are a large number of classifications of invectives: thematic, semantic, functional. Linguists suggest different approaches to the description of invective vocabulary. Posidelova divides invective resources depending on the type of lexeme proposed for analysis: 1) obscenities; 2) vocabulary with reduced emotional and stylistic coloring (slang, jargon, vulgarisms, dialecticisms, colloquialism); 3) expletives; 4) literary vocabulary with a negative assessment in a contemptuous modality (Posidelova 2016: 14).

Rawson's classification distinguishes: 1) blasphemous invectives that encroach on sacred concepts; 2) obscene words associated with the names of "shameful" body parts; 3) insults that vilify people in relation to their ethnic differences, faiths, political views, sexual, physical and mental capabilities (Rawson, 1989: 6).

It should be noted, that invective alongside with insult, threat and other acts of verbal aggression, comprise obscenity, abusive language, gossip, slander, deliberately false information, "compromising material." It may include sayings containing roughly colloquial words, sarcastic quotes on the verge of brutal cynicism as well.

The integral part of the invectives, according to Pozolotin, are:

- professions, that have already become common names for insulting a person
- professions, which are often given a pejorative connotation by means of suffixes
- invective animal metaphors
- a group of condemning verbs with negative modality
- direct expressive negative vocabulary used to offend a person

- euphemisms, i.e., mild or indirect words or expressions for those considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing. They help to make any word from all other groups more elegant, standard (literary), though offensive, but clear and easy to understand (Pozolotin 2005).

According to Mokienko, two mandatory points should be added, to complete this classification:

- occasionalisms (creative neologisms) with a negative connotation referring to a definite profession, occupation, religious or political affiliation
- scatological vocabulary, which includes words and expressions related to the “result” of physiological functions (Mokienko 1994).

Invective vocabulary exists within the limits of emotionally expressive vernacular. An invective communicative act can also be an emotional response in a dispute, an unintentional, uncontrollable emotional reaction. Respectively, two types of invectives can be singled out:

- an involuntary, uncontrollable emotional reaction
- a conscious intention to humiliate an opponent in order to demonstrate someone’s dominant position (Demidov 2004: 93).

Vulgarisms are rude words and expressions used in the literary language. The sources of vulgarisms are jargon and vernacular. Vulgarisms are evaluative and/or expressive in nature, therefore, they can be used to express emotions as an element of a language game, and, of course, for personality characteristics.

Each nation uses its native negative characteristics to express a common emotional state, identifying the receptor with various objects of reality. This is due to the fact, that different communities have their own criteria for evaluating people, behavior and mentality. They contain universal cultural values specifying aggression, anger, hostility and contempt. Invective units are directly related to the concepts that create the core of the linguistic picture of the world and are a means of storing and transmitting the centuries-old experience of the people.

3. Pragmatic Adaptation as an Effective Technique of the Invective Lexicon Translation in a Political Media Text

Verbal aggression is especially intensified during the elections, when the politicians use all the possible means to reduce the rating of their opponents: invective vocabulary with culturally specific elements, such as proverbs and sayings of abusive meaning, rude sarcastic quotes from films, books, jokes and swear words. Translator, being a mediator in between the two parties of communicative process, should realize definitely that translation is not a mere act of rendering words into a different language, it is an exact transmitting of language and cultural units into a different culture. If information is incorrectly decoded and transmitted, misunderstanding may arise, which will lead respectively to a failure of the communicative act.

Invectives contain universal cultural values, they indicate aggression, anger, hostility and indignity. To translate invective proverbs, aphorisms, jargon, obscenities, the translator uses various transformations to pragmatically adapt them for the target

cultural environment, since the source culture cognitive principles do not always coincide with those of the target culture.

1. After Turkey's invasion of Syria, US President Donald Trump sent a letter to Turkish leader Recep Erdogan, where he called for a cease-fire. At the end of his extraordinary letter, he added a phrase, which presupposes an implicit invective:

Don't be a **tough guy**. Don't be a **fool!** (Trump 2019)

Russian translation completely corresponds to the SL contextual meaning:

Не строй из себя **крутого парня**. Не будь **дураком!**
(Literally: Don't act like a cool guy. Don't be a fool!). (Trump 2019)

The word combination **tough guy** is transmitted into TL by means of a corresponding Russian cultural-bound unit **крутой парень** (tough guy, cool guy), whereas in the Armenian version the primary vocabulary meaning of the word **tough** is used:

Մի՛ եղեք **կոշտ տղա**: Մի՛ եղեք **հիմար**:
(Literally: Don't be a hard guy. Don't be a fool!). (Trump 2019)

The Armenian **կոշտ տղա** (hard guy, rough guy) does not convey the pragmatic value of the SL unit, though in the Armenian corresponding cultural inventory there exists a relevant unit **լավ տղա** (a good guy). Thus, the sentence could be translated as **Քեզ լավ տղայի տեղ մի դիր** (Do not behave as a good guy), where *good* is used in the meaning of *tough*. Furthermore, the translator has unreasonably used second person plural of the verb **եղեք** (be). According to Russian and Armenian grammatical structure personal, pronouns and corresponding verbs, have both singular and plural forms, whereas the pronoun *you* is used for both singular and plural in English. In Russian and Armenian, if *you* is used to address one person, it determines politeness and respect towards the interlocutor. In case with the Armenian **Մի՛ եղեք հիմար** (Don't be a **fool**) such a polite and respectful manner is inappropriate, since the speaker names his interlocutor **a fool**.

2. Talking about nuclear weapons, Putin responded to NATO's calls to reduce nuclear weapons in Russia:

У нас такого оружия больше, чем у стран НАТО. Они знают об этом и все время склоняют нас к его сокращению - **хрен им**, как у нас в народе говорят.
(Literally: We have more such weapons than the NATO countries. They know this and always force us to reduce it. Fuck them, as our people would say).
(Putin 2023)

There are two versions of translation into English:

1. We have more such weapons than the NATO countries. They know about it, and all the time we are being persuaded to start negotiations on reductions. **The hell with them**, as our people say. (Putin 2023)

2. We have more than NATO countries, and they want to reduce our numbers. **Screw them.** (Putin 2023)

In the first version, the vulgar unit **the hell with them** does not reflect the real concept of the Russian idiom, in fact, meaning **Fuck them, they will hardly ever catch it one day**. There are similar expressions in English, denoting rude denial of something, disagreement, protest - **Hell No! No way! Fat chance! Not bloody likely!** but none of them are used in the translation. Interlingual, intercultural and cognitive complications occur here due to the wrong interpretation of culturally specific units. The second version of the translation **Screw them** stands closer to the original and conveys the required essence of the message. Moreover, a method of addition is applied in the first version **and all the time we are being persuaded to start negotiations on reductions**. This method is likely used by the translator to transfer the Russian combination **склоняют нас к его сокращению** (force us to reduce it) and to convey the pragmatic impact on the target receptor.

3. Once, during Fundraiser Wednesday in San Francisco Joe Biden said about RF President Vladimir Putin:

We have a **crazy SOB guy**, PUTIN. (Biden 2024)

Likewise, the previous example, this one has two versions of translation as well.

1. Байден **оскорбительно высказался** в адрес Путина.
(Literally: Biden insulted Putin). (Biden 2024)

2. Джо Байден назвал Владимира Путина **crazy S. O. B.** («сумасшедшим сукиным сыном»)
(Literally: Joe Biden called Vladimir Putin crazy S. O. B. (“crazy son of a bitch”).
(Biden 2024)

In the first version a euphemization technique was used, the translator selected an expression neutral in meaning and emotional significance, replacing an indecent and inappropriate unit, characterizing the President of RF. In addition to euphemization, the translator used a semantic development technique, replacing dictionary correspondence with contextual, logically related one.

In the second version, **crazy S. O. B.** is maintained together with the explanation in brackets «сумасшедшим сукиным сыном» (crazy son of a bitch).

In the Armenian version, the equivalent translation method is used:

Մենք ունենք **խելազար շան տղա**, ինչպիսիս Պուտինն է:
(Literally: We have such a crazy son of a bitch like Putin). (Biden 2024)

Concerning the SL invective unit “*son of a bitch*,” it should be noted, that there is no specification regarding the noun *bitch*: it can be either a she-wolf, or a she-dog or any other she-animal. In Armenian, there is no gender specification of the concept: the noun *շու՛ն* (*dog* in general) is used. Respectively, due to this culturally specific substantiation, the translator, within the scope of pragmatic adaptation, used a similar cultural-bound unit, well known to the Armenian-speaking people.

During a presidential debate in 2020 Joe Biden defined Donald Trump as **Putin's puppy**:

He's **Putin's puppy**. (Biden 2020)

Both Russian and Armenian translators pragmatically adapted the unit **Putin's puppy** and used the corresponding idiomatic expressions existing respectively in their linguo-cultural storage. Thus, in Russian it sounds as **щенок (щеночек)** – a dog cub, which is most used by Russian people as an invective, whereas in the English version there is no specification for the noun **puppy**: it can be a bear cub, a tiger cub, a wolf or a lion cub.

Он «**путинский щенок**».
(Literally: He is a cub of Putin). (Biden 2020)

In the Armenian translation the invective unit **թուլա** (a cub) is used, which likewise the English corresponding one has no specification: it can be a cub of any animal.

Նա **Պուտինի թուլան է**:
(Literally: He is a cub of Putin). (Biden 2020)

Anyway, all the units of both source and target versions move into the category of invective lexicon due to a specific situation, they are used in.

4. In his comments on the missile and bomb attack on Grozny (September 24, 1999), Vladimir Putin declared:

Мы будем преследовать террористов везде... Вы уж меня извините, в туалете поймаем, мы и **в сортире их замочим**...
(Literally: We will pursue terrorists everywhere... Excuse me, we'll catch them in the toilet, and we'll soak them in it). (Putin 1999)

In the English translation for the vulgar unit of criminal jargon **в сортире их замочим** (will dunk them in the crapper) a phraseological equivalent is used **snuff them in a crapper**:

We are going to pursue terrorists everywhere... If we capture them in the toilet, then we'll **snuff them in a crapper**. (Putin 2011)

While in the Armenian translation, a semantic development occurs: **замочим** is transmitted as **վերջը կտանք** (will put an end to them):

Մենք ահաբեկիչներին հետապնդելու ենք ամենուր, կապ չունի, թե նրանք որտեղ կլինեն: Եթե մենք նրանց, ներողություն եմ խնդրում, զուգարանում բռնենք, ապա հենց այնտեղ էլ նրանց **վերջը կտանք**:
(Literally: We will chase the terrorists everywhere, no matter where they are. If we catch them, I'm sorry, in the toilet, we'll finish them right there). (Putin 2016)

To avoid tautology, the Armenian translator uses the word **զուգարան** (toilet) only once. The translator did not use another Armenian word, meaning *toilet*, since the word *շէտքարան* does not exactly correspond to the SL word *сopтup* (*crapper*), it has rather the meaning of *toilet*.

In the English version the SL parenthetical clause **Вы уж меня извините** (Excuse me) is omitted as in any English community it is unusual to apologize in such situations. Besides, the Russian verb *замочим* (dunk) is substituted by *snuff*, as the expression *snuff them in a crapper* corresponds exactly to the Russian *в сортире их замочим*.

5. In his Inauguration Speech in 2020 Vladimir Putin announced:

У нас нет права быть «Иванами, не помнящими родства».

(Literally: We have no right to be “Ivans who do not remember kinship”. (Putin 2020)

There is an implicit insult towards those who renounce their history. “**Иван, не помнящий родства**” (Ivan, who does not remember kinship), is a cultural-bound unit, used by Russian people, for those who do not respect their history, ancestors, who forget about their roots. In the English version a modulation (semantic development) technique is used by the translator:

And we do not have the right to **be heedless of our past**. (Putin 2020)

The proper name Ivan, having a nominal value, is usually used to specify Russian people in general. This name and the specific action associated with it were omitted in the English translation, which conveys merely the meaning of the statement without indicating, the origin of the unit used by the orator. Simultaneously, the expressive value and the emotional impact upon the receptor are reduced due to the use of **heedless of our past** instead of *do not remember kinship*.

6. In response to the RA Prime minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Facebook postings, RA ex-President Levon Ter-Petrosyan’s speaker said:

Նախագահ Տեր-Պետրոսյանը անիմաստ է համարում անդրադառնալ **ազգակործան պատուհասի հոգեկան տվայտանքներին**: Ինչ ուզում է՝ թող դուրս տա: Միևնույն է՝ նա արդարանալու ոչ մի ճար չունի: Հայ ժողովուրդը նրան երբեք չի ներելու:

(Literally: President Ter-Petrosyan considers it useless to respond the mental disorders of the destroyer of the nation. Let him say whatever he wishes. He still has no way to justify himself. The Armenian people will never forgive him). (Musinyan 2021)

In the Russian translation the combination **ազգակործան պատուհաս** (destroyer of the nation) is transmitted as **губящее народ олицетворение зла** (the evil ruining people) thus revealing the contextual meaning of the word by means of explication (descriptive translation) – *the destroyer of the nation*.

Президент Тер-Петросян считает бессмысленным обращаться к **душевному метаниям губящего народ олицетворения зла. Пусть болтает, что хочет.** Все равно, у него нет никакого шанса оправдаться. Армянский народ никогда не простит его.

(Literally: President Ter-Petrosyan considers useless to respond the mental anguish of the evil embodiment destroying the people. Let him talk what he wants. Anyway, he doesn't have any chance to justify himself. The Armenian people will never forgive him). (Musinyan 2021)

In the English version the SL **ազգակործան պատուհաս** (destroyer of the nation) is substituted by the attributive combination **national scourge**, which respectively loses its expressiveness and emotional impact upon the receptor.

President Ter-Petrosyan considers it pointless to respond to the **mental tribulations of this national scourge. Let him do whatever he wants.** In any event, cannot justify himself. The Armenian people will never forgive him. (Musinyan 2021)

It should be noted, that the translation was done by an Armenian translator, who failed in conveying the essence of the message. As a compensation, descriptive translation technique or explication could be used here to reveal the contextual meaning of the statement – *an evil person who destroys his nation*. Moreover, the SL device of concretization **Ինչ ուզում է թող դուրս տա** (Let him say whatever he wishes) is substituted by generalization in the English version: **Let him do whatever he wants.**

In case with the attributive combination **հոգեկան տվայտանքներ** (*mental disorders*), in Russian translation equivalent method was used – *душевные метания* (mental tossing), whereas the non-native translator of the English version suggests an incorrect modification – *mental tribulations*. The noun *tribulation* meaning *grief, misfortune, trouble, sorrow, calamity, adversity* is never used to determine such contextual significance. This part of the translation leads in fact to misunderstanding because of semantic discrepancy and incorrect interpretation of the statement.

Thus, the examination of the above-illustrated examples reveals that the following translation transformations have been applied within the pragmatic adaptation of the vulgar and invective vocabulary:

- equivalent translation
- modulation (semantic development)
- euphemization
- full transformation
- compensation
- generalization

4. Conclusion

A comparative political media discourse analysis suggested in the article focuses on the translation properties of invective lexicon, its cultural potential, linguistic and

extralinguistic parameters, as well as translation transformations within the scope of pragmatic adaptation of the corresponding units, based on illustrations specifically of Russian, English and Armenian sources.

It is really impossible to fix all the culturally specific meanings of lexical units in dictionaries, therefore, their contextual significance should be taken into account while transmitting them into a different communicative environment. In fact, they should be pragmatically adapted to convey the real meaning to be well recognized by the target receptor.

It is a mandatory requirement to be well aware of the cultural distinctions of both source and target languages to pragmatically adapt the SL invective lexicon and to transmit sufficiently its cognitive significance. Thus, proper interpretation of culturally specific information is a key to the correct linguistic and cultural decoding of vulgar and invective vocabulary and its exact and relevant transmission into a TL.

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The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

PROMOTING AND SPREADING SAKHA ETHNOCULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH THE MEDIATION OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE: THE PHENOMENON OF YAKUT CINEMA

GIORGIA POMAROLLI*

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8593-021X>

UNIVERSITY OF VERONA

Abstract: The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is nowadays one of the main centres of cinematographic production in the Russian Federation. Films are often low-budget and boast a wide spectrum of genres. They are mostly shot in the Sakha language and draw on local history, heroic epic, cosmogony, heritage, costumes, and spiritual values. In the present work the phenomenon of Yakut cinema is investigated as a means to promote and consolidate the ethnocultural Sakha identity in the Republic. To explore this issue, I briefly describe the sociolinguistic context, featuring the Sakha Republic. Further, I provide an overview of Yakut cinema, examining the process of its rapid development, and identifying its main themes and characteristics. Then, I discuss the resonance of Yakut films, which goes beyond the local context. A dozen of Yakut movies have screened at international film festivals, reaching out to the global audience by means of indirect translation, i.e., from Sakha to English, via the Russian language. As a result, the Russian language plays a pivotal role in the circulation of Sakha cinema, and hence, Sakha identity on the world stage.

Keywords: Yakut cinema; Sakha ethnocultural identity; Sakha language; Russian language; intermediary language

1. Introduction

In recent years Russian cinema has witnessed a sharp rise in regional film production. Regional films are to be understood as films made by a producer and a film crew based outside Moscow and Saint Petersburg – the traditional centres of Russian cinematographic production – and distributed to cinemas primarily in their own region with no mediation of a film distributor (Fontaine 2018; Kravchenko 2022). The phenomenon of regional cinemas involves, particularly, the Republic of Tatarstan, the Sverdlovsk Region, the Kemerovo Region, the Republic of Bashkortostan, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Omsk Region, the Samara Region, the Irkutsk

* giorgia.pomarolli@univr.it



Region, and the Ulyanovsk Region (Egorova 2017). Generally speaking, regional films aim at exploring and making visible the traditional culture of peoples of Russia by claiming an indigenous narrative based on local knowledge, folklore, spiritual values, and worldviews. In this respect, regional cinematography reflects the aspirations of ethnic groups and peripheral regions to promote and consolidate their identity within Russia and in the globalized world.

Over the last years several festivals have been organized annually to develop Russian regional cinematography and popularize it abroad. See, for example, the Baikal International Film Festival “People and Environment,” established in 1999 on the initiative of public environmental organizations of the Irkutsk and Chita Regions, and the Republic of Buryatia, now in its 25th edition; the Cheboksary International Film Festival, that has been held in the Chuvash Republic since 2008; the Arctic International Film Festival “Golden Raven,” that takes place in Anadyr City in the Chukotka Autonomous Region and is now in its 8th edition; and the Yakutsk International Film Festival, that was opened in the Republic of Sakha in 2013. These events are supported by local governments, together with the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and/or the Union of Cinematographers of the Russian Federation (UCRF). In 2022 the UCRF witnessed the establishment of the Regional Cinema Support Fund, which is intended to support and develop regional cinema, increase its competitiveness, as well as popularize it both in Russia and worldwide (Ustav FPRK 2022: 3). At the end of June 2023, in Kaliningrad the Fund organized the First Forum of Regional Filmmaking “New Vector,” with the purpose of bringing together filmmakers from different regions of Russia, exchanging experiences and best practices, as well as creating an open platform for dialogue between the film industry and the State authorities (Forum Regional’nogo kinematografa “Novyy Vektor,” n.d.). Along with the Government of the Kaliningrad Region, the Forum enjoyed the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Presidential Foundation for Cultural Initiatives, which confirms the commitment of the central government in supporting the development of the regional film industry.

This paper discusses the phenomenon of indigenous cinema, taking into consideration the case of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), which boasts the most prolific Russian regional cinematic industry.

2. The Sakha Republic: A Sociolinguistic Overview

With over three million square kilometres, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is the most extended subnational unit of the Russian Federation (it covers one sixth of its entire area). It is located in the North-Eastern part and is firstly well known for its extreme climate, as well as for the rich diversity of its natural resources, i.e., diamonds, gold, silver, oil, coal, etc. According to the 2021 Census, the population of the Republic amounts to 995,686 inhabitants (the density is only 0.32 per square kilometre) with a major concentration in the cities, mainly in the capital, Yakutsk. The titular ethnic

group of the Republic is the Sakha people or Yakuts¹, who nowadays represent around 55% of the entire population (469,348 people). Next to Sakha, the Republic is inhabited by representatives of the so-called Indigenous small-numbered people of the North, Siberia and the Far East (*korennye malochislennyye narody Severa, Sibiri i Dal'nego Vostoka*) among which Evenks (24,334), Evens (13,233), Dolgans (2,147), Yukaghirs (1,510), and Chukchee (709), that amount overall to approximately 5% of the Republic's population. The largest non-indigenous group is composed by Russians (276,986), who constitute around 32%, followed by Kyrgyz, Ukrainians, Buryats, and other groups².

The linguistic landscape of Yakutia is quite unique: given the vital interaction of Sakha, Russian and other Northern languages, one can speak of consistent bilingualism, if not trilingualism (e.g., Russian-Sakha-Even, Russian-Sakha-Yukaghir, Russian-Sakha-Chukchi; cf. Robbek 1998). If we focus on the Sakha language, another trait of uniqueness emerges: as Borsaro (2022, 28) pointed out, “among the indigenous and minority languages spoken in the Russian North, [Sakha] has a quite high number of speakers, not resembling the situation of a typical indigenous endangered language”³. According to the 2021 Census, in Yakutia the Sakha language is spoken as native language by 474,162 people, of which 93% are Yakuts, 4% Evenks, and 2% Evens (approximately 93% of them know also Russian; cf. Rosstat 2022).

The Sakha language is a Turkic language, that is written using the Cyrillic script (since 1939). It developed deviant features if compared to its sister Turkic languages due to its centuries-old isolation from the Turkic main branch, and to the contact with non-Turkic languages, such as Mongolic, Tungusic, and Siberian languages (Pakendorf and Novgorodov 2009; Petrova 2011).

Sakha are not indigenous to Yakutia. Most scholars agree that their ancestors moved from an area around Baikal steppes, in Southern Siberia, in the 13th or 14th century, as a result of the tribes' movement caused by the rise of the Mongol Empire (Pakendorf and Novgorodov 2009; Ushnitskiy 2016)⁴. The first Russian contact dates back to the 17th century, precisely to 1632, when a fort was founded in Yakutsk, which soon became a Russian-speaking city (Ferguson and Sidorova 2018). At that time Sakha were concentrated mainly in central Yakutia between the Lena, Amga and Aldan rivers (Pakendorf 2007); their expansion over the territory of nowadays Yakutia, and particularly in Yakutsk, occurred between the 17th and 18th centuries (Pakendorf 2007; Pakendorf and Novgorodov 2009). As documented by Ferguson and Sidorova (2018, 28), at the time of the Russian Empire, the Sakha language enjoyed a very peculiar

¹ ‘Sakha’ is the ethnonym that Sakha people use to designate themselves, while ‘Yakut’ is the Russian denomination which derives from the Evenki word *ya:ko, ekod*, (cf. Ushnitskiy 2016, Johanson 2021). In this paper I will use both terms interchangeably, since the use of the ethnonym ‘Yakut’ has a well-established tradition in anglophone literature (cf. Pakendorf 2007).

² All data are retrieved from the 2021 All-Russian Population Census (Rosstat 2022). It should be noted that, out of the total population living in the Republic, 146,918 informants did not declare their ethnicity.

³ Indeed, although it has been described by UNESCO as potentially vulnerable, Sakha language is not considered in a state of immediate risk (UNESCO 2021).

⁴ For an effective overview of the main theories on the ethnogenesis of Sakha people cf. Borsaro 2022.

status: during the 19th century, in Yakutsk, which back then had turned into an important centre of trade and industry, the use of Sakha was prominent, even among Russian settlers, functioning as a lingua franca. If in the early period of the Soviet Union, schooling in Saka language was promoted, things changed radically due to the strict Soviet policies of Russification which reached their peak in the 1930s. In these years the Sakha population suffered a demographic decline, particularly in Yakutsk, due to the massive settlement of Russians and Ukrainians who moved in the area to pursue the plan of industrialization. Sakha ceased to be spoken in the public spaces in Yakutsk and other urban centres, and was downgraded to non-progressive, a language of the rural population (Ferguson and Sidorova 2018: 29; Ventsel 2016: 17).

