

Variability of Translation Strategies in Inter-Cultural Communication

(As Exemplified By Indian Cultural Realia)

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Abstract—Translation is the action of bilingual inter-cultural communication, where the translator shall remember differences in the social and cultural experience between speakers of source and target languages. Use of social networking sites for inter-cultural communication leads to appearance of various communities where topics, strategies and solutions are discussed. The research objective is to describe variability of translation strategies in translation from Russian to Hindi by translator and by speaker of the language. We consider the degree of equivalent correlation as exemplified by comparison of Russian and Indian realia in translation to Hindi with the aim of achieving inter-cultural communication. The subject of research is a translation of a text that includes religious vocabulary and its variant translations from Russian to Hindi. Materials from the Orthodoxy in India community on the VK.ru social networking site were used.

Keywords—*variability of translation decisions, inter-cultural communication, Hindi.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, use of social networking sites for inter-cultural communications gives rise to discussion spaces where issues and topics of interest to various communities are discussed. Commentaries in the social networks are also important, especially if the matter is translation strategy in the inter-cultural communication. We support the opinion of Tomakhin, that «Translation is an action of bilingual communication; participants speak various languages and may belong to different cultures. Translation in the context of the inter-cultural communication is a «contact of two systems with their national and cultural peculiarities, and contact of representatives of lignuo-cultural communities, each with their own world view and a certain stock of cultural heritage, moral and ethical norms, speaking etiquette» [5]. In this paper, we consider the degree of equivalent correlation as exemplified by comparison of Russian and Indian realia in translation to Hindi with the aim of achieving inter-cultural communication. The research objective is to describe variability of translation strategies in translation from Russian to Hindi by a Russian translator and by a speaker of the target language. The subject of research is a translation from Russian to Hindi of a private message in the Orthodoxy in India community in the VK.ru social networking site. To study variability in translation a comparative analysis of text is performed to find discrepancies

between suggested variants of translation and typology of mistakes (semantic distortions, inaccuracies, ambiguity, grammar mistakes, stylistics mishaps, automatic errors). The theoretical foundation of the study is in the works of L.N. Golub in the method of studying translation with parallel texts [2]; works of E. Nida in linguistic and cultural differences [4]; works of L. Venuti on two strategies of translation: foreignizing and domesticising [7]. We propose a hypothesis of whether it is possible to call two translations as adequate to their original; what is the quality and completeness in reproduction of all the stylistic and ethnic peculiarities of the works? We concur with the opinion of Komissarov noting, that «in comparative analysis, several translation of the same text may be compared, made in different periods of time, translations produced by different translators, translations before and after editing. However, the main type of analysis is still comparison of the translation and the original, to determine the degree of equivalence between them. At that, analysis of equivalence assumes the adequate translation as a potential invariant — a text, to the maximum degree close to the original (possibly, taking into account some inevitable deviations)» [3]. The Orthodoxy in India community publishes a schedule of church services for the next month in its news feed. This text was translated to Hindi by a translator and published for subscribers studying the language. Indians, having read the text, commented that the text contains significant errors, noting that some words in Hindi are polysemic and may have two or more meanings. It is explained by the fact that Russian and Indian Christians may have different views of the same concepts. Let us recall, that Christianity was brought to India by Saint Thomas in 52 AD. The numerical strength of Indian Christians comprises about 2% of the Indian population (about 25 million people). In due course, the Indian Christian community underwent a strong influence from Hinduism, was fit into caste system, with various groups of Indian Christians having different position in the caste hierarchy.

Our study compares two translations. Here, we may speak about parallel texts in different languages: Russian and Hindi. Use of parallel texts is a necessity for comparing the quality of translated texts. Let us consider definition of parallel texts. Golub believes that the parallel texts are «texts similar in thematic parameters and thus, in translation practice are largely topically-similar texts in different languages» [2]. They may be

«translations of an original text» [2]. The parallel texts are juxtaposed using various parameters:

- in the plane of expression – when texts with the same pragmatic orientation are compared, aimed at the reader and pertaining to the same or different stylistic layers.
- in the plane of content – when texts are compared with the same topic, when the topic is insufficiently known to the translator and they need to establish terminology and frequent collocations in a given professional field, while the compared texts may not always be the original and the translation.
- Textological aspect of the parallel texts concept, when existing editions and drafts of the original are compared, which is especially important for literary translation. It provides the translator with an ability to trace the development of the author's idea, turning their attention to the elements of the original that shall be kept in the translation when the editor and the translator correct and refine several variant translations of the same text in search of an optimal result [2]. As this work includes variability in translation in two languages and its comparative analysis, we support the notion that «the use of parallel texts is a rather good procedure for translator's work, as it is convenient for compilation of the necessary glossary, understanding the usage of a certain term in a given context; also there is a shortening of time for the search for equivalent usage, establishing the key vocabulary and phraseology, typical for such texts in both languages» [2]. Thus, being acquainted with the parallel texts in any genre may help translators to juxtapose the texts of the translation, search for equivalents, key vocabulary, phraseology, idioms, as well as analyze translation errors.

