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TRANSLATION PECULIARITIES OF ECONOMIC METAPHORS FROM VIETNAMESE INTO RUSSIAN

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Abstract

The paper considers metaphors with a special focus on the metaphors used in the economic discourse and discusses some peculiarities in translating such metaphors from Vietnamese into Russian. A general definition of metaphor is given and some methods that were developed for translating metaphors are described. The metaphors from the Vietnamese economic newspapers and the difficulties that appeared at their translating into Russian are reviewed and analyzed. The study aims to analyze the economic metaphor in Vietnamese newspapers, to identify the main methods of their translation into Russian. The leading Vietnamese newspapers in the electronic version were the material for this study: “Vneconomy.vn”, “Dantri.vn”, “Vietnamnet.vn”, “Vnexpress.net”. The main research methods are the descriptive method, the method of contrastive analysis, the comparative method and the method of component analysis. Due to some cultural differences, translation is viewed as a complex process. As a result of the study. The results of this study can facilitate the task of a translator, where the main task of the translator remains to choose the most suitable translation method. Based on the analyzed examples, we found that when translating metaphors and economic metaphors, in particular, from Vietnamese into Russian, some difficulties arise due to the differences in the realities of the two languages, different cultures, and value systems. Therefore, the result of the study is justified by the possibility of using its materials in translation practice, some textbooks on the stylistics of the Vietnamese and Russian languages.

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Keywords: Economic metaphor, translation of a metaphor, translation methods, Russian, Vietnamese.



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1. Introduction

A metaphor is a way of understanding one object through another. In this sense, a metaphor is one of the ways to represent knowledge in a linguistic form. The metaphor remains a serious challenge not only for readers but also for professional translators.

The main in the definition of a metaphor done by Aristotle was the transfer of the name of one object to another. The metaphor, according to Aristotle (1978), gives the ground "to speak of something real, to connect something impossible with it" (p. 86). One of the best examples of the metaphor is Shakespeare's phrase, "The world is a theater". The world is not a theater, but people in Western countries extrapolate this metaphor to their lives and imagine that they are just playing roles.

A metaphor is considered one of the most complex linguistic phenomena, because to create and translate metaphors you need to know much of linguistic elements, including the culture of the original language (usually a deep section of the culture of the ancient times) and the author's creativity of the metaphor, used according to his 'brainchild'. A metaphor can also be completely new, lively, original (individually belonging to an author's style), and this sometimes raises some sharp questions and challenges regarding translation or senses convey. As Komissarov (1999a, 1999b) rightly states, each language creates a peculiar "linguistic picture of the world", which is one of the reasons for challenges appearing in translation. When considering the metaphors in terms of their translation from one language to another, it should be remembered that translation is, first of all, the exchange of information between representatives of different cultures. A translator, while translating a metaphor, often encounters a challenge of forced guesses (when a text does not give a full and unambiguous information) and he/she needs to relate his/her knowledge to the knowledge of other people, what they had in mind, both native speakers of a source language and native speakers of a target language.

2. Problem Statement

A large number of studies can be found in Russian and foreign scientific literature, which illustrate some research of the journalistic style and its expressive language means. The study of a metaphor is under continuous learning and development. In Vietnam, the issue of a metaphor is not new. There are many works devoted to metaphor's functioning and its integral role in the cultural life of a human being. In his work "Metaphor in the Stream of History", Trần Hữu Thực (2012) conducted a study on a metaphor and its role in developing the world culture. Trịnh Thị Thanh Huệ (2012) analyzed the metaphors of Vietnamese and English poetry. In Trịnh Thị Thanh Huệ's (2012) dissertation, some examples of the metaphors of human body parts in Chinese and Vietnamese were compared.

However, among the studies conducted in this domain, there have not been yet any works on challenges in terms of translation of the economic metaphor from Vietnamese into Russian.

3. Research Questions

The paper discusses some metaphors, to say precisely, the peculiarities with the reference to translating the economic metaphors from Vietnamese into Russian. A general definition of a metaphor is given and some translation methods are described. The economic metaphors taken from the Vietnamese

economic newspapers are reviewed and analyzed, similarities and differences of metaphors in Russian and Vietnamese economic texts are described, as well as the challenges in translating these metaphors into Russian.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this work is to analyze the economic metaphor, consider some specific features of how to translate this metaphor from Vietnamese into Russian, and identify the optimal methods among the presented ones.

To achieve the goal implies solving the following tasks:

- identify a metaphor concept.
- consider and analyze the examples of the economic metaphor in the Vietnamese newspapers; describe the developed methods for translating these metaphors into Russian; consider the features, similarities, and differences of the metaphors of the Vietnamese and Russian languages.
- identify the difficulties in translating the metaphors in economic journalism from Vietnamese to Russian.

The scientific novelty of the research consists in analysing the metaphors being used in the Vietnamese economic newspapers, there have been described the methods for translating the economic metaphors from Vietnamese into Russian, as well as the difficulties of translating them

5. Research Methods

The main research methods are the descriptive ones, the method of contrastive analysis, the comparative method and the method of component analysis.

6. Findings

Newspaper metaphors are usually divided according to the degree of “novelty”, according to which, they can be divided into two groups: individually-copyrighted (“living”) and commonly used (“habitual”) (Kovalevskaya, 2009). Newmark in his work “A textbook of translation” proposes to divide metaphors by the method of their formation, while the metaphor can be general, adapted, original, disappeared, clichéd, and new (as cited in Shikalov, 2010).