The attitude towards the Sakha language changed radically in the 1990s: after issuing a declaration of sovereignty in September 1990, a constitution of the Republic was instituted in April 1992, where, in article 46, the Saka language was conferred the status of state language (*gosudarstvennyy yazyk*) next to Russian (cf. Konstitutsiya Respubliki Sakha (Yakutiya)). In the “Law on languages in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia),” promulgated in October 1992, article 4 established that “the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) provides state protection of the Sakha language and takes care to expand its social and cultural functions”⁵ (Zakon Respubliki Sakha (Yakutiya) ot 16 oktyabrya 1992 goda N. 1170-XII). This period corresponded to a sort of “Sakha renaissance” (Ferguson and Sidorova 2016: 29), or to what Ventsel refers to as “Sakha nationalistic euphoria” (2016: 17): the Sakha language was restored in education and public sphere in general, while Yakuts took over dominant position in both politics and culture. The 1990s witnessed a demographic shift in urban population, especially in Yakutsk: if on the one hand, many Russians emigrated to central Russia, on the other, many ethnic Sakha moved from the villages to the capital. It is estimated that by 2010 Yakuts outnumbered those identifying as ethnically Russian in Yakutsk, with Sakha representing 47% of the city population and Russians at 38% (Ferguson and Sidorova 2018: 30). This ultimately resulted in the Sakha language becoming prevalent in the cities, especially Yakuts.

Nowadays the Sakha language is taught both in school and university, and is used in newspapers, magazines, radio broadcasts, websites, TV channels, theatre, and films. As pointed out by Ventsel (2016: 112), at present the Sakha language represents “a ticket to success and entry into the local elite,” being it political, economic, and cultural.

3. The *Kinoboom* in the Sakha Republic

In 2018 the Nevafilm Research released a report commissioned by the European Audiovisual Observatory⁶ which provided an overview of the development of the Russian film industry for the five-year period 2013-2017. The data supplied in the

⁵ All translations from Russian are by the Author.

⁶ The European Audiovisual Observatory is the body of the Council of Europe devoted to collecting and distributing information about the audiovisual industries in Europe. Since the aggression against Ukraine, the Russian Federation is no longer a member state of the Council of Europe, or of the European Audiovisual Observatory.

report show that the Republic of Sakha has been the leader in regional film production (with 64 films released in the period considered), followed by the Republic of Buryatia (22 films), the Republic of Tatarstan (16 films), the Republic of Bashkortostan (9 films), and the Irkutsk Region (6 films; cf. Fontaine 2018: 11). Considering the population of the Sakha Republic – as we have already said, a little less than one million inhabitants – the figure is quite notable: more than half of the Russian films made outside Moscow and St. Petersburg are realized in the Sakha Republic (Yegorov-Crate 2023). It is estimated that an average of 6 films per year has been going within the Republic in the last thirty years (Damiens and Mészáros 2022).

Yakut cinema emerged in the late 1980s-early 1990s and was initiated by a group of semi-professionals working in the national⁷ broadcasting company and theatre, as well as some Yakutia-born former students of the Moscow-based Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography, i.e., Vasily Parfënov and Aleksey Romanov⁸, who in this period returned to Yakutia (cf. Damiens 2015; Leont'eva and Anisimov 2021; Savvina 2021). The date most commonly identified as marking the birth of Yakut cinema is 1992, when the national film company, Sakhafilm, was established, together with the Sakha Filmmakers' Union. The first Sakhafilm production was *The Middle World (Orto Doydu)*, Russian title: *Seredinnyy mir*; 1993) by Aleksey Romanov, who is considered to be the first professional director of Yakutia. The two-hours-long film traces the life of a young Sakha man and displays the rites of passage characterizing the Sakha society. As highlighted by Mészáros (2022), the film “builds upon the best traditions and stylistic language of Soviet cinematography, which the director mastered at the Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography, and yet it still provides genuinely Sakha content.” These are years of great experimentation: in the five years period 1995-1999, Sakhafilm produced a dozen films of diverse genre and variable duration (from 26 up to 85 minutes; cf. Sakhafilm, n.d.), which were mainly broadcasted on the local television. These films were all low budget, a distinctive feature of Yakut cinema that will persist in the years ahead. Meanwhile, in Yakutsk a National Film Archive and a Cinema Museum opened (respectively in 1996 and 1997).

The new millennium witnessed a rapid and creative boom that led to the emergence of what is nowadays called *Sakhawood* – in analogy with Hollywood, Bollywood, and Nollywood. Alongside with Sakhafilm, a dozen of private companies arose (among them, Almazfilm, Arctic Cinema, Urgel V, Art-line, Argys-film, DetSat, Tuima-film, Magdis, ART Doydu). Films improved in quantity and quality, also thanks to the technological breakthrough and the shift to digital cameras. In these years the Yakut cinematic industry starts to attract directors and actors with little or no professional training, though driven by a great enthusiasm and motivation.

In the years 2000-2010, the first film to enjoy a huge commercial success within the Republic was *The Black Mask (Khara maaska)*, Russian title: *Chërnaya Maska*) directed by Nikita Arzhakov and released by Sakhafilm in 2002. The film is an

⁷ Throughout the article, I will use the term ‘national’ in the sense of its Russian counterpart (i.e., ‘natsional’nyy’), which is closer in meaning to ‘ethnic,’ ‘indigenous,’ ‘local,’ and therefore pertaining the Republic of Sakha.

⁸ Romanov is the director of what is considered to be the very first Yakut film, *Maapa*, that was realized in 1986 as his graduation project.

adaptation of the homonymous novel by the Sakha writer Yegor Neymokhov and is based on real events that occurred in Yakutia. It is a crime drama that tells the story of a criminal gang that was active in Yakutia in the post-war period. Another film worth mentioning is *My love* (Russian title: *Lyubov' moya*) directed by Sergey Potapov – known as the “Sakha Tarantino” (cf. Sibiryakova 2022) –, produced by Almazfilm and released in Yakut cinemas in 2004. The film combines features of a thriller and a social drama and tells of two brothers, living at the edge of Sakha society, who dream of robbing a bank and escaping abroad. The film enjoyed a splendid financial success – it grossed around 450,000 roubles (4,600 euros), with production costs being 120,000 roubles (1,200 euros).

In 2012 Sardana Savvina and Lyubov Borisova founded the association of independent filmmakers Sakha Cinema Club, in order to promote Yakut films in the Republic and build a channel of direct communication between professionals and the local community (Ivanova 2022). Meanwhile, Yakut cinema begins opening to the outside. Starting from 2013, Yakutsk has been hosting the Yakutsk International Film Festival (YIFF)⁹, whose goal is to “develop cultural exchange and creative collaboration between filmmakers all over the world” and to “improve the overall image of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)” (Festagent, n.d.). In this period various film festivals devoted to Yakut cinema started to be organized in several Russian cities, i.e., Kazan (Republic of Tatarstan), Kyzyl (Republic of Tuva). The year 2016 represents a turning point in Yakut cinema history, marking its official acknowledgment on the global stage: *The Bonfire* (*Kutaa*, Russian title: *Kostër na vetru*), Dmitry Davidov’s debut film, received the Best Drama award at ImagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival in Toronto. The film deals with redemption and revenge and tells of the encounter between a man who lost his son and an orphaned boy.

Since the very beginning of its short history, Yakut film production has been proven to be extremely diverse, encompassing a wide spectrum of genres: historical drama, mystical drama, crime drama, noir, thriller, comedy, romance, horror, as well as art house.

Films are primarily aimed at a local audience. As stated by Sakha producer Sardana Savvina,

“Our cinema is first and foremost something that is beneficial for ourselves [Sakha people – G.P.], because it speaks about us, about our life. It keeps track of our life and culture, it preserves our language, our cultural codes, our symbols for future generations.” (Savvina 2021)

The orientation towards the Sakha viewer finds confirmation in four main factors: first of all, the majority of films are made in the Sakha language; secondly, they are

⁹ The YIFF is realized with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Russian Cinematographers’ Union, and sponsored by the Ministry for Culture and Spiritual Development of the Sakha Republic. From 2013 to 2017 the festival took place uninterruptedly. The 6th edition of the YIFF, which was supposed to be held in 2020, was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The authorities of the Republic announced a new edition of the festival to be held in Spring 2024.

always shot locally, and depict the breathtaking landscapes of Yakutia; thirdly, they are often adapted from literary works, written by Sakha authors; finally, films draw on local customs, heritage, and culture (both in its material and spiritual manifestations). The main themes which find reflection in the Yakut cinematic discourse are daily life of the Yakut people, social and family issues, the relationship between man and nature, as well as the life in urban areas *versus* life in the desolated tundra.

Films convey an aesthetics of authenticity. As emphasized by Oturgasheva (2021: 177), such an aesthetics is achieved via multiple factors, i.e., via camerawork, location shooting, as well as realia of everyday life which are all-pervasive in the films. A key element that heightens naturalness is the participation of actors who did not receive any formal training. In some recent interviews, director Dmitriy Davydov declared: “I live in the Amga region, in Amga village. I shoot in the same place, and I only involve local people in my films: friends, acquaintances, and other residents of the village” (Davydov, n.d.); in addition: “most of actors are villagers. I like working with them because they are amateurs, and I can mould them into anything. Professionals often have their own style” (Davydov 2021).

It may happen that it is also directors who are self-trained. Let us take, for example, Davydov himself. At present he is one of the most acclaimed directors both in the Sakha Republic and abroad¹⁰. However, it is interesting to note that until 2021 Davydov conjugated filmmaking with teaching in a public school. In a recent interview he explains how he approached the world of cinema:

“I worked at a school and led a study group for teenagers where we filmed some videos – that was before 2011-2012. Just then, a boom in local cinema began in Yakutia, and there were full houses. I watched these films and realized that, in principle, I could shoot at the same level, and that I also had something to say.” (Davydov, n.d.)

The same goes for Lyubov Borisova and Stepan Burnashëv, who entered the cinematic industry as amateurs. Borisova is a director, screenwriter, and producer, who has a background in economics. Among her best productions as director and writer there are *The Sun Above Me Never Sets* (*Min ürdüber kün khahan da kïrbet*; Russian title: *Nado mnoyu solnce ne saditsya*; 2019) and *Don't Bury Me Without Ivan* (*Kereni körbüt*; Russian title: *Ne choronite menya bez Ivana*; 2022). Burnashëv used to be a professional athlete, former champion in kettlebell lifting of Yakutia. He became a director in 2009, after graduating in informatics (cf. Burnashëv 2023). Among the others, he directed and wrote *First love* (*Mannaygy taptal*; Russian title: *Pervaya lyubov'*; 2015), *Black Snow* (*Khara Khaar*; Russian title: *Chërnyy sneg*; 2020), and *Ayta* (2022).

Besides the consistent presence of directors and actors who did not receive any formal training, another characteristic feature of Sakha cinema is represented by the budget on which directors can count for realizing their films, which is generally very

¹⁰ Besides *The Bonfire* (2016), Davydov directed, wrote and produced *Scarecrow* (*Otohut*; Russian title: *Pugalo*; 2020), *Youth* (*Eder saas*; Russian title: *Molodost'*; 2022), and other films.

tiny¹¹. This aspect ultimately may have a significant impact on the films' aesthetics. As stated by Borisova, "small budget means very small film crew... it means that everyone makes a lot of work... Also, if you cannot [afford] a lot of decorations, you will [adjust] your script to existing objects, existing locations... which makes you think more creatively" (Klassiki 2021).

4. Reaching out to the Global Audience

As suggested by several scholars, the promotion and success of Yakut cinema have to be interpreted in the light of the Sakha renaissance that characterized the post-Soviet ideological shift within the Republic, and whose aim was (and is) to enforce and consolidate the ethnocultural Sakha identity (Damiens 2014-2015; McGinity-Peebles 2022). There is no surprise, then, that the internal market is its first target. As stated by cinema critic Anton Dolin,

"The true essence of Yakut cinema is its deep connection to the daily life, issues, and cultural richness of the Republic of Sakha. ...This authenticity is what draws local audiences in droves, making even the riskiest and most experimental of films profitable within Yakutia, whereas they might be deemed too adventurous to produce or distribute in cities like Moscow or St. Petersburg." (retrieved from: Dergacheva 2023)

While Yakut films find a dedicated audience within the Republic, they are often met with hesitation by the Russian mass public. In an interview with the Russian channel KinoTV, on occasion of the upcoming premiere of his film *Nuuccha* in September 2021, director and screenwriter Vladimir Munkuev describes the relationship that the cinema from Yakutia has with both the Yakut and the Russian audiences:

[journalist] - Does the Yakut cinematography consider itself part of the Russian cinematography?

[Vladimir Munkuev] - No. Why? In Yakutia we still don't understand whether we are appealing to the Russian audience. The film *Scarecrow* did well at festivals... The sophisticated audience went to see it... but the usual mass audience don't watch this type of films... Why?

[j.] - Our [Russian] usual mass audience don't watch these films. These are not the films that dominate the box office.

[V.M.] - You see, in Yakutia the average filmgoer doesn't watch Russian comedies... People watch blockbusters but they don't understand Russian comedies. Which is why Yakut cinema has boomed. Why do you think people watch Yakut films? Because they

¹¹ It is not unusual that directors produce their own films with their own money (this is the case, for example, with Davydov and Burnashëv). Within the whole cinematic production, the only exceptions in terms of budget are two films: the first is *By The Will Of Genghis Kahn* (original title in Russian: *Tayna Chingiskhaana*) by Andrei Borisov (2009) which represented the first Yakut blockbuster, realized through an international joint production, involving Urgel V Production Company (Yakutia, Russia), Nyamgaava Film Production (Mongolia), and Brown Wolf Production (USA); the second high-budget film is *Tygyñ Darkhan*, directed by Nikita Arzhakov and released in 2020.

talk about them. People understand that those films talk about things we have here, in our language, and that the problems and the mentality are completely those of the Yakuts. While Russian comedies, yes, they're interesting, but they relate to something alien to us, to something that exists on another planet. (Munkuev 2021)

Munkuev's words confirm the uniqueness of the Yakut cinema, its being a vehicle of the *Sakhaness*, and thus its orientation primarily to the local audience. However, in the same interview, Munkuev clearly states:

Yakut cinema only has one mission, to be watched by everyone, by the whole world. (Munkuev 2021)

As a matter of fact, in the latest years, the big screen has become an opportunity for Yakut directors to carry on an open dialogue with the Russian and foreign audience (Oturgasheva 2021: 175). On the heels of Davydov's *Bonfire*, since 2016 some Yakut films have been enjoying a great success at several Russian and international festivals. This is the case, for example, with Tat'yana Everstova's *His Daughter* (*Kini kyyha*, Russian title: *Ego doch'*; Grand Prize at the Festival "Window on Europe" in 2016), Eduard Novikov's *The Lord Eagle* (*Toyon kyyl*, Russian title: *Tsar'-ptitsa*; Golden St. George at the Moscow International Film Festival and Best Artistic Contribution at the Montreal World Film Festival in 2018), Borisova's *The Sun Above Me Never Sets* (Audience Award at the Moscow International Film Festival in 2019), Davydov's *Scarecrow* (Grand Prize at the Kinotavr Film Festival in Sochi and Faith Film Award at the Tromsø International Film Festival in 2020), and finally Munkuev's *Nuuccha* (among others, Best Director Prize at the Kinotavr Film Festival and Grand Pix in the East-West section at the 55th International Film Festival in Karlovy Vary in 2021). This success can be explained with the fact that, while bringing forward an idea of *Sakhaness*, Yakut cinema ultimately manages to position itself "at the intersection of multiple identities and film cultures – Asian, Arctic, Russian, Indigenous – so it is able to appeal to diverse audiences and film networks" (McGinity-Peebles 2021).

The possibility to engage the supranational (e.g., Russian) and international viewers is operationally made possible by the mediation of the Russian language, which plays a key role in propagating Sakha films and showcasing Sakha identity beyond the borders of the Republic. Adding Russian subtitles to Yakut films can significantly enhance accessibility for the Russian audience. In some cases, films may also be dubbed into Russian – in the form of simil-sync (voiceover) or, less frequently, lip-sync –; this allows the storyline and dialogue to be understood by a broader audience. However, Russian functions here not only as a target language. In most cases it serves as the intermediary language through which the English translation (in the form of subtitling) is realized, in order to facilitate international distribution at festivals and on online platforms, and ultimately provide Sakha films with exposure to the global audience. In its functioning as an intermediary language for translating Yakut films (from Sakha to Russian, and from Russian to English), the Russian language acts as a bridge to give full voice to an ethnic group that is seldom known outside the borders of Russia.

5. Conclusion

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Yakut cinema has been experiencing a rapid and creative boom that has led to the emergence of an indigenous film industry, known as *Sakhawood*. The flourishing of Yakut cinema must be interpreted as part of a broader strategy to reconceptualize and consolidate the Sakha identity in the post-Soviet era. The promotion of the Sakha culture is conveyed in films by various identity markers, i.e., language, locations, themes, sound of traditional instruments, etc. While films are primarily oriented to the local audience, in recent years we have witnessed the ambition of Yakut filmmakers to be acknowledged by the Russian and world film industry. The spread of Yakut films beyond the borders of the Sakha Republic is made possible thanks to the Russian language, that serves as a mediating language in the circulation of Sakha cinema, and hence Sakha identity, on the supranational and international stage.

In response to the invasion of Ukraine, major Hollywood film studios suspended film distribution in Russia. This is a heavy blow, considering that prior to February 2022 U.S. films made up around 70% of the Russian film market. In addition to that, many international Western film festivals banned delegations from the Russian Federation (among them, the Berlin, Cannes, Toronto, and Venice film festivals). The risk is that the entire Russian film industry collapses (cf. Corcoran 2022). In the meanwhile, it is mostly domestic productions to drive audiences, which could represent an unprecedented opportunity for Russian regional cinematography in terms of distribution and exposure across Russia. However, in the environments of independent regional cinema there is concern, due to the policy of censorship that Russian authorities have recently initiated against it. In September 2023, Roskomnadzor – which is the State agency responsible for communications, information technology, and mass media – imposed a ban on showing Burnashëv’s film *Ayta* on all streaming platforms in Russia, accusing it of nationalistic (Sakha) propaganda. *Ayta* premiered on 30 March 2023 and scored a remarkable commercial success: with production costs being 4 million roubles (roughly 40,000 euros), it grossed around 26 million roubles (over 260,000 euros). According to Roskomnadzor the film provides “destructive information that contradicts the principles of unity among the peoples of Russia”; “positive aspects of characters belonging to one nationality [Sakha – G.P.] are contrasted with the pointedly negative traits of characters belonging to another [Russian – G.P.]” (retrieved from: Sonny 2023). Another Yakut film, *The Candidate* (*Kandidat*), in September, was denied a distribution license for allegedly violating Russian LGBT propaganda law.

Such actions suggest that the central authorities are closely monitoring the regional – particularly Sakha – cinematic production, perceiving the representation of indigenous narratives and cultural diversity as a potential threat to the State ideology and supranational (Russian-based) identity.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

**THE ROLE OF MEDIATED TRANSLATION IN CHILDREN’S LITERATURE
FROM CROSS-CULTURAL PRAGMATICS STANDPOINT:
GIANNI RODARI’S *ADVENTURES OF CIPOLLINO* IN RUSSIAN AND ARMENIAN**

IRINA MKHITARYAN*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9336-2478>
YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY

DIANA HAYROYAN**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6173-6108>
YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract: The current essay zooms in on how the concept of cross-cultural pragmatics can bring forth a theoretical background for mediated translation practice, particularly taking into account equivalence. Nowadays, the criteria for highlighting translation pragmatics of literary texts embrace vast practical experience, insights into the translation theory, and cross-cultural similarities and dissimilarities set in the mediated translation of children’s literature.

The article attempts to uncover crucial cross-cultural elements of the present-day and past translations of children’s literature via mediated language from the translation pragmatics perspective. In the research, we mainly projected a plethora of latent lingua-stylistic nuances of the author’s style through intermediary language. The data analysis was conducted based on the descriptive-comparative method, which assumes semantic and pragmatic strategies suggested by Chesterman as a cornerstone.

Keywords: mediated translation; pragmatics perspective; semantic and pragmatic strategies; children’s literature

1. Introduction

In the second half of the 20th century, the issue of translation played a pivotal role in cross-cultural communication and has become the focus of research for a considerable number of linguists and scholars. In this regard, mediated translation is not an exception and has been a highly vulnerable and controversial phenomenon as “a necessary evil” (St. Andre 2008: 189) for many theorists. Moreover, mediated translation has enticed much debate and discussion, particularly concerning its being a

* irina.mkhitarian@ysu.am

** diana_hayroyan@ysu.am



creative process, whether negatively or positively, since translating a literary text using an intermediate language may trigger aesthetic and semantic loss, which can be the reason for distortion and misunderstanding because of the variety in the cultures of the translated texts. In fact, the recipients absorb new ideas and cultural “hues,” which either detach them from a certain perspective or junk them with definite ideas, values, and beliefs (Pięta 2019: 81).

A variety of terms is used to define the phenomenon of “translating a text through a language other than the original one,” such as indirect, secondary, relay, pivot, intermediary, and mediated translation (Dollerup 2009; Hekkanen 2014; Proshina 2005). For instance, Rigmar and Dollerup state that there is a distinction in terminology between “relay” and “indirect” translation. The latter term depicts a process comprising an intermediate translation performed through three languages. Conversely, *relay translation* involves a translation with a genuine audience in the first target language. He adds that relay translation is a complex manifestation of indirect communication and remains untrapped. In contrast, St. Andre (232) claims that mistakes made in the original translation are shifted to the relay translation, in that more distortions and errors are “borrowed” from the original. Proshina (2005: 518) uses *intermediary translation*, which serves as a secondary source text for a new translation meaning that what lies behind the translation chains the originals seeming to fade as new ones might turn up.

2. Mediated Translation and Cross-cultural Aspects

There is no doubt that translation has been critical to cross-cultural communication. The latter has become a fostering platform for the flourishing of many cultures throughout history. Many challenges are available in translation from one language into another, but these complications are multiplied when doing so across languages that have nothing in common. Two distant languages, such as Italian and Armenian, have been exposed to intercultural translation exchange. Nevertheless, adopting a pivot language (in this case, Russian) to mediate between these two languages (Italian and Armenian) has contributed to both translations and any barrier that might arise. Albeit a plethora of issues might appear in the process of mediated translation, they can be easily resolved by collaboration between the translators and the writers, as was the case with the Italian-Russian children's translation attempt.

The current article casts light on the role of mediated translation in cross-cultural communication in the framework of translating children's literature from Italian into Armenian through pivot language, namely Russian. The current research discusses some of the challenges encountered by the translators, particularly in the work “Le Avventure di Cipollino” (“Adventures of Cipollino”) by Gianni Rodari.

3. Benefits and Drawbacks of Mediated Translation

Translation is a cultural fact that presupposes cross-cultural communication because the latter enables language to cross borders and contributes to intercultural exchange

and perception (Calvo and Buesa 2010:67; Evans and Ringrow 2017:54). The diversity and complexity of cultures and languages, the empire of quantity, makes it impossible for an individual to cope with even principal references of literary or scientific research in the scope of various languages. For these reasons, bicultural translators and interpreters are in great demand to translate across different languages and cultures, to perform as mediators across cultures, and as necessary intercultural communicators in a world where language access has become protected by international laws in all parts of the world.