Here, we provide the source text in Russian (with a literal translation into English following) and then consider the variant translation provided by the Russian translator and by the speakers of the target language:

*«Расписание богослужений на октябрь 2018 года в Приходе Русской Православной Церкви в Нью-Дели.
Адрес: Посольский городок Российской Федерации, Александр Дубчек марг.
Настоятель прихода – священник отец Димитрий.
13 октября, суббота – 17:00 Всенощное бдение.
14 октября, воскресенье, 9:00 Божественная Литургия.
Праздник Покрова Пресвятой Богородицы.
18 октября, четверг – 18:00 Всенощное бдение.
19 октября, пятница – 9:00 Божественная Литургия.
День памяти святого апостола Фомы. Престольный праздник прихода.
20-21 октября священник о. Димитрий совершает богослужения в Генконсульстве РФ в Мумбаи.
25-27 октября священник о. Димитрий совершает богослужения в Посольстве РФ в Катманду (Непал).
28 октября, воскресенье 9:00 Божественная Литургия.»*
«Church Service Schedule for October of 2018 in the Parish of the Russian Orthodox Church in New Delhi.

Address: Legation quarter of the Russian Federation, Aleksandr Dubchek marg.

Rector of the parish – Father Dimitry.

October 13, Saturday – 17:00 All-night vigil.

October 14, Sunday, 9:00 Divine Liturgy.

The Virgin of Mercy Day.

October 18, Thursday – 18:00 All-night vigil.

October 19, Friday, 9:00 Divine Liturgy.

Saint Thomas Feast Day. Patronal festival of the parish.

October 20-21, Rev. Father Dimitry celebrates the divine service in the Consulate General of Russia in Mumbai.

October 25-27, Rev. Father Dimitry celebrates the divine service in the Embassy of Russia in Katmandu, Nepal.

October 28, Sunday, 9:00 Divine Liturgy.

Variability of the translation strategies is shown below. The sentence «Расписание богослужений на октябрь 2018 года в Приходе Русской Православной Церкви в Нью-Дели» was divided into two Hindi sentences: 1) “Aktubar 2018 ka samay saarini” – «Schedule for October 2018»; 2) “Sent Thamas peirish (samuday)” – «Parish of Saint Thomas (Community)». In the second sentence, the translator provided specification (the parish of the Russian Orthodox Church in New Delhi is the Church of Apostle Thomas, which is still under construction). We believe that adding the “samuday” («community») in parenthesis is superfluous. From the word combination «Расписание богослужений», the translator only translated the word «расписание» (schedule), without notion of «богослужение» (divine service), which is an omission; the Hindi speaker used an equivalent translation – “sevaon ki anusuchi” – «list of services», where “anusuchi” is a Sanskrit word meaning «list, inventory, index (of appendices)». The sentence «в Приходе Русской Православной Церкви в Нью-Дели» was equivalently translated by the Hindi speaker – “Nai Dilli me Ruusi ruruhivaadi charch ke peirish me”. In the sentence «Адрес: Посольский городок Российской Федерации, Александр Дубчек марг. Настоятель прихода – священник отец Димитрий», the Russian translator translates into Hindi only the phrase “Pujari: Fra.Dimitri” – «Priest – Father Dimitry»; here we see a typo in the abbreviation - “Fra” for “father”. Thus, the translator compressed the text. The translation provided by the Hindi speaker is more complete: “pata: Ruusi Sangh ke dutaavas shahar, Alekzender Dubchek marj. Peirish pujari pita Dimitriy he”. The word «street» contains a typo in Hindi “marj”, instead of “marg”. In translation of collocations similar to «Отец Димитрий», usually the word “pita” is used in Hindi, and the Hindi speaker uses it as well, while the Russian translator uses the English “father”.

The Hindi speaker translates the collocation «Всенощное бдение» as English words “all night vigil” transliterated into Devanagari. The Russian translator tried to combine English and Hindi words, producing “all right ghari”, with a typo, “all right” instead of “all night”, adding the Hindi word “ghari” («time, hour»). Hindi-Russian dictionary gives several equivalents for this word: a) “sandhyakaalin upaasna” as a church term, where “sandhyakaalin” is «twilight» and “upaasna” is a Sanskrit word meaning «divine service»; b) Hindi collocation “upaavas se pehle ki sandhya”, meaning

«twilight before a fast»; c) “jaagaran” – it is a grammatically masculine word of Sanskrit origin, meaning «vigil, vigilance»; d) “ratjaga”, meaning «wakefulness, vigil» with a note (especially during a celebration); “raat ki prarthna” – «night prayer». The Russian-Hindi dictionary does not contain the word «бдение», but it contains «бдительность, бодрствование» (wakefulness) – “jaagarukta”, a derivative of Sanskrit origin, formed from the adjective “jaagaruk” – «awake, vigilant». There is also “caokas”, meaning «wide-awakeness» in the meaning of «cautiousness».

The collocation «Божественная Литургия» is translated by the Russian translator with an English word “litarji”, while the Hindi speaker uses a combination of Hindi and English words “Divya Liturgy”.

The phrase «Праздник Покрова Пресвятой Богородицы» was translated by the Russian translator as “Bhagavan ki maan ke kavar ki chuttiyan” - lit. «The Feast of Virgin's Mantle». The Hindi speaker translates this phrase as “Dhanya verjin ke madhyastha ka parv” lit. – «The Feast of intercession (presence) of the Holy Virgin». On the social networking sites, another translation may be found: “Pavitra verjin ke sanrakshan ka parv” – lit. «The Feast of Protection of the Holy Virgin». Despite the modern Russian-Hindi dictionary providing the following definition to the word «Богородица» (Virgin Mary): “Kumari Meri”, “mariyam”, “Devmata”, – we see that they are not used in this message to parishioners.

The sentence «День памяти святого апостола Фомы» is translated by the Russian translator into Hindi as “Foma ke pavitra upaavas ki yaden”, which literally means «remembrance of sacred fast (here: saint) Thomas», where the word for «day» is omitted. The Hindi speaker translates the same sentence as “pavitra preshit Thamas ka smarak divas”, meaning “Remembrance day of Saint Prophet Thomas”.

The sentence «Престольный праздник прихода» is translated by the translator as “hamaare peirish ki sthaai chuttiyan”, meaning «our permanent parish celebrations». The Hindi speaker translates this phrase as “peirish ka parv ka din”, meaning «day of the parish's celebration», using Possessive case with a genitive postposition “ka”. In this phrase, the Hindi speaker made either a typo, or a grammatical mistake: the postposition “ka” is used twice, while according to the Hindi grammar, after the word “peirish” it should have been changed to “ke”.

In the sentence «20-21 октября священник отец Димитрий совершает богослужения в Генконсульстве РФ в Мумбаи», the translator omits the details and gives only the date and location: “Mumbai me 20-21 ki seva” – «Service in Mumbai 20-21 (here: October)». The Hindi speaker provides the literal translation: “20-21 aktubar ko, pujaari pita Dimitri Mumbai me ruusi vaniija dutaavas me sevaen ayojit karte hein”, at that, the word «священник» is translated with the Hindi word “pujaari” meaning «priest». The same happens to the translation of the following sentence «25-27 октября священник отец Димитрий совершает богослужения в Посольстве РФ в Катманду (Непал)», where the translator omits detail, giving only the date and location of the service: “Kaathmandu, Nepal me 25-27 seva” – «Servic in Katmandu, Nepal, Непал 25-27 (here: October)». Here, after the numerals

25-27, the translator also omits the genitive postposition that defines the feminine noun – “ki”. On the contrary, the Hindi speaker translates this sentence equivalently: “25-27 aktubar ko, pujaari pita Dimitri Kaathmandu, Nepal me ruusi dutaavas me divya sevaen karta hei”.

In translating the sentence «28 октября, воскресенье 9:00 Божественная Литургия», the Russian translator applies a transformation, by supplying additional information: “aktubar 28, ravivar 9:00 Divya litarji. Ravivar ki seva ke ant me chay he. Har kisi ka swaagat he”, which means «October 28, Sunday, 9:00 (there will be) a divine liturgy. After the Sunday service, there will be a tea party. Everyone's invited». The Hindi speaker translates this sentence also employing the translation transformation of extension: “28 aktubar, ravivar 9:00 Divya Isaiyon ki prarthna karne ki riti (litarji)” – «October 28, Sunday, 9:00 (there will be) a liturgy dedicated to Jesus the God». In this translation, the Hindi speaker extends the meaning of the «божественная литургия» (divine liturgy), by adding the «dedicated to Jesus the God».