Mediated translation is mainly associated with negative connotations and is frequently deemed a poor copy of a copy, which is inclined to entail a loss of detail with each successive passage along the process (Ringmar 2012: 32; Hadley 2017: 184). Furthermore, its negativity stems from the idea that if a translation is an inferior reproduction of the original source text, then one could acknowledge that the translation of an already translated text would be an even worse reproduction. While this line of thinking is not without its merits, it has most likely developed as a result of the scant academic attention indirect translation has received. Because of the existing lack of interest, the area of indirect translation research has not been able to advance to the point where it could change public perception and demonstrate the advantages of indirect translation as a form of translation. Nevertheless, studies have shown that retranslation can also result in positive feedback.

Initially, some scholars contend that if this practice had not existed, some classic works of world literature from distant cultures might not have been circulated in languages with so-called weak diffusion (or, at the very least, their inclusion might have been postponed) (Shuttleworth & Cowie 1997; Landers 2001). For instance, if Russian had not been utilized to translate Italian children's literature (in this case, "The Adventures of Cipollino") into Armenian, they would not have been made available to the Armenian-reading audience until the 1990s (Pięta 2014). Because of this, indirect translation could be the best and, in some cases, the only way to include cultural items from minor civilizations. Additionally, indirect translation offers writers and scholars' groundbreaking incentives to retranslate original works straight from the original language, particularly after realizing that a translation was inaccurate and had numerous issues. Based on the popular phrase 'traduttore traditore' (the translator is a traitor), though very frequently rejected by translators, can be best performed in the process of mediated translation. Thus, mediated translation disregards the principle of faithfulness since the end translation is not rendered from the original text (which is concealed from the receptor) but from a translated text. However, in many patterns, the faithfulness of the meaning is distorted and sometimes results in controversial translations. Instances of untranslatability or the 'sound incorrect' translation (Liddicoat 2016: 347), such as cultural differences, lexical gaps, figurative language, etc., failure to give 'the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language' (Nida 1959:19) mainly depend on the translator's application of a wrong equivalent for a word and/or expression. In this vein, meaning can be distorted 'naturally' and in 'normal' translation processes.

4. Challenges of Translating Children`s Literature Through Mediated Language

A growing number of scholars worldwide are interested in comprehending the quirks of the intricate process of translating a work of literature from one language to another. This explains why a large number of academics have become deeply involved in carrying out research projects that illustrate the translation process from a cognitive standpoint.

An interdisciplinary connection between translation and cognition has been established by the integration of cognitive science into translation studies. The study's ability to integrate translation and cognition allows it to establish a strong empirical foundation that supports the development of a reliable cognitive translation model. The uneven focus on producers and receivers in cognitive research, however, has been taken into consideration and reveals that the literature has overlooked the significance of examining how the translated texts are reconstructed each time the product is read, viewed, and received (Chesterman 1997: 57-60).

According to an outline of Chesterman's explanation of how translation affects the reader, cognitive processing analysis is crucial in understanding how translation is received. In this regard, Chesterman's model of local translation strategies has emerged as a key component of this study. According to Chesterman's book "Mememes of Translation," the taxonomy of translation tactics could, in its most basic form, consist of just one category: change anything. He claims that a translator frequently discovers, for a variety of reasons, that their initial translation of a particular passage of text is insufficient. Chesterman divides local translation techniques into three categories: pragmatic, syntactic, and semantic. Local methods known as syntactic strategies modify the grammatical structure of TT in relation to conveying the author`s intended meaning (Chesterman 1997: 101-104).

The following subcategories of pragmatic and semantic techniques were used in the framework of our study:

- ✓ Semantic strategies -*Synonymy, Trope Change, Hyponymy*
- ✓ Pragmatic strategies -*Cultural Filtering, Explication, Addition*

It is well acknowledged that translating children's books gives the translator more latitude than translating adult literature, therefore adaptation tactics frequently win out. For instance, House (1997; 2015) proposes that translators of children's literature 'filter' the information and values found in the source text for kids who are part of the target market. This filtering is frequently accomplished using domestication techniques that modify the source material to fit the norms of the target culture (Thomson-Wohlgenuth 2009: 226).

The plot, setting, characterization, theme, viewpoint, and style of children's literature can all be unique. Overall, even though these traits are not very dissimilar in many circumstances, they are meant to serve and satisfy the demands of the young reader as opposed to those of others. The goal of writing children's literature must also be as evident in its translation as possible. There are many characteristics involved in translating for children; in particular, developmental phases must be considered. According to Lathey (2006), "translators should be aware of the stylistic features and

modes of address appropriate for different age groups," Fortunately, the unique requirements of translating for children are currently being discussed and debated in both professional and academic circles.

Klingberg (1986: 10) cites two primary justifications for translating children's literature: to make it accessible in a different cultural setting and to advance the global recognition of young readers. Nevertheless, within these main motives, the author's and the translator's intents are linked and may include amusement and/or social, political, or didactic objectives. Per se, translating is a difficult task, regardless of whether the intended audience is adults or children. There may be many of the same issues and difficulties, whether translating literature for children or adults. Determining the intended audience for all texts and scenarios is also highly beneficial for the translator. Children's literature has quite different educational goals and objectives than adult literature. As a result, in the case of mediated translation of children's literature, the source texts may occasionally be "manipulated" to achieve specific goals. It has been established that children do not form a homogeneous group, and as a result, children's literature frequently targets a diverse audience with a range of needs and abilities (Thomas 2016). Now that this statement has been confirmed, it is worth considering textual and non-textual characteristics of children's literature, with a special emphasis on the difficulties they pose for translators. Children's literature translation is not commonly recognized as a professional specialty, necessitating unique knowledge. This is because children's literature is frequently mistakenly believed to consist of relatively 'simple' or 'uncomplicated' writings. It will hopefully be possible to better grasp how translating a text indirectly might affect several parts of an ST by locating, examining, and comprehending these terms. It will also be acknowledged that translating children's literature is a profession that requires specific knowledge. Children's literature translators can significantly benefit from a scientific grasp of their area of expertise, particularly the unique characteristics of children's literature, the difficulties it can present in translation, and various translation techniques.

5. The Purpose of the Research

In the current article, we have attempted to cast light on the role of mediated translation in cross-cultural communication in the frame of translating children's literature from Italian into Armenian through the pivot language, i.e., Russian. Nevertheless, adopting a pivot language to mediate between these two languages (Italian and Armenian) has contributed to both translations and any barriers that might arise. Albeit a plethora of issues might appear in the process of mediated translation, they can be easily resolved by collaboration between translators and writers, as was the case with the Italian-Russian translation attempt.

The current research aims at:

- illustrating the impact of the mediated language on the adequacy and equivalence of the TT
- identifying inconsistencies in the process of translation
- finding out culture-related features from the lingua-stylistic and pragmatic standpoints

- conducting a comparative analysis in ST and TT through Mediated Text, particularly in the fairy tale “Adventures of Cipollino” by Gianni Rodari

6. Method

A comparative analysis was carried out to examine the differences between Italian ST, Russian MT, and Armenian TT based on the semantic and pragmatic strategies suggested by Chesterman. When comparing the Italian ST and the Russian MT, we are apt to investigate culture-related cases and linguistic aspects. Cultural aspects in this study refer to objects or phrases that could trigger difficulties among readers of the TT. Precisely, this is conducted with the tendency to analyze the same novel but from the perspective of how it is written by the translator, the traces that another language leaves in translation, and how they influence each other. It will hopefully be possible to better grasp how translating a text indirectly might affect several parts of an ST by locating, examining, and comprehending these terms, which are of paramount significance for readers of the TT.

7. Analyses

One of the most powerful tools in the socialist education of the new generation was children's literature. Thus, in order to study children's literature in the Soviet Union, it should be acknowledged that it is a marginalized system that exists on the periphery of society (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2009: 4) and plays a central role in the ideology of young Soviet citizens. The simplest way to adapt children's literature to the demands of socialist education was to encourage the publication of novels and original children's books by contemporary Soviet authors. Translations of contemporary children's literature writers from capitalist countries were rare. The *Adventures of Cipollino* by Gianni Rodari (*Il Romanzo di Cipollino*), published in Italy in 1951 and almost immediately translated into Russian, is one notable exception. The translated edition gained popularity quickly, assimilating into Soviet society and being one of the most well-beloved books in the USSR for decades. The following analyses the factors that contributed to the success and contrasts two Soviet translations of the book: the 1953 Russian version, translated by Z. Potopova and edited by Marshak, and the 1983 Armenian version, translated by S. Harutyunyan.

7.1. The Adventures of Cipollino

The fairy tale is about a happy and energetic young onion named Cipollino who lives in a pleasant but impoverished peasant society of fruits and vegetables subject to the dictatorial reign of the local tyrant, Prince Lemon, and his goons. The brave little onion and his friends resolve to oppose the evil nobleman and overthrow the antiquated feudal system after Cipollino's father is detained and given a life sentence for a minor legal infraction. The community eventually experiences a full-fledged revolution (the

author explicitly refers to the event by that name in his book), which alters the vegetal world permanently and changes it for the better. The narrative splits its characters into two categories: those who are fundamentally good (such as Cipollino's family and Little Radish) and those who are inherently evil (such as Prince Lemon, Countesses Cherry, and Knight Tomato). The majority of the fairy-tale heroes are from the peasantry, whilst the adversaries are from the upper class.

Analyzing the original text, initially, we focused on the title translations of chapters, which drastically differed in the mediated text but were adjusted accordingly in the Armenian versions. In most of the title translations, one can detect meaningful sub-dominant elements that are represented by the stylistic traits of the source text. Factually, Italian titles of the chapters are mainly characterized by simple, agile, and often relatively short and linear sentences impacting the receptive possibilities of children.

Table 1. Comparison of individual chapter titles in the original and mediated texts translations

G. Rodari «Le avventure di Cipollino»	М. Потапова, С. Маршак «Приключения Чиполлино»	Ս. Հարությունյան «Զիպոլինոյի արկածները»
Capitolo 2 Come fu che il sor Zucchini fabbricò la sua casina? Перевод: (Как получилось так, что синьор Кабачок построил свой домик?)	Глава 2 Как в первый раз Чиполлино заставил кавалера Помидора заплакать	Գլուխ 2 Ինչպես Զիպոլինոն ստիպեց կավալեր Պոմիդորին լաց լինել առաջին անգամ
Capitolo 3 Un Millepiedi pensa: che guaio portare i figli dal calzolaio! Перевод: (Многоножка «Тысяченожка» думает: что за хлопоты водить детей к сапожнику!)	Глава 3 В которой рассказывается о профессоре Груше, о Луке Порее и о Тысяченожках	Գլուխ 3 Որտեղ պատմվում է պրոֆեսոր Տանձի, Սոխ Պրասի և Հազարոտնուկի մասին
Capitolo 4 Il terribile cane Mastino è preso per sete da Cipollino. Перевод: (Как Чиполлино провел ужасного пса Мастино, который хотел пить).	Глава 4 Чиполлино одурачил пса Мастино, которому очень хотелось пить	Գլուխ 4 Թե ինչպես Զիպոլինոն խաբեց Մաստինո շանը, որը շատ ծարավ էր
Capitolo 5 Signori ladri, prima di entrare il campanello vogliate suonare. Перевод: (Господа воры, прежде чем войти «в дверь», позвоните, пожалуйста)	Глава 5 Кум Черника над дверью вешает колокольчик для воров	Գլուխ 5 Քավոր Հավամրգին դռների վրա գողերի համար զանգակ է կախում

Capitolo 6 Il barone Melarancia, con Fagiolone porta-pancia. Перевод: (Барон Яблоко-апельсин с Фасолинкой, носильщиком живота)	Глава 6как много хлопот графиням доставили их родственники — герцог Мандарин и барон Апельсин	Գլուխ 6 Որտեղ պատմվում է այն մասին, թե ինչքան գլխացավանք ու տհաճություն պատճառեցին կոմսուհիներին նրանց ազգականները՝ բարոն Նարինջն ու հերցոգ Մանդարինը
Capitolo 9 Toro-in-caro perde il decoro, mentre esulta Pomodoro Перевод: (Главный Мышь теряет приличия, а Помидор радуется)	Глава 9 Мышиный главнокомандующий вынужден дать сигнал к отступлению	Գլուխ 9 Մկների գլխավոր հրամանատարն ստիպված է լինում նահանջի հրաման տալ
Capitolo 10 Una Talpa esploratrice, con finale poco felice Перевод: (Крот-исследователь с несчастливым концом)	Глава 10 Путешествие Чиполлино и Крота из одной тюрьмы в другую	Գլուխ 10 Չիպոլինոյի և խլուրդի ճանապարհորդությունը մի բանտից մյուսը

Dwelling further on the descriptive plot and the symbolic undertones of the novel, let us consider the excerpts that pinpoint the significance of the epithet *‘thick’* translated similarly into the two languages.

1.a) *Il barone Melarancia aveva una pancia fuori del comune: cosa logica, del resto, perché non faceva altro che mangiare dalla mattina alla sera e dalla sera alla mattina, frenando le mascelle solo qualche oretta per fare un pisolino. (25)*

У барона Апельсина был необыкновенно толстый живот. У барона Апельсина был необыкновенно толстый живот. Впрочем, ничего удивительного в этом не было, потому что он только и делал, что ел, давая челюстям отдых всего лишь на часок-другой во время сна. (41)

Բարոն Նարինջը արտակարգ մեծ փոր ուներ: Ի միջի այլոց, զարմանալու ոչինչ չկա այստեղ, նա բացի ուտելուց ուրիշ ոչինչ չէր անում, և միայն քնելիս էին նրա ծնոսները մի երկու ժամ հանգստանում: (20)

1.b) *Donna Prima cominciò a piangere:*

- Tu non vuoi ricevere i miei parenti. Povero baroncino, tu non gli vuoi bene. (32)

Синьора графиня Старшая заплакала:

- Ты не хочешь принимать моих родственников. Ах, ты никогда не любила моего толстого, бедного барона! (41)

Մինորա կոմսուհի Ավագը լաց եղավ:

- Դու չես ուզում իմ հարազատներին ընդունել: Ա՛խ, դու երբեք չես սիրել իմ խեղճ հաստափոր բարոնին: (21)

1.c) *Il tuo povero marito, pace al suo nocciolo, aveva parenti piccoli e magri, che quasi non*

*si vedono a occhio nudo. Il mio povero marito invece, pace al suo nocciolone, aveva parenti **grandi e grossi, visibili** a grande distanza. Il barone Melarancia era davvero visibile a grande distanza: a distanza di un chilometro si poteva scambiarlo per una collina. (39)*

*А у моего бедного покойного мужа - мир его праху! - родственники все как на подбор: **высокие, толстые, видные.***

И в самом деле, барон Апельсин был очень видной особой - он даже за версту казался целой горой. (45)

*Իսկ իմ խեղճ հանգուցյալ ամուսնու (աստված հոգին լուսավորի) ազգականները ոնց որ ջոկածուրիկ լինեն՝ **բարձր են, հաստ ու նշանավոր:** Եվ իսկապես, բարոն Նարինջը շատ նշանավոր անձնավորությունն էր. նա մի կիլոմետրի վրա էլ սարի չափ էր երևում: (21)*



1.d) *Si dovette subito provvedere per un aiutante che lo aiutasse a portare la pancia, perché da solo non ce la faceva più.*

*Пришлось сразу же нанять для него слугу, который возил бы его живот, - сам барон уже не в состоянии был **таскать своё внушительное брюхо.** (42)*

*Ստիպված նրա համար ծառա վարձեցին, որպեսզի նրա մեծ փորը տեղափոխի: Ինքը բարոնն ի վիճակի չէր **քարշ տալու իր հսկայական փորը:** (21)*

In the wake of the critical in-depth analysis of the aforementioned passages, we can observe that the pragmatic strategy of cultural filtering suggested by Chesterman is utilized. In the SL (Italian), the expression '**fuori del commune**' means extraordinary, abnormal, which is translated into intermediary language as '**thick**' (толстый). Moreover, in some passages, the word thick is intensified through the syntactical stylistic device climax. This phenomenon is visible in the Armenian version through semantic gradation '**մեծ փոր- հաստափոր- հաստ ու նշանավոր**' (big belly-thick/fat belly-thick and remarkable) which carries cultural elements. Interestingly enough, the word '**նշանավոր**' in Armenian is directly perceived with the wealthy man or merchant, which is not evidently the case in the mediated language rather than

an adjective describing the massive size of the body. According to the categorization suggested by Chesterman as compared with the ST, the pragmatic strategy of addition ‘*толстый живот,*’ ‘*внушительное брюхо,*’ ‘*մեծ փոր, հաստ ու նշանավոր*’ (*big belly, thick and remarkable*) is applied by both Russian and Armenian translators. Furthermore, a close reading of the SL (ex.2) and the target ones highlights that the Italian version is emotionally void. In the case of the third sample in the TL, the stylistic device of hyperbole is available but is surprisingly not manifested in the ST. Consequently, the impact of the mediated language, namely Russian, is undeniable: ‘*ранца-внушительное брюхо-հսկայական փոր*’ (*enormous belly*). Another important aspect regards the dominance of idiomatic expressions, which affect the general approach and basic choices in the translation processes, particularly in the ST. The below-mentioned idiomatic expression conveys the inner web of semantic and culturological references stratified in the use of given languages.

2.a) *Accorrevo Donna Seconda con le mani nei capelli:*

- *Mandarino, che cosa ti fanno?*

- *Non mi stirano bene le camicie, e io voglio morire!*

Per convincerlo a restare in vita Donna Seconda gli regalò tutte le camicie di seta del suo povero marito. (22)

Помогите, умираю!

Синьора графиня Младшая прибежала сломя голову:

- *Милый Мандарине, что с тобой?*

- *Ах, у вас так плохо погладили мои рубашки, что мне остаётся только умереть!*

Чтобы уговорить его остаться в живых, синьора графиня Младшая дарила Мандарину одну за другой шёлковые рубашки своего покойного мужа. (31)

Գլխապատառ փազու՛մ գալիս էր սինյորա կոմսուհի Կրոստերը իրար հետևից Մանդարինին էր նվիրում իր հանգուցյալ ամուսնու մետաքսե շապիկները: (21)

2.b) *I colpi, in realtà, erano quelli dei mortaretti che scoppiavano in onore del Principe Limone, ma la gente si spaventò tanto che si mise a scappare da tutte le parti.* (35)

На самом деле это была вовсе не стрельба, а треск праздничного фейерверка, устроенного в честь принца Лимона. Но толпа так перепугалась, что шарахнулась во все стороны от солдат-Лимончиков. (23)

Երականում որանք բոլորովին էլ կրակոցներ չէին, այլ իշխան Լիմոնի պատվին կազմակերպված տոնական հրավառություններ: Բայց մարդիկ այնպես սարսփախար եղան, որ գլխապատառ փախան այս ու այն կողմ: (28)

As is known, idiomatic expressions reflect the mentality, habits, and customs of people. Hence, in our passages, we put stress on the idiom translation ‘*con le mani nei capelli*’ (lit. with the hands in one’s hair), which might be translated as ‘*throw up one’s hands,*’ meaning to express utter hopelessness. Similarly, the mediated language transfers the same meaning and form of the above-mentioned idiom in the target language too.

Analyzing the translations of mediated and target texts, we observe that ‘*con le mani nei capelli- сломя голову-գլխապատառ փազել*’ depicts descriptive and explicatory translations. In Italian the word ‘*capelli*’ means ‘*hair*’ in plural form whilst in the Russian and Armenian linguo-culturological contexts, we have the phrase

expressed with *'head'* which evokes importance, urgency, haste, and fear of doing something immediately. In this very passage, one of Chesterman`s semantic strategies, i.e., literal translation, is applied, which maximally indicates closeness to the source language.

As for excerpt 2b, in the Italian version, the word *'scappare'* means *'to escape'* while the Russian variant is absolutely different from the source text, indicating *'шарахнулась во все стороны.'* Comparatively, in the Armenian text, the translator used the phrasal verb *'զրիսապատառ փախան'* underlining the scary way people ran away. In this vein, it can be noticed that cultural filtering of the semantic level is prevailing.

We have already pointed out that stylistic traits are of major importance and reflect the specific qualities of G. Rodari`s style. Hence, in another sample parallelizing three passages, we detect that a few stylistic expressive means, such as hyperbole, simile, and idiom, through which the utterance becomes more descriptive and impressive, are available. In the mediated language, the whole given sentence is coloured by hyperbole; any piece of the given information is exaggerated *'Во рту горит, а язык тяжелый, будто на него налипло фунтов двадцать замазки.'* More interestingly, the translations from the ST into MT and TTs are of great prominence. The expression *'la lingua di cemento armato'* means to have a concrete reinforced tongue, while in the Russian language, the word concrete is translated into *'замазка,'* which is void of any idiomatic expression, while *'ձյուր'* (tar) in the Armenian language is closely related to *'ձյուրի պես կպնել'* idiom meaning to stick to a person or a thing in a negative way. Furthermore, a close reading reveals a series of rhetorical transformations, namely from metaphor to simile in the target text, from metaphor-to simile from the ST to MT and TTs. In the source text and mediated texts, *'avere il fuoco in gola- во рту горит'* correspondingly are transformed into simile in the target text *'բերանիս մեջ ոնց որ կրակ լինի լցրած,'* likewise in Italian the metaphor *'ho la lingua di cemento armato'* is changed into simile in Russian and Armenian texts *'будто на него налипло фунтов двадцать замазки'- կարծես վրան մի քսան ֆունտ ձյուր է կպել'* thereof.

(ST) metaphor → (MT) simile → (TT) simile

3. Chissà cos'ho mangiato, questa mattina, - borbottava Mastino. - Che mi abbiano messo troppo sale nella zuppa? Mi sembra di avere il fuoco in gola e *ho la lingua di cemento armato.* (34)

"Чего это я наелся сегодня утром? - припоминал он. - Может быть, мой суп пересолили? Во рту горит, а язык тяжелый, будто на него *налипло фунтов двадцать замазки.*" (23)

«Ի՞նչ եմ կերել ես այսօր, - փորձեց հիշել նա, - գուցե սուպը շատ աղի՞ էր, բերանիս մեջ ոնց որ կրակ լինի լցրած, իսկ լեզուս այնպես է ծանրացել, *կարծես վրան մի քսան ֆունտ ձյուր է կպել*»: (35)

In a nutshell, the semantic strategy of trope change is unveiled in this passage.

As for the presented words *'cemento- замазка- ձյուր,'* all of them are building materials. However, in three languages, the authors implemented three different words

related to the same category, each of which typically characterizes cultural perception and is easily comprehensible in each language.

8. Conclusion

To sum up, due to a closer study of the nature of mediated translation, some distinctive features and transformative qualities on different levels of the target texts were disclosed. Through the analyses of both the original and mediated and target texts on the level of fairy tale rhetoric, it becomes possible to draw the subsequent deductions:

- most of the passages from the mediated language were translated directly into Armenian,
- there exists a tendency to generalize details that were specific in the ST by using the superordinate, such as by translating ‘*pancia*’ into ‘*внушительное брюхо - толстый живот- հսկայական փոր- մեծ փոր – հաստափոր.*’
- some of the phrases and tropes were equivalents from ST to MTs and accurately transferred cultural and pragmatic aspects of the pivot language,
- in some excerpts, the transformations of some tropes from mediated language, additions/explicitations particularly from Italian into Russian, and omissions from Russian into Armenian have been noticed,
- mediated language greatly impacts the target language, assuming that the source language (as it is evident in the above- given analyses of the samples) lacks expressive, emotional, and in-depth descriptive features.

Therefore, a closer understanding of translation processes could open up a conducive field for new considerations regarding the relationship between source text and mediated text translation problems and translation strategies, which, as we have attempted to highlight in this study, are a cornerstone for further research translation process.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

CROSSING CULTURAL BOUNDARIES: THE FIRST TRANSLATION OF *CRIME AND PUNISHMENT* IN ITALY

IRIS UCCELLO*

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4575-6102>

UNIVERSITY OF VERONA

Abstract: Indirect translation, criticized for impurity, played a pivotal role in introducing Russian literature to fin-de-siècle Italy. Initial Italian translations of Russian classics stemmed from French translations, with France serving as a key hub for Russian literary reception in Europe. This article delves into the first Italian translation of "Crime and Punishment" to explore the nuances of this process. It examines the trade-offs—what was lost in translation—and highlights how the mediation through French translation paradoxically aided the reception of Dostoevsky in late 19th-century Italy.

Keywords: Dostoevsky; indirect translation; Crime and Punishment; literary reception

1. Introduction

Indirect translation is frequently stigmatized as a form of impure and erroneous translational practice (Landers et al. 2001) due to its lack of fidelity to the source text and culture, resulting mostly in the loss of semantic nuances. Despite these reservations, indirect translation played a pivotal role in facilitating the recognition of literature from distant cultures; so it was, for example, for the first translations of Russian literature in fin-de-siècle Italy (Baselica 2019). In those years France emerged as the foremost bastion of receptivity to Russian literature in Europe¹. For instance, the first Italian translation of *Crime and Punishment* in 1889 (Dostoevski 1889) was mediated from the first French translation (Dostoïevski 1884). The influence of this first translation is still evident today, exemplified by the enduring usage of the title *Delitto e castigo* instead of *Delitto e pena*².

* irisucello41@gmail.com



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¹ A good example could be the publication of Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé's *Le Roman Russe* in 1886, the first extended work on Russian literature in Europe.

² 'Castigo' is a clear calque from the French 'châtiment.' 'Châtiment' has no judicial connotation, as the words 'peine' ('pena' in Italian) has. In Russian there is just one word for these two concepts: 'наказание' which is both a legal and internal punishment. Dostoevsky aimed at conferring the word 'наказание' a legal meaning. (Baselica 2011).

Despite these linguistic nuances, this translation played a pivotal role in introducing a Russian classic in late nineteenth-century Italy and mediating a culture perceived as savage (Renton 1961). In my article, I aim to analyze these translations to elucidate on the extent of the loss sustained from the original text during the indirect translation, but also how these losses, predominantly of a stylistic and semantic nature, facilitated a more favorable reception for a text that might have faced misjudgment had it adhered more closely to its original. This first indirect translation helps us to better understand how the first reception of Russian classics and Dostoevsky in Italy worked, and to understand how translation practices were related to and influenced by the cultural milieu in which they were made. The first translations of Dostoevsky in Italy have never been studied, due to heavy criticism toward the quality of these translations, never delving further into them.

2. The Context

First of all, I would like to provide a brief overview of the plot, the style and reception of *Crime and Punishment*.

Rodion Raskolnikov, a former student residing in the heart of St. Petersburg, driven by conflicting ideologies, embarks on the gruesome act of murdering an elderly pawnbroker, Alyona Ivanovna. Subsequently, he grapples with a tumultuous internal struggle resolving to confess his crime. Following his confession, Raskolnikov is met with a sentence of exile to Siberia. During his exile, Raskolnikov undergoes a profound metamorphosis, experiencing a moral and spiritual awakening. He emerges as a more compassionate and empathetic individual. The novel concludes with a glimmer of hope for Raskolnikov as he embarks on a process of rebuilding his life alongside Sonia in Siberia.

Notably, upon the first publication of *Crime and Punishment* in the Russian literary journal *Russkiy vestnik 'The Russian Messenger'* (1866), the reception was nothing short of extraordinary. As Nikolay Strakhov eloquently observed, the novel garnered immense acclaim and attention, signifying its profound impact on the literary landscape:

Только его («Преступление и наказание») и читали в этом 1866 г., только об нем и говорили охотники до чтения, говорили, обыкновенно жалуясь на подавляющую силу романа, на тяжелое впечатление, от которого люди с здоровыми нервами почти заболели, а люди с слабыми нервами принуждены были оставлять чтение (Strakhov 1883).

[“In 1866 everyone was reading it (*Crime and Punishment*), readers prior to reading were discussing it. They usually lamented the overwhelming power of the novel, the heavy impression from which people with healthy nerves almost fell ill, and those with weak nerves were compelled to abandon reading.”] (Translation mine, *I. U.*).

Not only the topic and the philosophical issues the novel engaged in, but also the language and style of the novel were very peculiar for its contemporary audience. Within the novel, each character possesses its unique linguistic characteristics, albeit the most expressive linguistic portrait is reserved for the main character. Dostoevsky deftly illustrates Raskolnikov's dual nature through various stylistic devices, including

the disjointedness of his speech, the disharmony in his syntax, and, most significantly, the contrast between the external and internal forms of his speech (Belov 1979). The writer's distinctive and captivating rhythm draws the reader into the character's complexities.

In less than two decades, *Crime and Punishment* garnered significant attention abroad, leading to translations in numerous European languages. It received a remarkable total of 26 translations in Italy. I presume this considerable amount of translations is related to the efforts to close the gap with the original text. The French translations, which number six, reflect a different approach in translation. André Markowicz, who translated *Crime and Punishment* (2016) lamented the consistent efforts of French translators to adapt, Frenchify, and sanitize the original text to conform to French literary and grammatical standards. According to Markowicz, French translations often mirrored a particular French literary era more than they preserved the original literary context and language (Markowicz, 2014). This fact is indeed true for the first translation of *Crime and Punishment*, where the primary goal was to align the literary text with literary and grammatical French norms. Consequently, the translations potentially reflected the literary and linguistic context of France more than that of the original text.

Thus, it is fundamental to delve into the historical and cultural context in which these translations were produced to better understand them. When Dostoevsky arrived in Europe, there was also the decadent movement which had thematic and philosophical similarities with Dostoevsky's works (exploration of human nature and taboos, response to social and cultural changes, pessimism and nihilism, irony and paradox). However, while these commonalities provided a fertile ground for the reception of his novels in Europe, there were significant differences between the Decadent movement and Dostoevsky, such as his literary style. The prose of Dostoevsky was considered all but aesthetic or beautiful by European audiences. Enrico Montecorboli, an Italian dramatist who penned the preface for the first publication of *Crime and Punishment* (Dostoevski 1889) may have regarded Dostoevsky's prose as disconcerting rather than aesthetically gratifying. He was convinced that a brilliant author must possess a sense of proportion, and according to Montecorboli, Dostoevsky, lacking such measure, cannot be deemed a genius. (Montecorboli 1889). Thus, in the act of translation, it became imperative to impose a sense of proportion upon his nervous and discontinuous style. The flourishing aestheticism and decadent prose that characterized this period prompted a modification of Dostoevsky's distinct linguistic style. This adaptation aimed at aligning his narrative with the refined literary sensibilities of French and Italian audiences, characterized by an inclination for ornate language and stylistic beauty. Consequently, Dostoevsky's intricate and intense linguistic expressions underwent a process of refinement and adaptation to the linguistic norms and tastes prevalent in the French and Italian literary spheres during that era.

3. Translation Analysis

For the analysis, I have selected pivotal extracts from *Crime and Punishment*. In the tables I have decided to show the last Italian translation by Damiano Rebecchini

(Dostoevskij 2013), recognized as the most faithful to the Russian text, to show how, after 26 attempts, Dostoevskij is now read in Italy (as if he was a different author).

Table 1. Part 1, Chapter 6.

<p>Russian original text³</p> <p>Впоследствии Раскольникову случилось как-то узнать, зачем именно мещанин и баба приглашали к себе Лизавету. (...)Так как на рынке продавать невыгодно, то и искали торговку, а Лизавета этим занималась: брала комиссии, ходила по делам и имела большую практику, потому что была очень честна и всегда говорила крайнюю цену: какую цену скажет, так тому и быть. Говорила же вообще мало, и как уже сказано, была такая смиренная и пугливая...(р. 52)</p>
<p>First French translation (1884)</p> <p>Raskolnikoff apprit plus tard pourquoi le marchand et la marchande avaient invité Élisabeth à venir chez eux. (...) Ces gens cherchaient donc à se mettre en rapport avec une revendeuse à la toilette ; or, Élisabeth exerçait ce métier. Elle avait une nombreuse clientèle parce qu'elle était fort honnête et disait toujours le dernier prix : avec elle, il n'y avait pas à marchander. En général, elle parlait peu; comme nous l'avons déjà dit, elle était fort douce et fort craintive... (1, p. 77)</p>
<p>First indirect Italian translation (1889)</p> <p>Raskolnikoff seppe più tardi perchè il mercante e la moglie avevano invitato Elisabetta a casa loro. (...) Quella gente dunque cercava di mettersi in relazione con una rivenditrice d'abiti; ora, Elisabetta esercitava questo mestiere, ed aveva una numerosa clientela perchè era molto onesta e diceva sempre l'ultimo prezzo: con lei non si mercanteggiava. In generale parlava poco; come abbiamo già detto, era molto mite e timida...(1, p. 91, 92)</p>
<p>Last Italian translation (2013)</p> <p>In seguito, Raskol'nikov venne per caso a sapere per quale motivo il bottegaio e la donna avessero detto a Lizaveta di passare da loro. (...) Siccome venderle al mercato non conveniva, cercavano qualcuno che le vendesse in proprio e Lizaveta lo faceva . Prendeva la merce per conto terzi, andava a chiedere a destra e a manca e aveva un buon giro, perché era onesta e dava sempre l'ultimo prezzo: se dava un prezzo, era quello. Parlava poco e, come si è detto, era una donna così mite, timorosa... (p. 147)</p>

In the first Italian translation, the fidelity to the French text is evident, the texts are pretty much identical. Notably, the French translation, and consequently its Italian counterpart, appears to simplify the narrative from the outset, thereby omitting the temporal dynamism present in the original Russian text. (“случилось как-то знать” is rendered in a very simple way: “seppe più tardi”).

A deliberate choice is observed to maintain linguistic simplicity, eschewing implicit elements. The translators, motivated by a commitment to both clarity and an aesthetic quality of expression, opt for explicit renderings, thereby sacrificing the distinctive linguistic tension inherent in Dostoevsky's literary works (“она этим занималась” is rendered with “Elisabetta esercitava questo mestiere”). This explicit approach, while serving the purpose of enhancing comprehension and fostering aesthetic appeal, inadvertently leads to a diminution of the intricate linguistic tension that is a hallmark of Dostoevsky's prose. The preference for explicitness, aimed at ensuring transparency

³ For citations of the Russian text, the reference edition is: Dostoevsky, Fëdor Mikhailovich. 1973. “Prestuplenie i nakazanie”. in Id., *Polnoe sobranje sochinenii v trizhati tomakh*, t. 6. Moskva: Nauka.

of meaning, results in a dilution of the inherent complexities and subtle nuances present in the original Russian text.

Table 2. Part 1, Chapter 6

Russian original text
<p>— Эж ведь спит! — вскричала она с негодованием, — и всё-то он спит!</p> <p>(...)— Опять спать! — вскричала Настасья, — да ты болен, что ль?</p> <p>Он ничего не отвечал.</p> <p>— Чаю-то хошь?</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>— Болен аль нет? — спросила Настасья, и опять не получила ответа.</p> <p>— Ты хошь бы на улицу вышел, — сказала она, помолчав, — тебя хошь бы ветром обдуло. Есть-то будешь, что ль? (p. 55-56)</p>
First French translation (1884)
<p>— Il n'est pas encore levé ! s'écria-t-elle avec indignation. Peut-on dormir ainsi !</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>— Encore ! cria Nastasia, mais tu es donc malade?</p> <p>Il ne répondit pas.</p> <p>— Veux-tu du thé ?</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>— Es-tu malade ou ne l'es-tu pas ? demanda Nastasia.</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>— Tu devrais sortir, dit-elle après un silence; le grand air te ferait du bien. Tu vas manger, n'est-ce pas ? (1, p. 83)</p>
First Italian indirect translation (1889)
<p>— Non s'è ancora alzato! esclamò con indignazione. È un modo questo di dormire!</p> <p>(...)</p>

— Ancora! gridò Nastasia, ma dunque sei ammalato?

Egli non rispose.

— Vuoi il thè?

(...)

— Sei malato, sì o no? domandò Nastasia.

(...)

— Tu dovresti uscire, disse lei, l'aria libera ti farebbe bene. Mangerai, n'è vero? (1, p. 98-99)

Last Italian translation (2013)

“Ancora dormi!” disse indispettita. “Ma non fai altro che dormire!”

(...)

“Di nuovo a dormire?!” esclamò Nastas’ja. “Sarai mica malato?” Lui non rispose nulla.

“Il tè lo vuoi o no?”

(...)

“Sei ammalato o no?” domandò Nastas’ja, ma di nuovo non ebbe risposta.

“Ti dovresti prendere una boccata d’aria per strada,” disse lei, dopo una breve pausa, “un po’ di fresco ti farebbe bene. Vuoi mangiare o no?” (p. 154-155)

In Part 6, Chapter 6, my attention focused on the Russian employed by Nastasya, a servant and cook in Raskolnikov’s building. Nastasya’s speech exhibits marked deviations from standard Russian, notably characterized by the substitution of “или” with “аль” and the insertion of the emphatic “-ro” suffix, the use of “хощь” instead of “хочешь,” imparting her discourse with a unique and culturally resonant quality. All the translations, even the last one, diverge significantly from the authentic linguistic stylings of a Russian servant, assuming instead a highly elevated literary register. This departure is particularly noteworthy, as the Italian translation faithfully adheres to the French source text, thereby perpetuating a linguistic disjunction from the genuine speech patterns of a Russian domestic worker. The stark incongruity between Nastasya’s colloquial Russian expressions and the elevated linguistic tenor in Italian is not casual. Differently from Dostoevsky, who conferred a specific type of language to different characters, in these translations all the characters speak with the same language. It should be said that it is quite impossible to render this specific kind of language, as can be seen from the last translation, that still does not render the peculiar language of Nastasya. Maybe in Italian that could be done only through a dialect. The

language used by Nastasya in Russia is a social dialect while in Italian there is no social dialect but only regional dialects.

Table 3. Part 1, Chapter 7

Russian original text
Удар пришелся в самое темя, чему способствовал ее малый рост. (...) Кровь хлынула, как из опрокинутого стакана, и тело повалилось навзничь. (p. 63)
First French translation (1884)
Le coup atteignit juste le sinciput, ce à quoi contribua la petite taille de la victime (...) Le sang jaillit à flots, et le corps s'abattit lourdement par terre. (1, p. 96, 97)
First Italian indirect translation (1889)
Il colpo colse giusto il sincipite, cosa a cui contribuì la bassa statura della vittima (...) Il sangue spiccìo a fiotti e il corpo ricadde pesantemente a terra. (1, p. 114)
Last Italian translation (2013)
Anche per via della sua bassa statura il colpo la prese proprio sulla sommità della testa (...) Un copioso fiotto di sangue iniziò a sgorgare come da un bicchiere rovesciato e il corpo si riversò supino a terra. (p. 174)

Part 1, Chapter 7, delineates the pivotal moment of the pawnbroker's murder and a notable simplification in the descriptive elements becomes apparent. This is exemplified by the absence of a metaphor that is present in the original text: “Кровь хлынула, как из опрокинутого стакана” [“The blood gushed out as if from an overturned glass”]. (Translation mine, *I. U.*). This exclusion is particularly noteworthy. The metaphor in question, depicting blood as if pouring from an overturned glass, serves as a poignant and vivid image, intensifying the portrayal of the blood flow and potentially evoking a visceral response. Its absence in the translations may be attributed to a perceived need for temperance, catering to the sensibilities of a European readership.

Table 4. Part 4, Chapter 4

Russian original text
Да ведь я... бесчестная... я великая, великая грешница! Ах, что вы это сказали! (p. 246)
First French translation (1884)
Mais je suis... une créature déshonorée... Ah! pourquoi avez-vous dit cela? (1, p. 50)
First Italian indirect translation (1889)

Ma io sono... una creatura disonorata... Ah! Perché avete detto ciò? (1, p. 135)
Last Italian translation (2013)
Ma se io... l'onore l'ho perduto, io... sono una grande, una grande peccatrice! Ah, ma cosa avete detto! (p. 629)

The translational trend of abridged or altered content is recurrent throughout the novel, as highlighted in a poignant dialogue between Raskolnikov and Sonia, where Sonia confesses that “she is a great sinner” (Translation mine, *I. U.*) twice, the Italian and French translations opt for a singular repetition. This modification aims to preserve a more subdued tonal quality in the heroine's speech. The stylistic choice of rendering “великая грешница” as “grande peccatrice” in the last translation aligns closely with the original, reflecting a nuanced appreciation for the depth of meaning and connotation encapsulated in the Russian phrase, as opposed to a more literal interpretation like “creatura disonorata” found in earlier translations.

Table 6. Epilogue

Russian original text
Но тут уж начинается новая история, история постепенного обновления человека, история постепенного перерождения его, постепенного перехода из одного мира в другой, знакомства с новой, доселе совершенно неизвестною действительностью. Это могло бы составить тему нового рассказа, — но теперешний рассказ наш окончен. (p. 422)
First French translation (1884)
Mais ici commence une seconde histoire, l'histoire de la lente rénovation d'un homme, de sa régénération progressive, de son passage graduel d'un monde à un autre. Ce pourrait être la matière d'un nouveau récit, — celui que nous avons voulu offrir au lecteur est terminé. (2, p. 308)
First Italian indirect translation (1889)
Ma qui comincia una seconda storia, la storia del lento riconoscimento di un uomo, della sua rigenerazione progressiva, del suo passaggio graduale da una vita ad un'altra. Potrebbe essere l'argomento di un nuovo racconto, - quello che abbiamo voluto offrire al lettore è terminato. (3, p. 143)
Last Italian translation (2013)
Ma qui inizia già un'altra storia, la storia del graduale rinnovamento di un uomo, la storia della sua graduale rinascita, del graduale passaggio da un mondo ad un altro, della presa di coscienza di una nuova realtà a lui totalmente sconosciuta. Questo potrebbe essere il tema di un nuovo racconto, ma il nostro finisce qui. (p. 1061)

A notable stylistic aspect of the novel is the deliberate use of repetition. Viktor Toporov underscores this stylistic device, pointing out that words and adverbs are constantly repeated (Toporov 1993). In the last sentence of the epilogue, Dostoevsky employs repetition with the word “постепенный” [“gradual”] (Translation mine, *I. U.*) to underscore Raskolnikov's incremental redemption. This repetition serves the purpose of clarity, emphasizing a gradual transformation. However, in early translations, the stylistic device of repetition is often eschewed, reflecting the prevailing aesthetic norms of the time, which discouraged the repetition of words for the sake of literary refinement.

4. Conclusion

The concept of indirect translation, though generally viewed negatively, can assume a positive role in literary translation. It serves to bridge the cultural and linguistic gaps between distant cultures by introducing works through an intermediary culture, language, or literary tradition familiar to the target audience. This approach facilitates the accessibility of works from distant cultures. Notably, the initial translations of Russian works into Italian were mediated through French translations (Baselica 2011), contributing to the acceptance and understanding of Russian literature in Italy. The familiarity with French culture and language provided a gateway for Italian readers to appreciate the richness of Russian literary tradition.

While acknowledging that these early translations may contain errors and French inspired phrases, their historical significance lies in their role as conduits for introducing Russian literature to the Italian audience. Despite potential challenges in readability by contemporary standards, these translations played a crucial role in fostering an appreciation for the works of Russian writers in Italy, contributing to the broader diffusion of Russian literary masterpieces.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

SIGHT TRANSLATION AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL IN TEACHING INTERPRETATION OF POLITICAL TEXTS

KULWA YOHANA MATALU*
<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6214-2826>
UNIVERSITY OF DODOMA

Abstract: In translation teaching, sight translation has been used, for decades, as a pedagogical tool to enhance students' interpreting skills in a myriad text genres. In this study, sight translation was used as a pedagogical tool to teach translation and interpretation of political texts to 37 undergraduate third year students of the academic year 2022/2023 at the university of Dodoma, Tanzania. The 3 collected English political speeches were chunked and organized in PowerPoint form to be sight translated into Kiswahili. The student sight translator displayed its content on the wall through a projector which was connected to a personal computer. When sight translating, the other students were comparing his/her verbal renditions into the target language with the content in the source language which was displayed on the wall through a projector. The study revealed that some English political expressions that refer to the address forms of the heads of state and government, the official residence of the heads of state and government, titles of foreign dignitaries, the etiquette of recognizing meeting attendees, and the capital city when used to denote a government or country could not be easily sight translated into Kiswahili for a number of reasons. Despite the challenges that sight translation may encounter during implementation, it remains a friendliest, adaptable, and inclusive pedagogical tool in translation and interpretation classes in all levels of learning.

Keywords: sight translation; pedagogical tool; political texts; interpretation

1. Introduction

In this paper, sight translation is the oral rendition of a written text whereby the interpreter receives the source text written visual input, processes it and reproduces its meaning orally in the target language. The sight translator does not need aural inputs to interpret into the target language as it is in other interpreting encounters. In sight translation, reading information in the source text and interpreting it into the target language is done simultaneously though with reading preceding the interpreting. Sight translation needs a quick analysis of the text and accurate interpretation of its meaning in the target language (Clavijo and Marin 2013).

* matalukulwa@gmail.com



Sight translation can be implemented in three ways. In the first instance, the sight translator obtains the text in advance and prepares himself before the actual interpretation moment (rehearsed sight translation). In this study, each student was asked to collect a political speech that he/she will use in sight translation in the class. In view of this, they performed a rehearsed kind of sight translation because they had access to the text before they sight translated them in the class. In the second instance, the sight translator is given an unknown text and asked to interpret it impromptu (unrehearsed sight translation). In the third instance, the sight translator is given a text in advance to be interpreted as the speaker reads it (sight interpretation or simultaneous interpretation with the text) (Obidina 2015).

Unrehearsed sight translation task is more cognitively demanding as the interpreter is faced with anxiety of the unseen text content, cultural nuances, unprepared coping strategies during the rendition and the potential reaction of the audience to his oral output of the message. In rehearsed sight translation, the sight translator already knows the text content and is therefore prepared for its delivery and coping mechanisms amidst linguistic and cultural differences between the two languages and thus it is less cognitively demanding. The sight interpretation, in my opinion, is the most cognitively demanding and stressful since the interpreter receives and processes two same inputs-aural and visual-which he has to process them before rendering their meanings into the target language. Even though the interpreter receives the text in advance and prepares for its delivery, the fact that there is another awaiting task of listening to the speaker places his preparations in uncertainty as it may be derailed by the speaker's accent, tone, and text transformations which involve omissions and additions. However, when compared with other modes of interpreting, such as simultaneous and consecutive, sight translation is less cognitively demanding (Agrifoglio 2004).

1.1. Sight Translation as a Pedagogical Tool

Sight translation has been used as a pedagogical and assessment tool in foreign language curricula, translator/interpreter training and translation teaching (Schjoldager 2004; Chen 2015). In foreign language curricula, it is used as a pedagogical tool to teach foreign language skills such as reading, speaking, vocabulary and comprehension. For example, Fatollahi (2016) used sight translation as a pedagogical tool to enhance reading abilities of students learning English as a foreign language in Iran and the results showed that when it is used to teach, it helps students improve their reading abilities better than when the traditional pedagogical tools are used.

In translator and interpreter training, sight translation is widely taught as a unit of learning, separate course, a pedagogical and assessment tool to prepare translator and interpreter trainees for actual simultaneous and consecutive interpretations. In consecutive interpretation, it is taught at the beginning of the course and in both consecutive and simultaneous interpreting courses, it is taught after consecutive interpretation to help trainees transform into simultaneous and simultaneous interpretation with the text modes of interpreting (Li 2014; Yamada 2020). As an assessment tool, sight translation is used as an aptitude test to determine the trainees'

ability before admission into translator and interpreter programmes (Čeňková 2010), formative assessment to monitor and improve learning (Obidina 2015), and summative assessment (Schjoldager 2004; Čeňková 2010) and certification of professional interpreters (Chen 2015).