Thus, we have considered the degree of equivalent correlation as exemplified by comparison of Russian and Indian realia in translation to Hindi with the aim of achieving intercultural communication.

In the translation variants given above, we may note, that both variants keep the communication objective. In translations produced by the Hindi speaker we see translational equivalence, while the Russian translator, uses generalization when translating from Russian into Hindi. In general, both translators provide their translations with transliterations of English words.

Further, speaking about the pragmatic adaptation of a foreign text, let us analyze the postulates of well-known translation theorists: Eugene Nida and Lawrence Venuti. Emphasizing the principle of correspondence and cultural-ethnic aspects of translation, Nida notes that «the objective of the translator may not be limited to transmission of information. For example, he may use translation to invoke a certain type of behavior. In such cases, he will aspire to achieve the most complete understandability of the text and will change some minute details to make the reader to understand the meaning of the message for their own circumstances. Adaptation of translation to the target language and to the corresponding culture is a significant component of any stylistically admissible translation» [4]. Considering the Hindi translation variants, we may see, that the Hindi speaker translation is a so-called *gloss translation*, where, according to Nida, «from the position of formally equivalent translation, that is when the translation of the original is structurally equivalent to the original, or «the message against the cultural background in the target language is constantly compared with the message against the cultural background in the source language», where the translator tries to recreate the form and the content of the original as accurate and literal as possible. Such a translation would require a multitude of commentaries to make the text completely comprehensible» [4].

We also considered two translation strategies: domesticising and foreignizing. Shelestyuk and Gritsenko note that «the number of foreign borrowings in the text may serve as a measure of the strategy, which the translator leans towards.

Other significant indicators are transformations of syntactic structure of the original, its morphological forms, stylistic features, etc. Excessive number of such transformation witness to active application of smoothing technique characteristic of domestication, and vice versa, their low number witness to aspiration to formally exact translation, «solid calquing», characteristic of foreignization. Translator's attitude towards realia may be considered an especially important aspect in linguo-cultural evaluation of the translation: their preservation and presentation to the reader in a form adequate to the original (that is, translated by transcribing, transliteration or calquing), as well as their explication (commentaries, footnotes) witness to translator's selection of foreignization; opposite, their omission or substitution with «functional analogues» in the target language without linguo-cultural commentaries witness to domestication» [6]. One may say, that in the second translation, the Hindi speaker aspired to communicate the text of the original to a maximum degree, to keep the formal equivalence, abandoning foreignization (according to Venuti), while the Russian translator aspired for maximum approach to the cultural realia, using words from literary Hindi originating from Sanskrit. Omissions on behalf of the translator are worth noting: he omits the details and gives only date and location of the service in two sentences.

In the translation made by the Hindi speaker we may see translation equivalence, which Komissarov defines as «closeness of texts in the source and target language, actually achieved during the translation, as compared to potentially achievable communality of meaning permitted by these languages (Komissarov 2013: 51). As Komissarov establishes five types of equivalence, let us determine which part of the original content is kept in two translations. So, the five levels of equivalence include: 1) preservation of the communication objective; 2) preservation of the communication objective and identity of the situation in the original and translation (communicative situation); 3) preservation of the communication objective, indication of the situation and a method of its description, where the translator shall often employ contraction or extension of the translation units, specification or generalization, as well as substitution; 4) preservation of the communication objective, communicative situation, the method of the communication situation description and reproduction of a significant portion of meanings of the original syntactic structures (syntactic variance); 5) preservation of both meaning and stylistic characteristics in translation (literal translation) [3].

In translations made by the Hindi speaker, we may see the «syntactic structure, or a type of equivalence where there is the maximum possible reproduction of syntactic structure meaning of the original, as well as a significant parallelism in vocabulary» and «vocabulary», providing maximum closeness between the textual content in the source and target languages, parallelism of vocabulary and structural organization, communality of certain semes in the meanings of correlated words [3].

We came to a conclusion that the norms of translating the Russian language original are aimed at preserving the national distinctiveness and features of originals. Both the Russian translator and the Hindi speaker tried to adapt the text to their own style. Methods of translation transformation (as per Barkhudarov) are present in both translations:

- a) lexical substitutions: generalization, specification;
- b) grammatical transformation: changing the form of a word, syntactic substitutions in a compound sentence;
- c) compensation, addition in the speaker's translation, omissions in translator's translation [1].

Having studied the two translations with the parallel texts comparison method, we may conclude the following: this method is of immediate interest and is necessary in teaching the theory and practice of translation and inter-cultural communication, as well as is very important in comparative analysis of several translations of a single original text, or analysis of several translated texts.

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