In translation teaching, which is the focus of this study, sight translation has been used, for decades, as a pedagogical tool to enhance students' interpreting skills. Sight translation is the easiest and friendliest way to implement by both teachers and students in the classroom as it requires minimal time for each student to practise it within an average class size, environment and supervision. It can be implemented in all interpreting and translation classes including secondary, university and translator/interpreter education depending on its design, content and implementation strategies. The use of sight translation in translation and interpreting classes is acknowledged to have a numerous advantages including helping students avoid literal translation so as to ensure high quality interpretation product (Li 2014) and focus more on meaning than words during interpreting (Chen 2015).

The skills required in sight translation form the foundation for students' actual engagement in future professional translation and interpreting. Just as a driver training starts on the roadside to equip trainees with road driving skills before they engage in actual road driving, sight translation should be deemed as a roadside training form which students practise skills that are required in their future engagement in translation and interpretation. In order to practise sight translation in classrooms, students need a variety of skills including reading, vocabulary, anticipation, generalization, omission, chunking, condensation, delivery and accuracy among others (Čeňková 2010; Lee 2012; Nilsen & Monsrud 2015; Fang & Wang 2022) as explained in the following paragraphs:

Sight translation and reading comprehension are mutually reinforcing. Sight translation can be used as a pedagogical tool to enhance reading skills. When used as a pedagogical tool, sight translation has proven to be effective in enhancing learners' reading skills over other traditional pedagogical approaches (Fatollahi 2016). That is to say, when students sight translate from their A-language into their B-language, they learn rapid reading skills and when they do the opposite, they learn comprehension skills in the their B-language. According to Nilsen & Monsrud (2015), sight translation needs a good foundation on reading skills to practise it effectively. The sight translator, therefore, needs reading and comprehension skills to cope with time pressure and efforts required during sight translation.

When reading a foreign language text, the vocabulary plays a significant role for the reader to comprehend what he is reading. It is widely acknowledged that the higher the vocabulary knowledge one has, the higher the text comprehension ability they have and vice versa is true. The effectiveness of sight translation, as it is for other reading tasks, is dependent on the sight translator's knowledge of the vocabulary found in the text. The higher the knowledge of vocabulary in the source language text that the sight translator has, the higher the comprehension he will have which leads to the higher accuracy of the rendered information in the target language and the opposite is true. The rendered information in the target language is compromised by the sight translator's insufficiency knowledge of the vocabulary in the source text. In an attempt

to deal with unfamiliar words, Fang & Wang, (2022) report that student interpreters tend to omit the unfamiliar words in their sight translations, something that virtually compromises the adequacy and accuracy of the rendered information in the target language. Therefore, vocabulary knowledge underlies the primacy of reading comprehension which is the vital component required to accomplish successfully the sight translation task.

Anticipation as a strategy in interpretation reduces interpreter's overreliance on the speaker's output and time pressure to cope with the speaker's speed. In sight translation, it helps the sight translator avoid constant eye gaze at the text during which he is faced with a dual task of simultaneously facing the text and the audience. Through anticipation, the word for word or literal translation resulting from student interpreter's desire to find the meaning of each word at sight is avoided leading to the quality interpretation output that accounts for linguistic and extralinguistic elements which are highly encouraged in both interpretation and translation. Anticipation is, therefore, a crucial skill for each aspiring interpreter to acquire (Bartłomiejczyk 2008) before they engage in their awaiting interpreting assignments.

Languages define concepts differently and as such a concept can be expressed using a particular term in one language (particularization) while the other language may fail to have a particular term for the same concept and therefore require a general one to express it (generalization) (Molina and Hutardo Albir 2002). For example, while English makes a distinction between *refrigerator* and *freezer*, Kiswahili has only one general word for both *refregerator* and *freezer* which is either the lexicalized one *jokofu* or the naturalized one-*friji*. The sight translator requires the knowledge of generalization and particularization as an easy strategy to find equivalents in the target language. This knowledge would reduce hesitations and pauses that result from searching an exact equivalent of the source language term. Generalization can also be used as an option to render the source language term using a well known concept in the target language when the available specific term is deemed less familiar or too technical for the audience to understand.

If the information in the source text is deemed unnecessary to be rendered into the target language, it may be omitted. The omission is done to avoid repetition or when the audience can infer the omitted elements' meaning using experiential or contextual knowledge. The omission in the target language is necessitated by the source language superfluous nature of expressing things which does not exist in the target language (Molina and Hutardo Albir 2002). Since not anything can be omitted during interpretation, learning omission skills helps student interpreters and translators learn how to make their target language renditions respond to the norms of the target language text genre without sacrificing its content.

Related to omission is the condensation which means using few words in the target text to express the idea that has been expressed through many words in the source text (Molina and Hutardo Albir 2002). In order to condense, the interpreter needs to understand well all of the information in the source text before interpreting it wholly and as brief as possible, usually using own words into the target language. The condensation skill is required by student interpreters to help them shorten the delivery time and improve the quality of their interpretation output (Lee 2012).

Condensation is made possible by chunking which is also used in teaching and learning reading. It involves breaking the text into smaller meaningful segments. The sight translator just glances at the chunked piece of information instead of moving eyes rapidly to and from each sentence, something that would increase the information load to be processed and rendered. Reading each word in each sentence makes it hard for the sight translator to cope with speed, reorganize the information into acceptable target language patterns, and ensure smooth flow of the speech, something that usually ends up with a literal rendition of the source text. In sight translation, chunking the text reduces the information load and processing thereby enhancing understanding and speed of the rendition into the target language (Chen 2015).

All of the discussed skills in the foregoing paragraphs aim at enhancing sight translation delivery and accuracy. Delivery skills are required for the actual implementation of the task. Delivery skills include the time duration and flow of the target text rendition (Lee 2012). It is the skill that the sight translator needs to manage and accomplish his rendition. The effectiveness of the delivery is dependent on how the sight translator navigates through the other skills whose ultimate goal is to achieve accuracy. Accuracy is the benchmark through which the interpreter, the interpreting process, and the interpreting output is gauged. Like delivery, accuracy is dependent on how best the interpreter complementarily incorporates them in his interpreting activity.

1.2. Interpretation of Political Texts

Political speeches are delivered by politicians and/or top government officials to their fellow citizens to address national matters or to other politicians or diplomats in international meetings to address international matters. The choice of the language differs basing on whether it is delivered in national or international meetings. The language of political speeches delivered to fellow citizens for domestic purposes is typically characterised by the local customs and political systems of that country. For example, Pamungkas (2020) says that political speeches in Indonesia usually contain religious greetings at the beginning and end. Indonesia being a country with the largest population of Muslims in the world, no doubt that these greetings are mostly Islamic. In Tanzania, a secular country, when the speaker uses religious greetings at the beginning of the speech, he/she has to include both Islamic, Christian and customary greetings to avoid being religiously biased. This fear of being religiously biased, forces public speakers to use different greetings based on different religious denominations.

In international meetings, different greetings, political terms and, generally, language is used. In those forums, the language used is characterised by diplomacy and recognition of others' customs, political systems and ideologies. The speakers in international forums carefully choose and use political terms depending on the type of the delegates. Knowing the countries where the delegates come from is of paramount importance for determining the proper address terms, and avoiding inappropriate salutation. Political terms are tied to the discourse and context thereby forcing interpreters to always reconstruct them during their renditions to ensure appropriacy (Márdirosz 2014).

In view of cultural diversity, interpreting political texts is challenging. Some of the challenges which I owe to Newmark (1986) include the use of pronouns, euphemism, acronyms, metaphors and political jargons. For example, according to him, the pronoun *we* refers to those making the statement, *you* to the public and *they* the opposition, the bureaucracy, those in power if *we* remains in opposition. In Tanzania, the term *wenzetu-colleagues* connotatively refers to the opposing party when it is used by the ruling party or those in power and vice versa when it is used by the opposing party.

Euphemisms in political speeches require interpreter's world knowledge to render them appropriately. Currently, Russia refers to its intervention in Ukraine as *military operation* while the West refers to the same as *invasion*. For the interpreters, the accuracy and relevance of this translation is dependent on whether they are interpreting for the West or Russia.

Acronyms also need interpreters' cognitive and world knowledge to render them appropriately. Though the interpreter may transfer acronyms into the target language, the understanding of the fact that the acronym *CCM* stands for *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (Revolutionary State Party) and *CHADEMA* for *Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo* (Party for Democracy and Progress) and the fact that they are political parties in Tanzania is important. Similarly, the understanding of the fact that the acronym *PLO* stands for *Palestine Liberation Organization* in addition to the fact that it is a Palestinian nationalist coalition with the aim of establishing a Palestine State is important too to ensure their appropriate renditions. Knowing these acronyms and their meanings gives the interpreter a number of options on how to render them better. For example, instead of transferring them, they may descriptively reconstruct a rendition that reflects the same concept.

Political metaphors require an understanding beyond words by the interpreter. Political metaphors are used by politicians, diplomats and media to influence the attitude of the listeners in favor of or against one's position and sometimes to express one's satisfactions, dissatisfactions or frustrations on a certain matter. In Tanzanian politics, Jilala (2016) exemplifies several metaphors that are very common in Tanzanian politics. The term *Kujivua gamba* – *sloughing* connotatively means to rebrand. It is used to refer to the politician's act of joining a new political party to denote that he/she is leaving the evil side to join the virtuous one. The term *mchwa-termites* is used metaphorically to refer to the corrupt government officials who devour public funds just like termites do on woods. Nowadays, the term *chawa-lice* is metaphorically used to denote those (especially youth) who praise everything and do anything to please those in power in their bid to secure political favor and appointments. Political metaphors tend to go beyond political boundaries and enter common usage in casual communications with the same or related meanings. Interpreters should, therefore, prepare to interpret them in other communication settings besides politics.

Political jargons also pose a challenge for the interpreters for they are common words which assume a different meaning when used in politics. In Kiswahili, the term *mwananchi-citizen* (singular) or *wananchi-citizens* (plural) is used in politics to refer to other citizens than those in power. This distinction between those in power and those not in power is well known by these two groups. In the Tanzanian parliament, for

example, it is common for the members of the parliament to say *wananchi wangu-my citizens* instead of *wananchi wenzangu-fellow citizens* or *kutumikia wananchi wetu-to serve our citizens* instead of *kutumikia nchi - to serve the country*. This usage denotes the power that the ruling elites have over the citizens. It is a blanket term that is, sometimes, used to represent not the interests of the citizens per se, but personal and political interests of those in power. In international forums, a related term *our people* is used to represent *a country*. When the speaker says to safeguard the interests of *our people*, he/she means to safeguard the interests of *our country*. The interpreters, therefore, need a wide knowledge of these terms and their meanings when used in politics or diplomacy as opposed to when they are used in other settings of communication.

2. The Study

This study was motivated by the author's engagement in teaching translation and interpretation in undergraduate classes at the university of Dodoma, Tanzania. One of the pedagogical tools I use is sight translation as it requires average class environment, resources and time to design and implement. Students have been facing a number of challenges in interpreting certain text genres during its implementation despite being given a chance to collect the texts themselves and rehearse them before the actual interpretation in the class. In view of that, the study investigated the common expressions in political texts that pose challenges during interpretation and the reasons for such challenges.

The study took into account the Interpretive Theory of Translation (also known as Theory of Sense) which was developed by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer in 1980's. The theory is built on four pillars: command of the native language, command of the source language, command of relevant world and background knowledge, and command of interpreting methodology. In this study, Kiswahili is the students' native language for which they have all the competencies. It is their A-language into which sight translation was done. The source language is English. It is the B-language of the students from which sight translation was done.

According to the theory, the interpreters should have good grammatical and phonological knowledge as well as a sufficient stock of lexical items (Chungwha 2003). Given the phonological, syntactic and morphological differences between English and Kiswahili, students always face some limitations in navigating between these rules of the two languages. In the light of the third pillar, the interpreter needs to know the environment that surrounds the text in order to interpret it appropriately.

An understanding of the political text, therefore, needs an understanding of the beliefs, and stances of the parties that come into play in the text. These beliefs and stances are, however, not static and therefore require the interpreter to continuously and dynamically learn them (Chungwha 2003). The command of the native language, source language, world and background knowledge is manifested by the interpreter's ability to reformulate the source language content in line with the canons of the target language and culture for it to make sense (to have meaning). In this study, therefore,

the accuracy and relevance of the target language sight translations depended on the student's ability to tailor the source language content to the usage and customs of the target language.

2.1. The Subjects

The third year undergraduate students studying bachelor of arts in translation and interpretation, bachelor of arts in English and bachelor of arts in French for the academic year 2022/2023 whose A-language is Kiswahili and B-language is English participated in the sight translating English political speech texts, collected by students themselves, into Kiswahili. All students had studied other translation and interpretation courses in their first and second years of study which are aimed at equipping them with the theoretical foundations of translating and interpreting.

The third year course in which they sight translated the texts is a practical one. It is called the practical aspects of translation and interpretation. Therefore, sight translation, besides other practical activities was deemed appropriate in the class. Each of the 37 students in the class was required to collect a soft copy of English political speech delivered by government leaders in national or international meetings, as one of the text genres that they were supposed to study in the course, and submit it to the course instructor – the author of this article.

Of all the submitted texts, three of them which were submitted by the majority of students were selected, chunked and organized in PowerPoint form. Those texts included, Theresa May (Former UK Prime Minister) resignation speech - Britain, the Great Meritocracy, the speech by His Excellence Robert Mugabe (Former Zimbabwean President) delivered at the official opening of the 34th assembly of heads of state and government of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 8th June, 1998 and welcome remarks by Her excellency Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax, (Former SADC Executive Secretary) on the occasion of the visit to the SADC secretariat by His Majesty, King Mswati III of the Kingdom of Swaziland and Chairperson of SADC, 9th May 2017, Gaborone, Botswana.

During sight translation, the texts organized in PowerPoint were displayed on the wall through a projector. The chunked part of speech had 300-350 words which were sight translated within six minutes. The political speech texts were put into account as they are the ones which interpreters frequently deal with in their jobs.

2.2. The Procedure

The course instructor, who is also the author of this article, organized the texts submitted to him by the student through email using PowerPoint application software without changing their contents. The aim was to ensure each text was in good layout, font size and space to enhance visibility by other members of the class during sight translation. Each student was given five to six minutes to sight translate his/her text followed by other five to six minutes of class discussion. The sight translator read the

text in the personal computer placed on the podium while facing the other members of the class. He/she was instructed on how to navigate through the PowerPoint slides through computer arrow tabs.

The class members listened to the target language renditions and compared them with the source text content displayed on the wall through a projector. The sight translation was done during seminar hours in the classroom. There are fifteen seminars per semester, equivalent to one hour each per week for 15 weeks which make up a semester at the University of Dodoma. Since the seminar lasts in one hour, a total of five students sight translated their texts in each seminar.

After the sight translation of each student, the other class members commented on the accuracy of the target target language renditions, suggested alternative target language renditions of some source text content and asked some questions to the sight translator regarding his/her interpretation. The sight translator had the opportunity to respond to the classmembers' comments and questions. The course instructor acted as a mediator and passive participant in the discussion. The analysis of the target language renditions was guided by the assessment criteria proposed by Viaggio (1992, 1995): comprehension (has the student understood everything and understood it correctly?) Re-expression (did the student make any syntactic or lexical mistakes?) and style (could it have been better expressed).

2.3. The Common Expressions in Political Speeches that Pose Challenges during Interpretation

The sight translation practice in the classroom revealed a number of common political expressions that posed a challenge to the student interpreters. Such expressions are those which refer to forms of address to the heads of state and government, the official residence of the heads of state and government, titles of foreign dignitaries, the etiquette of recognizing meeting attendees, the capital city when denoting the government or country.

Forms of Address to the Heads of States and Government

The heads of states and government are addressed differently depending on the governance system of their countries and culture. For example, the presidents of the republic states are addressed differently from heads of monarchy states. The common form of address to the republic president is *his/her excellency* and the common form of address to the head of the monarchy state such as a king or queen is *his/her majesty*. This distinction extends to other high government officials such as ministers. In monarchies such as the kingdom of Swaziland some ministers are addressed as *chief* whereas in republic states the same is normally addressed as *honourable or excellency*.

Even though Kiswahili has only one address term *Mheshimiwa* for all heads of states and government and other high ranking government officials irrespective of the government systems in their countries, some students who sight translated the speech with other address terms than *excellence*, omitted it. For example, the sentence *Your Majesty, King Mswati III of the Kingdom of Swaziland and the current chairperson of*

SADC was translated as *Mfalme Mswati wa Swaziland na Mwenyekiti wa SADC* which can be glossed as *King Mswati of Swaziland and chairperson of SADC*. In this translation, the address term *Your Majesty* in the source language was omitted in the target language. Likewise, the sentence, *Your Royal Highness Prince Hlangusemphi, Minister of Economic Planning and Development of the Kingdom of Swaziland and Chairperson of SADC Council of Ministers* was sight translated as *Hlangusemphi, Waziri wa mipango ya uchumu na maendeleo wa Swaziland na mwenyekiti wa baraza la mawaziri la SADC* which can be glossed as *Hlangusemphi, minister of economic planning and development of Swaziland and the chairperson of SADC council of ministers*. In this translation, the address term *Your Royal Highness* was omitted.

The students who omitted the honorific terms of address said that they lacked appropriate Kiswahili terms to address the king and prince and as such the only thing to cope with the delivery of speech is to omit them. Since the honorific terms of address are used to show politeness (Yang 2010), their omission results in face threatening utterances and inappropriate address to the head and prince of the kingdom. Their omissions were, however, unnecessary because Kiswahili has only one address term- *Mheshimiwa* (*honourable*) for all heads of state and other government officials even though English uses distinctive honorific terms of address to the heads of state and government depending on the governance system of their countries.

The Official Residence of the Heads of State and Government

It is a common practice for the residence of heads of state and government to be named after the street, or building where they are located. For example, the official residence of the Tanzania president in Dar-es-Salaam city is connotatively referred to Magogoni because it is the street where the *Ikulu* (state house) is located. Downing street is the official residence of the UK prime minister. Golden Jubilee House is the official residence of the Ghanaian president.

When these residences are mentioned, they sometimes denote executive power instead of location. For example, in the resignation speech of Theresa May, the UK former Prime Minister, the sentence *when I stood in Downing Street as prime minister for the first time this summer* was sight translated as *Niliposimama katika mtaa wa Downing kama Waziri mkuu* which can be back translated as *when I stood in Downing Street as prime minister....* In this translation, *Downing Street* is denotatively translated as *mtaa wa Downing* (Downing Street) which does not represent what the speaker meant. Through class discussion, it was learnt that the statement *when I stood in Downing Street as prime minister* denotes the time when Theresa May came into power as a prime minister.

As such, its Kiswahili translation would be *nilipoingia madarakani kama waziri mkuu* which can be back translated as *when I came into power as a prime minister*. The phrase *Downing Street* in that speech does not merely refer to the location of the prime minister's office, but represents the executive power she was entitled before even taking the office which is located in the Downing Street, London. This observation appeals to the fact that contextual knowledge is of paramount importance for the interpreters to ensure proper renditions of the source text information.

Titles of Foreign Dignitaries

The translation of titles of foreign dignitaries such as ambassadors, high commissioners, and members of diplomatic corps posed challenges to some of the sight translators because of their closeness in meaning for which Kiswahili has no distinctive terms to refer to them as English does. The sight translators were not able to sort out the meaning nuances that each term entail. The terms *ambassador* and *high commissioner* were in most cases properly translated as *balozi* and *kamishna* respectively. The meaning of the term *diplomatic corps* was confused with the meaning of a *diplomat* and *ambassador*. Some sight translators rendered it as *wanadiplomasia* (diplomats) while some rendered it as *mabalozi* (ambassadors).

During class discussion, the students who rendered it generally as *diplomats* or *ambassadors* defended their renditions based on the fact that *diplomats* and *ambassadors* represent their countries to a foreign country, just like the *members of diplomatic corps* do. Based on the general meaning of the term *ambassador* and *diplomat*, the students' renditions were reasonable given the fact that Kiswahili could not provide a more accurate and precise term for it.

With the help of written sources, the differences in meaning between a *diplomat*, *ambassador* and *member of a diplomatic corps* was sorted out. According to the online Oxford Learners Dictionary, a *diplomat* is a person whose job is to represent his/her country in a foreign country, for example, in an embassy. An *ambassador* is an official who lives in a foreign country as the senior representative there of their own country. *Diplomatic corps* is a general term for all diplomats who work in a particular city or country. So, *diplomatic corps* include all diplomats representing their countries or international organizations in a foreign country. In view of that, the rendition of *members of diplomatic corps* by a general term *wanadiplomasia* (diplomats) was deemed semantically and contextually relevant as there is no Kiswahili specific term that could be an accurate translation of it and therefore, the use of a general term when the specific one is unavailable in the receiving language is justifiable (Molina and Hutardo Albir 2002).

The Etiquette of Recognizing Meeting Attendees

The speaker in a meeting usually recognizes meeting attendees in the introductory part of his/her speech as the way to appreciate their presence and participation in the meeting and welcome their attention to his/her speech. The speaker does so in an orderly manner. The common terms used include chief guest/guest of honor – *mgeni rasmi*; invited guests – *wageni waalikwa*; distinguished guests/delegates – *wageni mashuhuri*; comrades and friends – *ndugu jamaa na marafiki*; ladies and gentlemen – *mabibi na mabwana* etc.

During sight translation, a discussion broke on whether or not the terms *ladies and gentlemen* should be translated as *mabibi na mabwana* even though this translation is used even in highly formal gatherings. Those who argued against the use of *mabibi na mabwana* as the translation of *ladies and gentlemen* were guided by the grammar of Kiswahili according to which the root nouns *bibi* and *bwana* are uncountable and thus the pluralizing morpheme *ma-* should not be attached before them to form *mabibi* and *mabwana*.

Since the source language terms *ladies* and *gentlemen* are in plural form, according to the class discussion, the plural would be marked somewhere else than the roots. They proposed the use of *bibi* and *bwana* with an addition of the complement *mliopo* (who are here) to which the plural would be marked by the pronominal form *m-* i.e, *bibi na bwana mliopo hapa* (ladies and gentlemen who are here). However, this usage is not apprehended by the Kiswahili speakers

Despite the target language terms *mabibi na mabwana* being ungrammatical, it is what the Kiswahili speakers use and expect to hear from other speakers of the language. In that case, it is the correct translation of the source language terms *ladies* and *gentlemen*. Since language is the property of its speakers, interpreters should be cognizant of the fact that it is the speakers rather than prescriptive grammar who determine how better should their language be used in communication. The interpreters should produce renditions that the audience expects, rather than imposing their own creations which would not meet the communicative needs of the audience. The interpreters should always assume that it is their audience who know the target language better than they do and they, should therefore, endeavor to deliver to the maximum expectations of their audience.

The Capital City Denoting the Government or Country

It is a common practice to refer to interstate relations by mentioning their capital cities instead of the countries or governments. As such, the capital city serves as a metonym for the government or country. For example, the sentence *the relations between Kinshasa and Kigali are improving* is interpreted as *uhusiano kati ya Kinshasa na Kigali unaimarika*. This interpretation which owes its meaning from the source language expression denotes, at the surface level, that the relations referred to are between the two cities or local governments of Kinshasa and Kigali, which amounts to distortion of the intended meaning. In real sense, this statement refers to the relations between the two governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Rwanda whose Kiswahili interpretation would be *uhusiano kati ya Jamhuri ya Kidemokrasia ya Kongo na Rwanda unaimarika* which can be back translated as *the relations between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda are improving*. This translation does not need experiential or world knowledge to understand it unlike the former one. The interpreters are urged to use target language expressions that do not task the audience to go beyond their words to understand them.

3. Conclusion

Translation and interpretation teachers apply a variety of pedagogical tools in classes, not only to enhance translation and interpretation skills to the students, but also to reveal and overcome challenges that emerge during interpretation in the view to improve future classroom pedagogical practices and interpretation performance in general. Sight translation is one of the friendliest pedagogical tools that can be used to do that as it requires minimal time for each student to practise it within an average class size, environment and supervision. It engages students in a simulated interpreting

activity using a variety of text genres, such as political, which they will work with as professional translators and interpreters in the future. Through sight translation, the students learn some skills related to interpretation itself such as delivery, voicing and speed, and more specifically orient themselves with some procedures of interpreting expressions or terminologies used in certain text genres and the better ways to interpret them into the target language with accuracy.

Sight translation is, therefore, a pedagogical tool that should not be forgotten in translation and interpretation classes at all levels of learning given its easiness to implement it in different learning environments. Teachers may implement it with or without technology and yet provide a forum for all students to practise interpretation in the class. Without technology, teachers may use print texts which can be distributed to all students so that when one of them is sight translating, the rest are following up the interpretation. With technology, its implementation may be designed and structured as it is in this study, or otherwise. So, with or without technology, its implementation keeps all students in the class active, thereby reducing the teacher's role to that of the supervisor, not of an orator.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

MEDIATED TRANSLATION OF FILMS: A CROSS-LINGUISTIC AND CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF “GONE IN 60 SECONDS”

MARKUHI VOSKANYAN*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5285-7335>

YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY

LUSINE SARGSYAN**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5064-4144>

YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract: The present study focuses on the notion of equivalence in film translation through comparative analysis that enables to get new insights into its lexical, grammatical and stylistic peculiarities. Translating films involves careful consideration of various elements, adding complexity to the process of translation for this particular medium. Different approaches employed by translators in rendering the text significantly impact the attainment of equivalence in the realm of film translation. This objective is fulfilled by exploring key methods of film translation, notably dubbing and subtitling, along with their widespread use and the evolution of their history. One of the most complicated tasks in film translation is to accurately transfer the linguistic features and cultural values into the target language. The data analysis of the research aims to reveal the role of intermediary language in film translation. The text analysis utilized in this study relies on qualitative analysis. By comparing the source text with the target one, an attempt has been made to highlight their similarities and differences and whether the source text has undergone any major transformations in the course of mediated translation. Thus, some linguistic and cultural issues dealing with mediated translation have been examined and a number of conclusions have been drawn.

Keywords: film translation; audiovisual translation; intermediary language; mediated translation

1. Introduction

This study aims to discuss the transformations of some subtitling issues that the translator faces and to examine the function of intermediary language in the translation process of subtitles for the movie “Gone in 60 Seconds” from English as a source

* markuhi.voskanyan@ysu.am

** SargsyanLusine@ysu.am



language into Armenian as a target language. The Armenian subtitles are translated from the Russian dubbed version, which in its turn is translated from English, being the original language of the film. The Russian version has considerably influenced the final results acting as an intermediary language in forming the message from the source language into the target language based on cultural and linguistic differences of the original language as well as the intermediary and final languages. The present case study dwells upon the translation strategies used in film translation.

The problem arises from the scarcity of research on mediated translation which affects the final translated product. Mediated translation has not been analyzed as a subject of study before in the field of translation studies, especially in situations where the source text is inaccessible or when the translator possesses proficiency solely in the target language (the intermediary language), lacking proficiency in the source language. Moreover, it can be inferred that translating through an intermediary language might result in undesirable outcomes, such as distorting the message in terms of semantics, grammar, and style. This is mainly due to the fact that the translation is conducted from the mediated language rather than directly from the original text. Consequently, the present study is grounded in the aforementioned reasons.

Therefore, it is imperative to assess the potential difficulties and issues that translators could encounter in analogous situations. “Whether adopting a domesticating or foreignizing strategy, any type of audiovisual translation ultimately contributes uniquely to the shaping of both national identities and stereotypes. The portrayal of cultural values through screen translation has been minimally explored in literature, making it a significant and pressing research area within translation studies” (Baker & Hochel 1997: 76).

2. The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to bring attention to certain challenges arising from the translation process involving an intermediary language. The study aims at revealing how translating from an intermediary language affects the content and the form of the original text syntactically, semantically and stylistically as well as what the final product loses and/or gains as a result of such shifts.

3. Methods

To deliver a fairly unbiased analysis, we conducted comparative research and delved into a specific case study based on the original English, intermediary Russian and Armenian as a target language of translation of the film “Gone in 60 Seconds.” A total of 100 translation examples were collected for the study. The corresponding examples are classified according to the following techniques: (1) direct observation; (2) comparative analysis carried out according to strategies proposed by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007), and Santamaria Guinot (2001), which help find out various transformations and challenges of mediated translation.

4. Film Translation Problems

Film translation can be a challenging as well as a rewarding job, as, despite the typical challenges, there are several other components that make this process even tougher.

The following offers a summary of certain principles relevant to the translation of movies:

1. Informal discussions may contain industry-specific terminology or colloquial expressions.
2. Subtitles are constrained by limitations related to both time and space. It is important to ensure that the text fits within the confines of the screen space, taking into consideration readability for the audience. Synchronization of the text with both visual imagery and auditory elements is crucial for a cohesive multimedia experience.
3. In the process of dubbing, it is essential that the length of the translated text closely aligns with the duration of the original material.
4. Prior to commencing the translation process, it is imperative to reach a mutual understanding regarding various technical specifications. This encompasses specifying the desired text format preferred by the client, identifying the original file format, and defining the format of the eventual translated output, among other relevant details.
5. In certain scenarios, the process of translation may be undertaken being devoid of the availability of foreign language subtitle files, essentially necessitating the direct translation from a tape or analogous medium. This could pose a considerable challenge, particularly in case of poor sound quality. Broadly speaking, translators generally exhibit a preference for engaging with manuscripts or foreign language files, a practice that serves to diminish the probability of encountering errors.
6. In some cases, a translator might need to translate subtitles without having the opportunity to watch the movie. This situation can lead to potential errors; as visual context significantly aids comprehension.

Although easy film translating may seem due to the use of everyday language, the translator has to make complex decisions in order to meet the fixed character limitation. The task of the translator may sometimes become even harder when they have to replace depictive expressions with shorter, ordinary or just laconic ones.

5. Theoretical Background of Mediated Translation

According to Amal Al-Shunnaq (2014), “in the context of mediated translation, the term denotes a case where the translation does not take place directly from the original source language. Instead, it involves translating from an intermediary language that was previously translated from the target language.” This process incorporates at least three languages: the source language, the intermediary language, and the target language, although there could be more. For instance, an English text may undergo translation into French, then into Russian, and finally into Armenian. Therefore, the

complexity of the translation process from an intermediary language is influenced by the number of languages involved.

In this respect Nida (1964: 17) states that “in the process of translation, the unique characteristics of a text, particularly in the case of poetry or drama, are often diminished in a direct translation.” This effect becomes more pronounced when translating from an intermediary language. It can be contended that the extent of losses increases with the number of languages involved in the translation process. Thus, if there are losses in each iteration of translation, the overall losses compound with each additional attempt.

As suggested by Adusmilli (2007: 24) “translation may necessitate translators with proficiency in multiple languages, extending beyond mere bilingualism. This is justified by the growing demand for translating texts into various languages and back again. Consequently, there is a need to enhance the reciprocal nature of translation.”

Li et al. (2017) note that “the influence of translation from an intermediate language extends to both culture and literature.” To support this idea, a significant portion of international literature has undergone translation into various languages using an intermediary language. This practice facilitates global access to the rich international literary heritage. Consequently, to foster interliterary dialogue, the emphasis is on understanding the work itself rather than a literal word-for-word translation. Translators strive to grasp the essence of the piece and convey it effectively in the target language. In this context, the nature of literary dialogue remains consistent, regardless of whether the works are translated through an intermediary language.

6. Differences between Dubbing and Subtitling

Film translation employs two methods, dubbing and subtitling, to aid viewers in comprehending foreign films, while also contributing to the broader development of the domestic film industry. The choice between these techniques, as Gottlieb (2001) asserts, is influenced by the country and language of origin and the target country and language. Subtitles, displayed at the bottom of the screen, present translated captions in real-time, appearing and disappearing in sync with the dialogue. With a character limit ranging from 35 to 42 per line, the speed of human reading determines the content. Subtitles convert the audio into text, allowing viewers to read and understand the film simultaneously. For example, if a scene features a ringing cell phone, the subtitles might indicate ‘(mobile phone rings).’ Intralinguistic captions serve to facilitate accessibility for the hearing impaired by ensuring that the content within media is comprehensible to individuals with auditory challenges.

The objective of dubbing is to present the translated dialogue in a manner that gives the impression it is spoken by the actors in the target language. This is achieved through “the substitution of the original speech with a voice track that strives to closely match the timing, phrasing, and lip movements of the original dialogue” (Luyken et al. 1991: 31).

In contrast to the relatively static and literary nature of novel and poetry translation, subtitle translation assumes a more colloquial character as it involves the interpretation

of original dialogues among characters. Consequently, it necessitates the incorporation of typical features of spoken English, refraining from obscure expressions or intricate sentence structures. The language employed in subtitle translation should be straightforward and simple to ensure comprehensive understanding and audience engagement. Unlike readers of printed literary works who may have the luxury of revisiting the text, those viewing subtitles are afforded only a brief interval, necessitating a balance between immediacy and conciseness in subtitle translation to accommodate the limited time available for information processing.

7. Strategies of Film Translation

Translators address translation challenges by employing specific strategies, which can be defined as “approaches through which translators aim to adhere to established norms” (Chesterman 1997: 88). In the realm of subtitling, various strategies are available to handle the transition from the source text to the target text. The analysis of examples has been guided by the categorizations of subtitling strategies put forth by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) as well as Santamaria Guinot (2001). Accordingly, the following 11 strategies will serve as the basis for the comparative analysis of the present work providing a concise explanation of each procedure:

1) Loan (LN) occurs when an identical word or phrase from the source language is also utilized in the target language. This situation commonly arises with proper names, such as brand names, as illustrated in the following example:

SL: Tumbler messed up. Said the *Porsche* would be at the corner of Wiltern and Wetherly.

IL: Тумблер облажался. Он сказал, что *Порше* на углу Уилтерн и Ветерли.

TL: Տումբլերը սխալվել է, ասել էր «Պորշեն» Վիլթերնի և Վեթերլի խաչմերուկում է:

2) Calque (CAL) involves a verbatim translation of a word or expression. As an illustration, a character might exclaim:

'Let's get the hell outta here,' which is dubbed into Russian as *'Давай убираться к черту отсюда!!'* a rather typical solution for the Russian audience, while the subtitled Armenian version *'Արագացրո՛ւ, փախչել է պէտք'* is rather condensed and reformulated.

3) Explication (EXP) involves making the subtitled text more accessible to the target audience by employing a hyponym (a word with a more specific meaning) or utilizing a hypernym (a word with a broader meaning) to enhance the clarity of the reference. In one of the examples analyzed, the original text *'... the car is you. You are the car'* is translated into the intermediary language using the broader term. *'...Вы единое целое'* which is translated into Armenian as *'...դուք մի ամբողջություն եք'* (Eng. *single whole*) to make the reference clearer and more precise.

SL: But remember - the car is you. You are the car.

IL: Помните: машина - это вы. Вы единое целое.

TL: Հիշեք՝ մեքենան դուք եք, դուք մի ամբողջություն եք:

4) Substitution (SUBS) serves as a form of explicitation and represents a common approach in subtitling. This strategy becomes particularly relevant in situations where the limited space available in subtitles prevents the inclusion of a lengthy term, despite its existence in the target language. An illustration of substitution is evident in the Armenian dialogue, where the word ‘*talented*’ is rendered as the Russian word ‘*талантливая*’ to address spatial constraints. However, as the Armenian language, unlike Russian, is gender neutral, the translator has substituted the adjective ‘*талантливая*’ with the noun ‘*աղջիկ*’ (Eng. girl) inasmuch as the Armenian noun is shorter than the word ‘*талантливая*’ and reflects the gender of the character.

SL: Oh, my God. Sweetie, you're so talented.

IL: О, Боже, дорогая, ты такая талантливая.

TL: Ի՞նչ: Տեսեք ինչ աղջիկ է:

5) Transposition, in cultural context, occurs when an element from one culture is replaced with a counterpart from another culture. For instance, the colloquial phrase ‘*You’re bullshittin’ me, right?*’ is transformed into the neutral Russian expression ‘*Ты что, шутишь?*’ which is directly transposed into Armenian as ‘*Կատաղու՞մ ես.*’ The following is another example of transposition:

SL: Aw, come on.

IL: Блин, не надо!

TL: Գրողը տանի, պետք չէ՛:

The exclamation ‘*Aw!*’ used to express disapproval or sympathy is transposed into Russian as ‘*блин*’ which compared to the English ‘*Aw!*’ sounds more demeaning while not very rude. In the same way, the Armenian expression ‘*Գրողը տանի*’ substitutes the Russian version.

Similarly, in the following example we may observe a complete cultural substitution, i.e. “The Dukes of Hazzard” which, being an American action comedy TV series, is substituted with the Russian ‘*Через витрину? Мы не каскадеры,*’ (Eng. *Through the shop-window? We’re not stuntmen.*) as the target audience may not be familiar with this popular TV series in the US. Due to the same reason, the Armenian translation is done from the intermediary language as ‘*...ցուցափեղկի միջոցով: Ի՞նչ ես անում, մենք կասկաղորներ չենք*’ correspondingly.

SL: Come on! This ain't The Dukes of Hazzard.

IL: Что ты делаешь? Через витрину? Мы не каскадеры.

TL: Ի՞նչ ես անում, հիմա՞ր ես, ցուցափեղկի միջոցով: Ի՞նչ ես անում, մենք կասկաղորներ չենք: Դե՛:

6) Lexical recreation (LR) is a linguistic phenomenon characterized by the inventive formation of new terms and is deemed acceptable in the target language, especially when a character coins a word in the source language. In a dialogue, one character employs the phrase ‘*you know Ferraris,*’ signifying someone's professional expertise in their field. This has been translated into Russian idiomatic expression as ‘*вы с Феррари на ты,*’ while the Armenian rendition is subtitled as ‘*Ֆերարրիաւնի,*’ a term entirely coined in the TL.

SL: I know you know Ferraris.

IL: Я знаю, вы с Феррари на ты.

TL: Գիտեմ, ֆերարրիաւնի ես:

7) Compensation (COM) is a frequently used technique in subtitling, where any loss in translation at a particular moment in the audiovisual program is offset by improving specific elements in the translation at another juncture in the target text. Examples of this strategy have not been analyzed in the scope of the current research.

8) Omission (OMS) of specific parts of the message is inevitable due to the technical constraints set by the medium. Subtitlers need to discern the crucial information essential to the plot, ensuring its retention in the target language, thus we may observe a tendency to omit some proper names in the dialogues substituting them with the corresponding context-based words. For instance, the name ‘*Jerry Springer*’ is omitted from the Russian and the Armenian translations being substituted for the nouns ‘*свидание*’ and ‘*Ժամադրութիւն*’ correspondingly, which mean ‘*dating*’ in English. Thereby, in the given example, word substitution has been made based on the contextual background information.

SL: Something wrong, Tumbler? - Yeah, I'm missing Jerry Springer.

IL: Что-то не так, Тумблер? Я опоздаю на свидание.

TL: Ինչ-որ բան այն չէ՞, Տումբլէ՛ր: Ժամադրութիւն եմ ուշանում:

9) In the context of explicitation, the addition (ADD) technique is employed when a cultural reference is present, potentially unclear to the intended audience, and requires an explanation for better comprehension. This strategy is not frequently utilized in subtitling due to the associated increase in length. An illustration of addition can be observed in the translation of the given English sentence: ‘*It seems a little late for soccer practice*’ rendered in the IL and TL as ‘*Детишек в такое время с футбола не развозят*’ and ‘*Այս ժամին երեխաներին ֆուտբոլից տուն չեն տանում*’ correspondingly. As can be observed, the nouns ‘*детушек*’ and ‘*երեխաներին*’ (Eng. children) have been added to provide more contextual information stating the reason why the character is being late.

SL: It seems a little late for soccer practice.

IL: Детишек в такое время с футбола не развозят.

TL: Այս ժամին երեխաներին ֆուտբոլից տուն չեն տանում:

10) Condensation (CON) refers to the partial reduction of textual content, whereas Reformulation (REF), as per Talaván (2011), is employed to convey information in an alternative manner. The approach that a subtitler adopts in condensing and rephrasing statements is contingent upon the anticipated reading speed of the audience. The effectiveness of integrating these two strategies is exemplified in the subsequent example:

SL: Kip! *Man*, that's not a tool. That's a *damn* brick. Kip, *man*, we gonna use a brick, man.

IL: Кип, это инструмент? Это же кирпич! Кип, *чувак*, ты что, хочешь воспользоваться этим кирпичом?

TL: Վի՛ւյ, դա գործի՞ք է, աղյուս է, աղյուսն ինչի՞ դ է պէտք:

As can be observed, the words *man* and *damn* are omitted in the Russian version, while condensation has taken place in the Armenian version as, besides omission of some elements, the core of the message has been successfully conveyed through the use of reformulation.

The previously outlined strategies have been utilized to elucidate the methodology employed by the Armenian subtitler in dealing with the challenges encountered during the transfer of source language dialogue to the target language. These challenges encompass issues related to grammatical structures, the use of slang, omitted elements in sentences, and similar constraints. Furthermore, limitations referring to spatial, lexical and syntactic aspects, including the use of loans, may become a real challenge for the subtitler. The subtitler often has to combine and integrate several strategies simultaneously in an effort to choose the most relevant translation for the exchange of the dialogue.

8. Data Collection

The movie was downloaded from an open online source and was carefully viewed and analyzed throughout the research. The intermediary translation and the subtitles were carefully studied. About 100 examples from the movie were found and thoroughly analyzed. Russian and Armenian equivalents were compared to the SL version revealing the translation strategies and categorizing the examples according to them. The overall results of the data analysis could be best illustrated in Table 1

Table 1. Observed frequencies of translation strategies

Strategies	Observed frequencies /TL	Observed frequencies /IL
Loan	9	9
Calque	5	20
Explicitation	6	2
Substitution	10	10
Transposition	32	26
Lexical Recreation	4	6

Compensation	0	0
Omission	12	8
Addition	5	10
Condensation/Reformulation	17	9

9. Conclusion

Based on the current research, we can conclude that colloquialism, popularity, instantaneity and brevity are the four features of subtitle translation, warranting meticulous consideration. Subtitles should not be too long due to time and space restrictions. The imposition of temporal and spatial constraints necessitates the restraint of subtitle length, prompting translators to align the length of the source text with its translated version. Therefore, it is necessary to delete redundant information in order to make the translation more concise and readable.

Within the various linguistic limitations identified in the translation process, the following are the outcomes derived from a qualitative analysis of the case study of "Gone in 60 Seconds." Accordingly, it has been revealed that the prevailing strategies employed in the TL subtitle translation of the given film are reduction through condensation/reformulation (17%), transposition/cultural substitution (32%) and omission (12%), whilst calque (5%), addition (5%) and lexical recreation (4%) hold the lowest rates. Notably, instances of compensation are absent in the investigated research. In comparison, most frequently used techniques in the IL dubbed Russian version are calque (20%) and transposition (26%), while condensation (9%) and explicitation (2%) are the least frequently used ones in comparison to the subtitled version. Similarly, no examples of compensation have been observed in the IL either.

Data analysis underscores a tendency towards the deletion of linguistic elements, driven by the consideration that linguistic structures in English are more concise than their Armenian variants. This stems from linguistic disparities, with Armenian structures being inherently longer than those in English and Russian, necessitating text reduction in the target text to prevent subtitle overloading with too many characters. Similarly, the original text consistently surpasses the translated version in length. Among the myriad challenges encountered in film translation, a notable issue is the requirement to employ translation from intermediary languages. In instances where no linguistic or cultural "equivalence" exists in the target language and culture, translators may opt to omit colloquialisms and re-create lines, striking a balance between the dual principles of fidelity to the source text and naturalness in the target text.

Furthermore, strategies of loan, lexical recreation and omission loss are usually implemented while translating proper names, nicknames, geographical names, and so on. The translator applies the method of transposition in the translation of culture-specific words and phrases.

Translation is a multifaceted phenomenon and some aspects of it can be subject to the research of diverse sciences. The choice of film translation mode significantly contributes to the reception of a source language film in a target culture. Accordingly, dubbing neutralizes foreign elements of the source text and thus privileges the target

culture. In contrast, subtitling accentuates the foreign nature of a film, embodying a source-culture-bound translation.

Ultimately, the success of a well-translated film hinges on the translator's ability to evoke analogous feelings in both foreign and local viewers, constituting a formidable challenge and a measure of the translator's proficiency.

Abbreviations Used

Loan (LN), calque (CAL), explicitation (EXP), substitution (SUBS), transposition (TRAN), lexical recreation (LR), compensation (COM), omission (OMS), addition (ADD), condensation (CON), reformulation (REF), source language (SL), intermediary language (IL), target language (TL)

Filmography

Gone in 60 Seconds, directed by Dominic Sena. 2000. United States: Touchstone Pictures, Jerry Bruckheimer Films.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

METHODS OF TRANSLATING NON-RUSSIAN PROPER NOUNS EMPLOYED IN RUSSIAN TEXTS

MARTINA NAPOLITANO*
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8989-5012>
UNIVERSITY OF TRIESTE

Abstract: The present article deals with proper noun (PN) translation concentrating on the issue of non-Russian PNs employed in Russian texts. While the Italian translation tradition has in general opted for the method of transliteration of all PNs from Russian Cyrillic regardless of the name origins, a decolonizing approach would be that of considering non-Russian PNs as ‘translated’ terms from a third language. This approach will prove useful in expanding our understanding of how translation (and transliteration) may influence the perception of specific cultural and ethnic contexts embedded within source texts. In this article, examples of Kyrgyz, Armenian, Georgian, Azeri, and Belarusian PNs (from Victoria Lomasko’s *The Last Soviet Artist*) are provided. Avoiding intermediary translation (transliteration) from Russian Cyrillic, the translator (and author of this article) decided to reconstruct the original PNs encountered in the source text. The article thus discusses the reasons for the employment of such method when approaching PNs that are ‘mediated’ in the context of the source text, showing how this helps in decolonizing translation.

Keywords: proper nouns; Russian translation into Italian; transliteration; Victoria Lomasko; intermediary translation

1. Introduction

Proper nouns (PN) have attracted growing attention within the field of translation studies. However, scholars have not treated ‘translated’ (domesticated or foreignized) names employed in source texts in much detail yet. These ‘mediated’ PNs can be easily found in Russian texts, and so far, the translation praxis (with regard to the Italian context in particular) has generally approached these names as regular Russian PNs regardless of their origins. However, the result is that of a mediated (and thus Russified) translation of the PN in question. This article, drawing on concrete examples from a recent translation experience of its author, sheds new light on the methods of translating non-Russian PNs employed in Russian texts, advocating for a decolonizing approach to translation also beyond the specificity of this language.

* martina.napolitano@units.it



2. Review of Previous Studies

Even though as early as in 1981 Peter Newark noted the complexity of proper nouns (PN) when translating literature, the issue has been growingly discussed by scholars in particular since the 2000s. In the last twenty years translation studies has attached even greater attention to the issue of translating PNs (Vinogradov 2001; Ballard 2001; Lozano Miralles 2001; Salmon 2002; Viezzi 2004), underlining that PNs represent relevant signs in any text:¹ the use of a specific PN in a text is never the result of a random or arbitrary choice, but of a specific selection made by the writer. It is not by chance that many literary novels or poems are titled with a PN (usually that of the main character: Anna Karenina, Oliver Twist, Effi Briest, etc.) (Salmon 2004: 72-73).

The translation praxis has traditionally adopted one of the two possible strategies when dealing with PNs: either “functionally” translating them (Salmon 2004: 72) – and that is what fables, comics, movies, cartoons have made us accustomed to over centuries (e.g. *Eng.* Cinderella – *It.* Cenerentola, from *cenere*, cinder – *Ru.* Zolushka, from *zola*, cinder), or non translating them (or, in the case of other alphabets, transliterating them), which has been the main strategy adopted in literature and non-fiction.

However, in many cases the choice of ‘non-translating’ PNs (in any case, a translation strategy) deprives the target text reader of the opportunity to understand “what’s in a name.” Laura Salmon exemplifies this problem providing the case of Dostoevsky’s character Raskol’nikov (from the novel *Crime and Punishment*, 1866), whose speaking name says nothing to a non-Russophone reader. Given the fact that *raskol* means *schism*, and *raskol’nik* – *schismatic* (with a direct reference to the Schism of the Russian Church and the so-called Old Believers), Salmon further proposes a possible translation into Italian of this PN as *Skizov* as a result of the “hybridization” strategy: while *skiz-* suggests the idea of the *schism* (*It.* *scisma*), the suffix *-ov* maintains an estranging element (2004: 74).

Besides that of “hybridization,” Laura Salmon has summarized the different strategies that may be adopted by the translator when approaching PN translation: “compensation” (effective, for example, when dealing with diminutives), “explicitation” (useful to add, for example, information about the ethnic origin of a character when it is evident from the PN used in the source text), “foreignization” (that is, non-translation of the PN, which may however result in a misleading mechanistic approach²), “domestication” (a strategy that was applied, for example, in Italy during the Fascist regime) (2004: 74-76).

However, another issue is represented by the translation of ‘translated’ PNs from a source text that has either domesticated or foreignized them (in some cases adapting the loan names to the phonetics and alphabet of the target language). A well-known example from Russian literature is Lev Tolstoy’s novella *Hadji Murad* (written between 1896 and 1904 and published posthumously in 1912). The original title,

¹ According to Salmon, anthroponyms in particular constitute a “subcode” within the natural language in which they exist (2003: 279).

² In this regard, Salmon openly criticizes Lawrence Venuti’s approach (1998).

carrying the PN of the Avar rebel commander, is *Хаджи-Мурат* (*Khadzhi-Murat*), that is a foreignized PN transliterated into Russian Cyrillic. How have translators dealt with this PN? The Italian tradition generally opts for ‘non-translating’ PNs in literature: in the case of Russian, PNs are simply transliterated according to the Scientific transliteration system. This is true also for non-Russian PNs contained in Russian literature:³ the result is that Lev Tolstoy’s novella is titled *Chadži-Murat* in Italian. The English translator instead decided to move away from the Russian transliteration of the Avar name and ‘reconstructed’ the original PN as *Hadji Murad*. It is interesting to notice that in the Italian Wikipedia pages related to Tolstoy’s novella and the historical figure of the Avar commander two different graphic renderings are used: Tolstoy’s hero is named *Chadži-Murat*, while the historical figure is *Hadji Murad*. As a result, a non-expert reader may get confused.⁴

PNs include not only anthroponyms, but also toponyms. Recently, after February 2022, many media outlets all over the world were faced with the urgency to use Ukrainian toponyms for cities that traditionally were called by their Russian names (e.g. Kiev/Kyiv, Kharkov/Kharkiv, Chernobyl/Chornobyl, Odessa/Odesa, etc.). In the case of the Italian language, such ‘mediated translation’ of toponyms takes place not only when we deal with Russian: Maurizio Viezzi has, for example, observed that Dutch and Flemish cities are generally ‘translated’ into Italian through French:

For Belgian toponyms, where there are no established Italian-language forms (Antwerp = Anversa, Liège = Liegi, Leuven = Lovanio), French-language forms are regularly used, and this applies not only, understandably, to the Walloon region, and therefore French-speaking localities (Mons, Namur), but also to Flanders (Malines and not Mechelen, Gand and not Gent, Bruges and not Brugge); and applies to the capital, an officially bilingual city (Bruxelles and not Brussels) (2017: 106).

When translating PNs, a translator must be very careful, since in a PN “all morphological elements (roots, prefixes, suffixes and endings) are ethnically sensitive”; “the demarcation line between translation and change of names is vague” (Azhniuk, Azhniuk 2014: 260). Bohdan and Lesia Azhniuk provide, for instance, the example of Russified Ukrainian anthroponyms in Soviet passports: *Bilokin* to *Belokon* (this last name can be literally translated as ‘White Horse,’ and the Russian calque was created on this basis); *Olena* to *Elena*; *Petro* to *Pyotr*. These are not results of a ‘translation’ in terms of alphabet, but rather of a morphologic adaptation and calque formation which indeed changes the PNs in question.

In their socio-linguistic aspect PNs are culture specific (for Russian PNs see Superanskaya 1973; Uspensky 1989), they are never unmarked and their multilayered “evocative potential”⁵ relates to shared “encyclopedias” among groups of speakers

³ Exceptions are represented by “European” PNs in Russian literature: Kitty and Dolly from Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*, for instance.

⁴ One may argue that the Avar language uses Cyrillic letters, so transliterating from this alphabet could be a viable strategy. However, Avar officially uses Cyrillic only since 1938. At the time of the historical events Tolstoy depicts in his novella the alphabet used was the Arabic one (Crisp 1985).

⁵ At the etymological, phonological/graphic, morphological, antonomastic/parodic, geo-ethnic, intertextual, pragmatically marked levels.

(Salmon 2006: 81-82). Languages in this regard are asymmetric, and “the anthroponymic system of a given language never fully coincides with the system of another language” (Salmon 2003: 289). What a translator should demonstrate when approaching a PN is a passive (grasping the implicit) and an active competence (recoding it) when moving between the source and the target texts, as well as consistency in terms of hierarchical choices with regard to the different functions of the text (Salmon 2004: 73-80).

If the source text contains a PN which has in its turn been subject to translation, the translator should face the problem of ‘reconstructing,’ ‘retrieving’ the original, ‘archetypical’ name. Otherwise, in the case of a Russian source text containing a non-ethnically Russian PN, the translator would end up involuntarily Russifying the PN in question if they were just to transliterate it. It is high time that we decolonialized our translation approaches to PNs as well (Batchelor 2009).

3. Translating Proper Nouns in Victoria Lomasko’s *The Last Soviet Artist*

I have practically encountered the issue of ‘translated’ non-Russian PNs in a Russian source text when translating a volume by the graphic artist Victoria Lomasko into Italian. After authoring the translation of her first book, *Other Russias*, in 2022 (*Altre Russie. Un reportage illustrato*, published by BeccoGiallo), in 2023 I worked on her second volume, *The Last Soviet Artist*:⁶ while in the first case I did not have to face any problem with non-Russian PNs as all characters involved were Russian citizens, this time I had to deal with the problem of PNs, as this work is a reportage from other post-Soviet countries, namely Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Armenia, and Georgia. Due to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, she did not manage to travel to all the fifteen post-Soviet states, but still these four countries posed a challenge for me as translator.⁷

Since the 2000s, Victoria Lomasko has documented trials, protests, arrests, and right violations both in her country and in the post-Soviet space through her peculiar drawing. Lomasko’s illustrations do not conform to the criteria of sequentiality typical of comic strips, but rather constitute a gallery of portraits – “witness portraits” (*portrety svidetel’siva*), as I defined them elsewhere (Napolitano 2021) – that invite the viewer to take part in a process of denunciation of uncomfortable and often silenced social contexts in Russia and beyond. Lomasko conducts interviews, catches key events and gathers everything she observes in her on-site sketches. Her works display a huge gallery of figures, about whom the reader (and the translator) knows little except for their name. And this name, when non-ethnically Russian, comes ‘Russified’ as it is presented in Russian Cyrillic letters.

As for Caucasian names encountered in *The Last Soviet Artist*, namely Armenian, Georgian and Azeri, what I decided to do was to retrieve the original PNs avoiding

⁶ The translation will be published by BeccoGiallo in summer 2024.

⁷ In this volume Victoria Lomasko includes chapters devoted to Dagestan and Ingushetia, two specific regions of the Russian Federation where she investigates ethnic issues. The people she interviews in these chapters are Russian citizens, even though non-ethnically Russian; in this case PNs are transliterated from Russian Cyrillic according to their passport.

transliteration from the Russian variants of the source text. Among Armenian names there were, for example, *Martiros Saryan* and *Minas Avetisyan*, the prominent Armenian painters: instead of transliterating these names according to the Scientific system from Russian (*Сарьян* – **Sar'jan*, *Аветисян* – **Avetisjan*), I transliterated them from the original Armenian (ISO 9985): *Մարտիրոս Մարյան* and *Մինաս Ավետիսյան*, respectively. As for Georgian PNs, *Natia*, *Irak'li* and *Nuk'ri* were transliterated from Georgian (Georgian national system, 2002), and not as they come in Russian (*Натия* – **Natija*, *Иракий* – **Iraklij*, *Нукрий* – **Nukrij*): ნათია, ირაკლი, ნუკრი, respectively. Finally, since in Tbilisi Victoria Lomasko interacted with a group of Azeri immigrants who had left Baku as a result of persecution for their political activism, I had to reconstruct some Azeri PNs, too. In this case, once identified, I did not have to transliterate them since the Azeri language employs Latin letters: so *Сеймур Байджан* was not rendered as **Sejmur Bajdžan*, but as *Seymur Baycan*, *Гюнель Мовлуд* is not **Gjunel' Movlud*, but *Günel Mövlud*, nor *Хаджи Хажиев* is **Chadži Chažiev*, but *Наси Насыев*.

Kyrgyzstan and Belarus represent a different issue, as for now both countries not only use Cyrillic as the alphabet, but also recognize Russian as official language together with Kyrgyz and Belarusian.

Since the chapter devoted to Belarus depicts, in particular, the 2020 protests during which the use of Belarusian turned into a political tool (starting from the slogan *Žive Belarus – Long Live Belarus*), I propose to the Italian reader the transliteration of PNs from Belarusian. However, in certain cases, I also add in brackets the corresponding Russian PN, since this may still be more familiar to the Italian reader: e.g. *Svjatlana Cichanoŭskaja* (*Svetlana Tichanovskaja*).

In the case of Kyrgyzstan, the distance between ethnically Russian names and ethnically Kyrgyz names is more evident, but the real issue is that there is no internationally recognized system to transliterate from Kyrgyz Cyrillic. What I decided to do in this case was 're-reading' each Kyrgyz name through the International Phonetic Alphabet. Therefore, along with the ethnically Russian names *Marija* (*Мария*), *Darija* (*Дария*) and *Sofija* (*София*), the reader will find the Kyrgyz PNs *Bahtijar* and *Baktigül*: the former is the transliteration of the name *Бахтияр*, with the grapheme 'x' rendered as 'h' (not 'ch') since it corresponds to the IPA symbol [χ], voiceless uvular fricative (different from the Russian voiceless velar fricative 'x'); the latter is the transliteration of *Бактыгүл*, where the Kyrgyz 'ы' (i) corresponds to the IPA symbol [ɯ] (close back unrounded vowel) and not to the 'Russian' (y) [ɨ] (close central unrounded vowel), and where 'ү' corresponds to ü, close front rounded vowel [y].

4. What's in a (Transliterated) Name?

The attention I have drawn to my translation and transliteration reflects the importance devoted to this topic in Victoria Lomasko's text; it is one of the intrinsic, implicit keys of her volume *The Last Soviet Artist*. Instead of a 'touristic' wandering through former Soviet countries, Lomasko provides the reader with variegated, colorful encounters

with differentiated, specific, self-conscious Others, reluctant to cultural homogenization. It is the reportage itself that pushes readers to reconsider and weigh their approaches to other languages, alphabets and cultures.

The volume opens with Victoria Lomasko's arrival in Kyrgyzstan; her very first dialogue proceeds on the way from the airport to Bishkek and her interlocutor stresses the need to pay attention to the proper use of language and to pronunciation.

Кыргызстан/Киргизия

Моё исследование постсоветского пространства началось в 2014 году с поездки в Бишкек по приглашению Бишкекской феминистской группы. «Неужели в Киргизии есть феминистки?» – удивлялась (*sic*) московские активисты перед моим отъездом.

Уже по дороге из аэропорта в Бишкек лидерка группы Сельби несколько раз поправила меня: «Говори не «Киргизия», а «Кыргызстан», не «киргизский», а «кыргызский.» Вообще-то, местные русские говорят, как привыкли, и на их «и» не обращают внимания. Но когда кыргыз называет себя и других «киргизами», это значит, он совсем обрусел и забыл традиции своего народа.

The English translation of this chapter,⁸ apart from evident mistakes and paraphrasing, may appear confusing to a reader who does not know Russian and who ignores the implicit content of Selbi's point (the difference between the term 'Kyrgyzstan' and 'Kirghizia' and their use, the value of suffixes *-ia* and *-stan*):

Kyrgyzstan/Kirghizia

I had come to visit Bishkek Feminist Collective SQ.

“Are there really feminists in Kirghizia?” my mom had wondered before I left.

On the way from the airport to Bishkek the collective's leader, Selbi, corrected my speech several times.

“It's not Kirghizia, but Kyrgyzstan, and Kyrgyz, not Kirghiz.”

In fact, the local Russians speak the way they are used to, and no one pays any mind to their use of “Kirghiz.” But when a Kyrgyz says it, it is insulting and even offensive. It means someone who is Russified and has forgotten the traditions of their people.

This is why I felt the need to convey all this into Italian. If I were to transfer my own Italian translation into English, the result would (approximately) be as follows:

Kirgizstan

My research in the post-Soviet space started in 2014 with a trip to Bishkek as I was invited there by a local feminist group. “Are there really feminists in Kirghizia?” surprised activists in Moscow would ask me.

As soon as I landed, on the way from the airport to Bishkek, the leader of this group, Selbi, repeatedly corrected me: “Don't say ‘Kirghizia’ like Russians do, but ‘Kirgizstan’ as we do, and the correct adjective is Kirgiz, not Kirghiz.” Actually, Russians who live here speak as they are used to, and people do not pay attention to the way they pronounce the “i.” However, when a Kirgiz defines himself and others as Kirghiz, then it means that they completely got Russified and forgot about their people's traditions.

⁸ It is available online on “Left East” e-magazine: <https://lefteast.org/trip-to-kyrgyzstan/>.

Apart from further explaining why Selbi asks not to say ‘Kirghizia,’ I also decided to insert into my translation an estranging element that would recreate the stirring effect that Selbi’s reasoning arouses in a Russian reader accustomed to the use of the toponym without much thought. This element is the use of the vowel ‘ı’ which is typical of the Turkic languages and renders the sound [u] of Kyrgyz. The strategy that I adopted is, therefore, a variation of foreignization: this choice is quite appropriate to the functional and pragmatic markedness of the source text, which requires the reader to be aware of what it means to adapt a PN. As a rule, “the translator decides (bets) how the recipient will read the target text” (Salmon 2004: 74); in certain texts, transliteration choices can represent a valid translator’s bet.

5. Conclusion

This article has discussed the reasons for a reconsideration of the methods translators may employ when approaching non-Russian ‘translated’ (domesticated or foreignized) proper nouns that can be found in Russian texts. Rather than treating them as regular Russian names and transliterating them from Cyrillic regardless of their origins, a translator can avoid ‘Russifying’ these ethnically sensitive elements, demonstrating instead a competence in ‘retrieving’ the original name in question, grasping thus its implicit value and significance within the text.

Based on concrete examples, this study argues that such a careful approach contributes at once both at decolonizing the traditional translation praxis and at offering target text readers more accurate information regarding the names of characters and places.

The area explored in this article would prove fruitful for further work both regarding texts in Russian and texts in other languages, given the situation of coloniality that has characterized and still characterizes the global arena, and which impacts the specific issue of proper nouns too. Also, new translations of classics may employ these strategies and thus open new perspectives on how we read them.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

PROBLEMS OF MEDIATED TRANSLATION IN DANIEL DEFOE'S *ROBINSON CRUSOE*

NONA HARUTYUNYAN*

<https://orcid.org/my-orcid?orcid=0009-0002-1750-8532>

YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract: Mediated translation as a linguistic and literary phenomenon is of great interest in terms of studying the linguistic, structural, and linguo-cultural aspects of languages involved in the translation process. Despite the ambiguous attitudes of translation studies theorists and practitioners, translation through an intermediate language remains significant for the representation of distinct literatures from the perspective of different cultures. In fact, mediated translation seeks to understand the dynamics between the source and target languages, cultures, and communicative contexts, and how they can influence the translation process. Overall, the main goal is to gain insights into the translation process and its implications for communication and understanding between different languages and cultures. In recent years mediated translation has become a more popular concept in translation studies research field. This growing popularity is evident from the noticeable increase in the number of academic events and scientific publications on the topic. The current study aims at conducting a comparative analysis of the mediated translations of the novel *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe in English, Russian, and Armenian. An attempt has been made to illustrate the influence of intermediary language on the adequacy and equivalence of the translation of the abovementioned work highlighting the inconsistencies in the translation process. Basing on the research several conclusions have been drawn.

Keywords: mediated translation; literary translation; idioms, stylistic devices

1. Introduction

Translation is a powerful tool used to bridge cultural and linguistic gaps; in simple terms, it is the art of converting words from one language to another. The process of translation between two different languages involves the translator transforming an original written text (the source text or ST) in an original verbal language (the source language or SL) into a written text (the target language or TL). Besides the research on translation carried out directly from a source language into a target one, in recent years

* nonaharutyunyan@ysu.am



the notion of ‘mediated translation’ has attracted special attention among scholars in the sphere of translation studies.

One of the most widespread definitions of mediated translation is suggested by Kittel and Frank: according to them, mediated translation is based on a source which is itself a translation into a language different from the original, or the target language (Kittel & Frank 1991: 3). Gambier defines it as “a translation of a translation” (Gambier 1994), whereas in Toury’s view it involves translating from languages other than the ultimate SLs (Toury 2012: 82).

Dollerup, in his turn, considers mediated translation as a process that comprises an intermediate translation and therefore involves three languages. The intervening translation does not cater to a genuine audience and exists only to transfer a message from one language to another (Dollerup 2009: 6).

Mediated translation is carried out mainly due to the lack of translators or linguistic competence in the ultimate SL, or due to the difficulties in obtaining the original text, or to the necessity of translating from a geographically and/or structurally distant language.

As it is known, literary translation involves conveying not only the literal meaning of a text but also its cultural nuances, the stylistic elements, and the literary techniques used by the original author. Mediated translation of literary works is a very important research area in translators’ work experience. It seeks to examine how translation technology affects the ability to capture and express the creative and cultural aspects of literary works. In fact, literary texts are deeply embedded in their cultural and historical contexts; thus, through mediated translation it is possible to carry out a study on how translation technique assists translators in understanding and representing the cultural and historical elements of the source text, including references to specific events, customs or traditions. Intermediary translation also explores the ethical implications of relying on technology in the translation of literary works, as well as issues related to authorship, intellectual property, and the impact on the translator’s role. It may even help to investigate the aesthetic qualities of machine-assisted translations and their comparability to metatexts produced solely by human translators. By analyzing mediated translations of literary works, researchers can gain some insights into the challenges and opportunities that arise when combining human creativity and machine assistance in the translation of complex and culturally rich texts.

Mediated translation is heavily loaded with negative connotations and it is often considered a poor “copy of a copy” that entails a loss of details with each successive passage through the process” (Landers 2001). One of the main disadvantages of intermediary translation is the translator’s unawareness of the original text, which may lead to a double meaning shift. However, despite its negative connotations, scholars state that recourse to mediated translation can also lead to positive results. According to them, had it not been for this practice, certain literary works from peripheral or distant cultures would not have been disseminated in the most spread languages and thus consecrated as world literature classics (or, at the very least, their consecration would have been delayed: see Shuttleworth & Cowie 1996; Landers 2001). Mediated translation may therefore be the most efficient- and sometimes the only means of

inclusion for cultural products from peripheral or distant cultures. Moreover, it has been claimed to be profitable to translation companies and clients alike, as it provides an opportunity to economize on translation expenses and minimize the risks” (Pięta & Bueno 2015).

2. Inconsistencies in Mediated Translation of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*

In the scope of this research, we have chosen the classic novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) by the British writer Daniel Defoe (1660-1731). The work had a significant impact on both the readers and writers worldwide. In fact, it is considered one of the most widely translated and published books in the world. One of its translations from English into Russian by Marija K. Yesipova was published in 1904 and the latter version was translated into Armenian by Harutyun Harutyunyan in 1948. The translation was mediated because there weren’t many translators able to do translations from English into Armenian in that period. However, the most successful and well-known Russian translations of the novel are considered the ones by K. Chukovsky (1935) and M. Shishmareva (1902) who have succeeded in preserving the definite imprint on the vital values of the original English novel.

When performing mediated translation from English to Armenian with Russian as intermediary language, several challenges and problems become apparent. Here are a few potential issues:

Language Structure: English, Armenian, and Russian have different grammatical structures, word orders, and syntax. This can lead to difficulties in accurately conveying the intended meaning from English to Armenian through the intermediation of Russian.

Vocabulary and Terminology: Each language has its unique vocabulary and terminology. When translating from English to Armenian through Russian, there might be instances in which specific English words or expressions do not have direct equivalents in Russian, and, consequently, finding appropriate Armenian equivalents can be challenging.

Cultural Nuances: Cultural nuances and idiomatic expressions can create difficulties when translating through an intermediary language. The underlying English and Armenian cultural context may not align with the Russian one, potentially leading to misinterpretations or inaccuracies in the final Armenian translation.

Loss of Precision: Using an intermediary language introduces an additional layer of interpretation, increasing the chances of losing precision or nuances from the original English text. Translating through Russian might result in certain subtleties or specific meanings being lost or altered in the final Armenian translation.

Time and Efficiency: In a way, employing an intermediary language “prolongs” the translation process, as it requires an additional translation step from the source language to the intermediary language (English into Russian) and then from the intermediary language to the target language (Russian into Armenian). This can impact the overall efficiency of the translation and potentially lead to delays.

Comparing three versions of the novel it is immediately evident that both translations are much thinner than the original one, as the Russian translator skipped many sentences which could be easily translated without making the text harder to understand. The original narrative consists of 487 pages (10 chapters), the Russian one has got 104 pages (28 chapters) and the Armenian version 222 pages (27 chapters).

At length I set three traps in one night, and going the next morning I found them, all standing, and yet the bait eaten and gone; this was very discouraging. **However, I altered my traps; and not to trouble you with particulars, going one morning to see my traps, I found in one of them a large old he-goat; and in one of the others three kids, a male and two females.** (Defoe 1719: 237)

Тогда я устроил настоящие западни и на другой же день нашел в одной яме большого старого козла, а в другой - трех козлят: одного самца и двух самок. (Defoe 1904: 72)

Այն ժամանակ իսկական թակարդ սարքեցի և հենց հետևյալ օրը փոսերից մեկում գտա մի խոշոր պառավ այծ, իսկ մյուսում երեք ուլ, մեկը արու, երկուսը էգ: (Defoe 1948: 126)

Even at first glance, it is clear that half of the text is omitted. The translators left only those parts that outline the general idea of the occurrences without deepening into details. We can see that there are two sentences in the original text while the translated versions consist of only one sentence each.

After I had been there about Ten or Twelve Days, it came into my Thoughts, that I should lose my Reckoning of Time **for want of Books and Pen and Ink.** (Defoe 1719: 89)

Вскоре после того, как я поселился на острове, мне вдруг пришло в голову, что я потеряю счет времени. (Defoe 1904: 45)

Կղզում տեղավորվելուց հետո շատ չանցած՝ հանկարծ մտքովս անցավ, որ կարող եմ կորցնել ժամանակի հաշիվը: (Defoe 1948: 68)

The last part “for want of Books and Pen and Ink” of the source text is missing in the Russian translation, therefore it is lacking in the Armenian version as well, but it can be considered an important part, as it shows how hard it was for Robinson to change his behavior in a few days, as he was so used to writing on paper with some ink, that at first he didn’t even consider trying to do the same with other materials. Besides, the omitted part indicates how miserable and pitiful the main character's situation was at first.

In the original version of the book, there are some instances where the author illustrates different aspects of Christianity and sheds light on Robinson Crusoe’s beliefs. In the Russian version, these passages are mainly omitted. Therefore, we can say that the translation suffered a lot, and as the Armenian version is translated from

Russian, there is also little mention of religion. Thus, we can state that important elements of the book's thematic contents were lost in the translation process.

The ship was no sooner out of the Humber than the wind began to blow and the sea to rise in a most frightful manner; and, as I had never been at sea before, I was most inexpressibly sick in body and terrified in mind. I began now seriously to reflect upon what I had done, and how justly I was overtaken by the **judgment of Heaven** for my wicked leaving my father's house and abandoning my duty. All the good counsels of my parents, my father's tears and my mother's entreaties, came now fresh into my mind; and my conscience, which was not yet come to the pitch of hardness to which it has since, reproached me with the contempt of advice, and the breach of **my duty to God** and my father. (Defoe 1719: 26)

Всякий раз, когда на корабль налетала большая волна, мне казалось, что мы сию минуту утонем. Всякий раз, когда корабль падал с высокого гребня волны, я был уверен, что ему уже никогда не подняться. Тысячу раз я клялся, что, если останусь жив, если нога моя снова ступит на твердую землю, я тотчас же вернусь домой к отцу и никогда за всю жизнь не взойду больше на палубу корабля. (Defoe 1904: 16)

Ամեն անգամ, երբ մի խոշոր ալիք էր գալիս նավի վրա, ինձ թվում էր, թե հիմա պիտի խեղդվեմ: Ամեն անգամ, երբ նավը իջնում էր ալիքի բարձր կատարից, ես կարծում էի, թե այլևս երբեք նա չի բարձրանա: Հազար անգամ երդվեցի, որ եթե ողջ մնամ, եթե իմ ոտքը նորից ամուր գետնի վրա դնեմ, իսկույն կվերաառնամ տուն՝ հորս մոտ, և ամբողջ կյանքումս այլևս երբեք նավի տախտակամած չեմ բարձրանա: (Defoe 1948: 35)

In the original passage, Defoe mentions the name of God and Crusoe's faith in Him, but in the Russian version, the translator preferred to omit this part. The passage is full of emotional words, but when we take a look at the Russian version we don't come across any emotional expressions. The same can be observed about the Armenian translation.

Another important factor worth mentioning is that both the source text and the translated versions of the novel are influenced by the period in which they were written. A vivid example is the use of the word “**negro**” which was well preserved in Russian and Armenian. The original novel was published in 1719 when it was used to refer with that epithet to individuals of African descent. It is important to note that the usage of this term in the narrative reflects the language and attitudes prevalent during the time it was composed. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that this word is now considered outdated and offensive. Modern terms currently used to refer to African people are “Black” or “African American”, the appropriate equivalent of which in Russian is “чернокожий” while in Armenian it is “սևամորթ”.

I had frequently given them an account of my two voyages to the coast of Guinea: the manner of trading with the negroes there, and how easy it was to purchase upon the coast for trifles—such as beads, toys, knives, scissors, hatchets, bits of glass, and the like—not only gold-dust, Guinea grains, elephants' teeth, &c., but negroes, for the service of the Brazils, in great numbers. (Defoe 1719: 12)

Я часто рассказывал им о двух моих поездках к берегам Гвинеи, о том, как ведется торговля с тамошними неграми и как легко там за безделицу, за какие яибудь бусы, ножи, ножницы, топоры, стекляшки и тому подобные мелочи, приобрести не только золото и слоновую кость, но даже купить у вождей негритянских племён невольников для работы на плантациях в Бразилии. (Defoe 1904: 9)

Մենք հաճախ հանդիպում էինք և, իհարկե, ես պատմում էի Գվինեական ափերին կատարածի մերկ ուղևորությունների մասին, այն մասին, թե ինչպես էի առևտուր անում այնտեղի նեգրերի հետ, ինչպես հեշտ է այն տեղ զանազան մանրուքներով, ուլունքներով, դանակներով, մկրատներով, կացիներով կամ հայելիներով ձեռք բերել ոսկու ավազ և փղոսկր: (Defoe 1948: 21)

3. Mediated translation of “Robinson Crusoe” from the Perspective of Idioms and Stylistic Devices

Different languages are characterized by unique idiomatic expressions and ‘fixed phrases’ that in most cases cannot be directly translated into other languages; these elements may create serious problems to translators due to cultural differences between the source language and the target ones. In the novel “Robinson Crusoe” we came across some idiomatic expressions which are worth being analyzed. Translating idioms from English into Russian and Armenian can be challenging as translators should be able to transfer the “flavor” of the idiomatic meaning to the destination language. In our view, in the novel *Robinson Crusoe* some idiomatic expressions are worth being analyzed:

After I had been there about Ten or Twelve Days, **it came into my Thoughts**, that I should lose my Reckoning of Time for want of Books and Pen and Ink, and should even forget the Sabbath Days from the working Days; but to prevent this I cut it with my Knife upon a large Post, in Capital Letters, and making it into a great Cross I set it up on the Shore where I first landed, viz. I came on Shore here on the 30th of Sept. 1659. (Defoe 1719: 32)

Вскоре после того, как я поселился на острове, **мне вдруг пришло в голову**, что я потеряю счет времени и даже перестану отличать воскресенье от будней, если не заведу календаря. (Defoe 1904: 16)

Կղզում տեղավորվելուց հետո շատ չանցած՝ **հանկարծ մտքովս անցավ**, որ կարող եմ կորցնել ժամանակի հաշիվը և նույնիսկ կղաղարեմ կիրակին տարբերել լի օրերից, եթե ինձ համար օրացույց չսարքեմ: (Defoe 1948: 32)

It is noticeable that the ST contains the idiom “it came into my Thoughts”, which according to the Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms means “to suddenly or immediately realize something” (Walter 1998: 77). The idiomatic expression is maintained both in the Russian and Armenian translations: “мне вдруг пришло в голову” and “հանկարծ մտքովս անցավ”. Finding effective equivalents of idioms

in the target language is essential to be able to convey the message, and it makes it easier for the arrival audience to understand.

But I am in a hot climate, where if I had Clothes **I could hardly** wear them. (Defoe 1719: 36)

Но климат здесь жаркий, и **можно обойтись** без одежды. (Defoe 1904: 18)

Բայց այստեղ կլիման տաք է, և կարելի է ամանց հագուստի **յոլա զնալ**: (Defoe 1948: 33)

In his diary, Robinson writes about all the good and evil events he had to cope with on the island. The ST includes 6 entries; however, one is skipped in the translated versions. In the diary, the protagonist talks about the positive aspects of not having more clothes. The translation of this passage appears to be interesting, as the author didn't use any idioms in the ST, but the translators added one existing in both languages to make the description more colorful, employing the verbs “обойтись” and “յոլա զնալ” which are commonly used in both target languages.

I have no Soul to speak to or **relieve me**. (Defoe 1719: 34)

Мне не с кем перемолвиться словом, **некому ободрить и** утешить меня. (Defoe 1904: 19)

Չկա մեկը, որի հետ ես մի խոսք փոխանակեմ, չկա մեկը, **որ ինձ սիրտ տա** ու մխիթարի: (Defoe 1948: 35)

Here can be noted the usage of the idiom “սիրտ տալ” meaning “to give him comfort and a feeling of safeness, which is commonly used in the Armenian language at present.

In our analysis, we also attributed great importance to the stylistic devices that characterize Defoe's novel, through the help of which the writer could provide a unique literary representation of Robinson's adventurous life.

In this distress, the mate of our vessel laid hold of the boat, and with the help of the rest of the men got **her slung over the ship's side**; getting all into **her**, let go, and committed ourselves, being eleven in number, to God's mercy and **the wild sea**; for though the storm was abated considerably, yet the **sea** ran dreadfully high upon the shore, and might be well-called **den wild zee**, as the Dutch call **the sea in a storm**. (Defoe 1719: 4)

В этот критический момент помощник капитана подбежал к шлюпке и с помощью остальных людей экипажа перебросил её через борт: мы все, четырнадцать человек, вошли в шлюпку, отчалили и, поручив себя мило сердию божию, отдались на волю **бушующих волн**; хотя шторм поутих, всё-таки на берег набегали страшные валы, и море по справедливости могло быть названо бешеным. (Defoe 1904: 16)

Նավապետի օգնականը նետվեց դեպի այդ մակույկը և նավաստիների օգնությամբ ջուրն իջեցրեց: Մենք բոլորս, տասնմեկ մարդ, մտանք այդ մակույկը և անձնատուր եղանք կատաղի ալիքների կամքին, որովհետև թեև փոթորիկն սկսել էր մեղմանալ, բայց և այնպես դեպի ափն էին թռչում վիթխարի ալիքներ և ծովը իրավացիորեն կարելի էր անվանել կատաղի: (Defoe 1948: 19)

In this excerpt the repetition of the word “sea” in different expressions as “the wild sea”, “the sea in a storm” emphasizes the imagery and creates an effect of horror. By mentioning the Dutch phrase “den wild zee”, the author alludes to the experiences and knowledge of the Dutch sailors or seafarers in dealing with stormy seas. As it can be observed, the expression “the wild sea” was translated as “бушующих волн”, while the Armenian translator rendered it directly from the Russian as “կատաղի ալիքներ”. The Dutch expression “Den wild zee” is missing in both translated versions, and this represents a deviation from the equivalence present in the original English text. In our point of view, this choice damages the paratext and has a negative impact on it. Firstly, the expression “den wild zee” in the original English text is a *metaphor* that conveys a vivid image of the sea, emphasizing its wild and untamed nature. By excluding this phrase, the translator missed the opportunity to evoke a specific sensory experience in the readers. This loss of imagery could result in a less effective portrayal of the sea. It can also impact the overall tone of the translated version. Secondly, the original phrase contributes to create the adventurous atmosphere of the story. The absence of this phrase in the Russian translation could also lead to a slight shift in tone. In fact, following the Russian version of the translation, the Armenian translator omitted the phrase “den wild zee” as well. The expression “the sea ran dreadfully” is a vivid example of metaphor which has been well preserved in the translated versions “на берег набегали страшные валы”, “դեպի ափն էին թռչում վիթխարի ալիքներ”.

In the sentences “got her slung over the ship’s side” and “getting all into her” the boat is personified, as the author employed the personal pronoun “she” instead of “it”. It is interesting to remark that in old times when referring to ships or boats, the pronoun “she” was generally used instead of “it” because when shipping became popular, only men went onboard the ship to control it, and consequently the vessels were frequently compared to women (Clark 2012). However, the use of the pronoun “she” for ships is linguistically considered inappropriate nowadays, because it sounds clearly anachronistic.

The repetition of the sound [s] in the phrase “slung over the ship’s side” creates an *alliterative* effect. This technique adds musical quality to the sentence and helps it flow more smoothly. In the translated versions the alliteration is not preserved due to the different phonetic characteristics of the words in the target languages.

Another stylistic device present in the original passage is *anaphora* based on the clauses beginning with the expressions “and” “and with the help”, “and getting all into her, “and committed ourselves... The sentence “Committed ourselves, being eleven in number” is a parenthesis, as the phrase provides extra information about the characters. This stylistic device is preserved in both translated versions “мы все, четырнадцать

человек, вошли в шлюпку”. “Մենք բոլորս, տասնմեկ մարդ, մտանք այդ մակույկը”.

The number of them broke all my measures; for seeing so many, and knowing that they always came four or six, or sometimes more in a boat, I could not tell what to think of it, or how to take my measures to attack twenty or thirty men single-handed; so lay still in my castle, perplexed and discomfited. (Defoe 1719: 68)

Так как я знал, что в каждую пирогу обыкновенно садится по шесть человек, а то и больше, признаюсь, я сильно растерялся. Я никак не ожидал, что мне придется сражаться с таким большим количеством врагов. "Их не меньше двадцати человек, а пожалуй, наберется и тридцать. Где же мне одному одолеть их!" — с беспокоейством подумал я. Я был в нерешительности и не знал, что мне делать, но все же засел в своей крепости и приготовился к бою. (Defoe 1904: 28)

Քանի որ գիտեի, թե սովորաբար յուրաքանչյուր մակույկում վեց մարդ է նստում, երբեմն նույնիսկ ավելի, ապա, խոստովանում եմ, մի փոքր շփոթվեցի: Ամեննին չէի սպասում, թե հարկ կլինի կռվի բռնվել այդքան մեծ թվով թշնամիների հետ: «Ես ինչպե՞ս կարող եմ միայնակ հաղթել այդպիսի մեծ բազմությունը», — տխուրորտում ասում էի ինքս ինձ: Ես երկմտանքի մեջ էի, չգիտեի ի՞նչ անեմ, բայց և այնպես նստեցի իմ ամրոցում և պատրաստվեցի կռվի: (Defoe 1948: 57)

In the English passage the expression “The number of them broke all my measures. . . , I could not tell what to think of it, or how to take my measures to attack twenty or thirty men single-handed” is an example of *cataphora* as the author preferred to use the personal pronoun “them” at the beginning of the sentence, later clarifying that it refers to the men. In the translated versions this stylistic device is not preserved, as the translators might have found the equivalent structure inappropriate in the translated languages.

“Attack twenty or thirty men single-handed” is *hyperbole* as it exaggerates the overwhelming odds the narrator perceives, emphasizing his fear of being outnumbered. In the Russian passage, the hyperbole is expressed through the rhetorical question “Где же мне одному одолеть их!” (“How can I defeat them alone!”) which highlights the narrator's worries and the challenge he faces. The same is apparent in the Armenian version “Ես ինչպե՞ս կարող եմ միայնակ հաղթել այդպիսի մեծ բազմությունը” (How can I conquer such a great multitude alone?) which emphasizes the narrator's doubts and uncertainty.

“So lay still in my castle, perplexed and discomfited” is an *ellipsis* as the subject of the sentence is omitted. The same stylistic device is preserved in the translated versions.

4. Conclusion

The present paper aimed to analyze the mediated translation of the novel *Robinson Crusoe* from English into Armenian via Russian, with a special focus on idiomatic

expressions and the usage of stylistic devices. We can conclude that when using an intermediary language there are some notable differences that may have a great impact on the actual translation process. *Robinson Crusoe* was written in the 18th century and contains allusions, contextual references and cultural elements that may not be directly relatable to contemporary readers or different cultures. Our research showed that the translators considered mainly preserved the less relevant parts of the prototext, or the ones that would be more suitable to the target audience in order to ensure better cultural understanding and engagement.

It is important to observe that the translators tried to transfer the meanings and essence of the idioms referring to specific cultural elements while adapting them to the target languages. For what concerns the examples of stylistic devices analyzed, we can state that some of them were preserved, while others were not, due to the characteristic features of the target languages.

Focusing on the selected Russian translation of the novel some deviations from the original can be noted. Therefore, we can draw the conclusion that the translator felt free to make a lot of changes, which resulted in the loss of some important elements of the literary work's plot. As the Armenian translation was conducted starting from the Russian one, it is very close to this intermediary version, with a number of deviations from the original English text. Even though many details were lost in the translated versions, it was due to mediated translation that in that historical period the novel was transferred between distant cultures and social communities, so its significance remains undeniable.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical Standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Alessandra Marabini

PhD, Senior Teaching Fellow at Belgorod State University, Russian Federation; former teacher assistant for Russian language courses at Bari State University “Aldo Moro” and at Tuscia State University, Italy. Her research interests lie primarily in contrastive phraseology of the Russian and Italian languages, linguo-cultural studies, phraseology and cognition.

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7450-9115>

Anoush Ayunts

PhD, Associate Professor at the Department of English for Cross-cultural Communication, Yerevan State University, Armenia. Scale of professional interests include: intercultural communication, cross-cultural competences, virtual exchange projects, translation studies. She is a member of World Council on Intercultural and Global Competence.

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4653-7841>

Hasmik Mkhitarian

Assistant Professor and postgraduate researcher at the Department of Translation Studies, Yerevan State University, Armenia. Her research interests include pragmatolinguistics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, translation studies and other disciplines.

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1198-3750>

Colleta Akoth Owino

Master’s student at the Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology in Kenya; holder of B.Ed. in English Language and Literature. Her research interests include translation and interpretation.

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-7987-8179>

Benard Mudogo

PhD, Senior Lecturer in Linguistics specializing in translation and mediated communication and research in literacy and communication knowledge for development. He has worked with various organizations in the areas of translation and early grade literacy, communication and policy development and capacity building of English language teachers.

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4290-8706>

David Barasa

PhD, Senior Lecturer in Linguistics and Communication Skills at the Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology in Kenya. His research interests lie in the fields of linguistics and communication studies with special reference to phonology, morphology, language documentation, language policy analysis, language contact and variation and multilingualism.

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7144-7772>

Rose Auma

PhD, Senior Lecturer in French. Her areas of academic interest include French as a foreign language, foreign language pedagogy, language acquisition, verbal interaction, curriculum development as well as initial and continued training of teachers of French. She currently serves as the Ag. Dean, School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS).
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4982-7335>

Gayane Gasparyan

D.Sc., Full Professor at the Department of English Translation; acting dean of the Faculty of Intercultural Communication and Political Science and member of the Board of Trustees at Brusov State University, Armenia; a board member of RA Specialized Research Council of Slavic Languages; vice-president of AASE (member of the Association of the European Society for the Study of English, Armenian Branch); member of the Advisory Board of the International Scientific Journal “Translation Studies: Theory and Practice”; Editorial Board member of Bulletin of Brusov State University RA; Editorial Board member of International Scientific Journal “Terra Linguistica” RF. Her research interests include text/discourse pragmatic analysis, cognitive pragmatics, discourse analysis, translation studies.
<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3353-8512>

Meri Ishkhanyan

PhD student at Brusov State University; trilingual translator (Rus-Eng-Arm). Her research interests include cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, comparative typology, cultural linguistics, translation studies and intercultural communication.
<http://orcid.org/0009-0003-1487-645X>

Giorgia Pomaroli

PhD, Senior Temporary Assistant Professor in Slavic Studies at the University of Verona, Italy; author of a monography devoted to Russian language and Russian identity, as well as articles on linguistic culturology, teaching Russian FL, Russian phraseology, and sociolinguistics. Her research interests cover topics related to Russian linguistics and literature, foreign language education, inclusive and accessible education and translation.
<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8593-021X>

Irina Mkhitaryan

PhD, Associate Professor of English Language and Theory of Translation at the Department of Translation Studies at Yerevan State University and the Armenian State University of Economics; holder of UK Global English TESOL teaching qualification along with expertise in teaching Business English and English for Accountants. Her research domains encompass general issues of translation studies, literary translation, cognitive stylistics and intercultural communicative competence.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9336-2478>

Diana Hayroyan

Lecturer and a Ph.D. student at the Department of Translation Studies at Yerevan State University, Armenia; holder of UK Global English TESOL teaching qualification. Her main research interests include general issues of translation studies, literary translation, cognitive stylistics and fairy tale studies.

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6173-6108>

Iris Uccello

PhD in Russian Literature from the University of Verona, Italy. Her research interests include F. M. Dostoevsky's works, microhistory, late imperial Russian cultural history, pre-revolutionary women's prose and Russian realism. She has completed internships at the Hermitage and the Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin House) in 2018 and 2020, respectively. She holds a diploma with honors in Russian Literature from Saint Petersburg State University. She has contributed scholarly articles on Dostoevsky and the role of microhistory in reshaping grand narratives and published in journals such as eSamizdat, Tomsk State University Journal, and Dostoevsky Studies.

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4575-6102>

Kulwa Yohana Matalu

PhD, Lecturer in Linguistics and Communication Skills at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, University of Dodoma, Tanzania. His research interests include translation and interpretation, language education and sociolinguistics.

<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6214-2826>

Markuhi Voskanyan

Lecturer of English Language at the Department of Translation Studies at Yerevan State University, Armenia. Her research interests lie mainly in general issues of translation studies, legal translation, economic translation as well as media translation.

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5285-7335>

Lusine Sargsyan

PhD, Associate Professor in Linguistics at the Department of Translation Studies at Yerevan State University; language coordinator of “TED Talks” Project in Armenia.

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5064-4144>

Martina Napolitano

Fixed-term postdoctoral researcher in Slavic Studies (Russian Studies) at the University of Trieste, Italy (SSLMIT, Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies); author of a monograph on Sasha Sokolov's work; translator (Ru>It). Her research interests lie primarily in late-Soviet and contemporary Russian culture (poetry and music).

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8989-5012>

Nona Harutyunyan

Lecturer at the Department of Translation Studies at Yerevan State University, Armenia. Her research interests include legal and economic translation, literary translation as well as gender discourse studies.

<https://orcid.org/my-orcid?orcid=0009-0002-1750-8532>

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- e. Do not use **non-standard fonts**. Times New Roman (and other Unicode fonts) now supports most special characters, so it should not be necessary. If you think an

exception needs to be made in your case, please contact the editors.

- f. The text should contain between **20 000 and 24 000 characters** including spaces.

4. References

Use the author-date system (Whoever 2007: 144–58) of the Chicago Manual of Style (see http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

Use a negative indentation of 0.5 cm (left) for the list of references.

Non-Latin alphabets are not used in the reference list, so the references need to be transliterated and the English translation should be provided in square brackets.

5. Images

- a. Make sure that you have the right to publish the image. If you did not create the image yourself, you will need to provide proof that you have obtained the permission to publish the image.
- b. It is recommended that you use TIFF files for producing images or photographs, and EPS files for vector graphics (illustrations). All images including photographs must be included in the main Word or other files submitted.
- c. Take into account the size of CSP pages (148 x 210 mm) when including images. Your image will have to be resized if it is too large or too small, and this can prove problematic in certain cases.
- d. Call your pictures or illustrations Fig. 1, Fig. 2, etc. in the order of their appearance.
- e. Images should not be inserted into Word at more than 100% of their original size because this will cause a loss of quality.
- f. Images for printing should always have at least a resolution of 300 dpi at the size in which they are going to be printed.
- g. The size in which images are intended for printing and resolution (300 dpi) is the minimum required for the original scan or photograph: images cannot be recalculated to a larger size at the same resolution or else they will lose quality. 7. The quality of an image cannot be checked by looking at it on a screen (which often shows images at a resolution of 72 or 96 dpi in contrast to high quality print where they are usually printed at 360 dpi).
- h. Colour images for printing should always be saved in the CMYK mode (not in the RGB mode).

6. Tables

- a. It is recommended that you use some sort of background colour like light grey for the title row or column of a table, and ensure that the text of titles is in bold. This can be achieved by clicking on the relevant cells of your table, and then clicking on Table, Table Properties, Borders and Shading, and then selecting a colour (preferably 20%-grey).
- b. Do not use different types of formatting for different rows or columns unless you would like to differentiate between headings and body text.
- c. Entitle your table in the same way that you entitled your image (Table 1, Table 2, etc.)
- d. Leave a blank 10 pt. TNR line before and after the table.

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