Whatever the type of a metaphor, the methods of its translation will be chosen. When translating commonly used metaphors, one should go in line with commonly used analogue in the target language – cliché. The author’s metaphors are recommended to translate as close as possible to an original text. The main task in translating some individual author's metaphors is to keep the meaning and style of an author. In the works of Komissarov and Koralova (1990) the author differentiate the various ways of translating metaphors. However, they were not categorical in applying a certain method of translating metaphors. Newmark noted that the translator himself must decide to keep the image of a metaphor or to take it off, taking into account an author and a recipient, a type of text and information and their target orientation (as

cited in Shikalov, 2010). The paper describes the methods developed by the author of the research on how to translate metaphors from Vietnamese into Russian, which can become the basis for the development of some translation techniques aimed at translating metaphors of an economic text.

This section details the economic metaphors and their translation.

6.1. Literal translation, in which the figurativeness of the primary metaphor is kept

Common metaphors coincide in frame-type composition if they fall into both Russian and Vietnamese as borrowings. To translate these metaphors, a translator uses the “literal translation” method, keeping the metaphorical image with the original metaphor. We put this method in the first place since a translator's primary task is to convey the metaphor in its original form.

In the Vietnamese newspapers, the expression *đáy* – *the bottom* is often found to denote the lowest level of some state in the economy. To this Vietnamese expression *đáy* corresponds to the Russian metaphor *bottom*. *Bottom* – a metaphor for an economic downturn, often used to refer to a crisis or worsening an economic situation. This metaphor allows translators to keep the style of a text and the true meaning existing in the target language. “*Giá dầu lao dốc, trượt xuống đáy 5 tháng.*” (Vneconomy 06/06/19) – *The price of oil is falling down, it will reach bottom within 5 months.*

Consider the expressions often used in the Vietnamese newspapers, for example: *chiến tranh lạnh* – **cold war** ; *làn sóng đầu tư* – **investment wave** ; *con sóng toàn cầu hóa* – **wave of globalization** ; *phao cứu sinh* – **rescue circle** ; *chìa khóa* – **the key to something** ; *mở cửa* – **door opening** ; *con dao hai lưỡi* – **double-edged sword** ... These metaphors are very strong, they mean the collapse of the ideology, the phenomenon that is very familiar to Russian culture, therefore a translator without errors keeps the metaphor in the source language when translating. Let us give a few examples:

“*Căng thẳng Mỹ – Trung: “Chiến tranh lạnh” kiểu mới?*” (Vneconomy 05/06/19) – *“Tension between the US and China: the new “cold war”?”* ”

“*Việt Nam đón nhận làn sóng đầu tư không ngừng từ Châu Á*” (Vneconomy 02/26/19) – *“Vietnam receives an uninterrupted “investment wave” from Asia.”*

“*Giảm thuế nhập khẩu thép có thể là con dao hai lưỡi*” (Vneconomy 19/10/18) – *“Reducing import duties on steel can be a double-edged sword”.*

“*Số vốn này được coi là một “phao cứu sinh” cho Venezuela, đất nước đang cạn kiệt ngoại tệ.*” (Vneconomy 20/03/15) – *“This capital is considered a “lifeboat” for Venezuela”.*

“*Chìa khóa để kinh tế tư nhân thực sự lớn mạnh*” (Vneconomy 10/05/19) – *“Key to the effective development of the private economy”.*

6.2. Replacing the Vietnamese metaphor with the equivalent metaphor in Russian

The second method of translating a metaphor is used when there is no similar metaphor in the target language or it has a different meaning in the source language. The problem is that such metaphors cannot always be translated verbatim, because some of the images on which the metaphor in the source language is based may not coincide with the metaphors in the target language. In this case, a translator must find the expression in the target language, which will have the corresponding image with the metaphor in the source language. In other words, this method is called – replacement with the equivalent metaphor or the translation based on the similar image. For example,

Metaphor **nợ ngập đầu** – *diving headlong* in the Vietnamese economic newspapers means a state of redundancy for something, in this case, it is debts. This expression in the Vietnamese language corresponds to the Russian metaphor *in debt as in silk* or *to sink into debts*: “**Nợ ngập đầu, nhiều doanh nghiệp khó tìm người mua cổ phần?**” (Vietnamnet 02/23/18) – “**Plunging into debts, many enterprises find it difficult to find buyers of their shares**”

There are many figurative metaphors used to describe the growth and decline in prices in the economic market. For example, the expression **bốc hơi** – *evaporate* is often used in the economic newspapers to indicate a decrease in commodity prices. Therefore, translators can replace the metaphor *to evaporate* with the common expression *the price has fallen* in Russian: “**Giá dầu “bốc hơi” 4 %**” (Vneconomy 13/06/19) – “**The price of oil fallen by 4 %.**” Metaphor **bão giá** – *the price storm* in the Vietnamese economic newspapers refers to the situation at the market when the price rises constantly without warning. When translating, we can use the approximate expressive Russian phrase “*surge in the price for ..*”: “**Ngành dệt may ứng phó với “bão giá” nguyên liệu nhập khẩu**” (Vneconomy 4/05/18) – “**The clothing industry will withstand “surge in prices” for imported raw materials.**”

We also found popular metaphorical models in Vietnamese with the image **dốc** – *slope* (*trượt dốc* – *fall from the slope*, > < *leo dốc* – *climb up the slope*), which represent the change on goods and denote only negative situations in the economy. Thus, a price increase or inflation is mainly associated with an upward movement, and when pointing out negative trends in cases of falling prices, a metaphorical model is associated with a downward movement. When implementing this Vietnamese expression in the Russian language, some metaphorical expressions are used: “*fall, roll down, take off*”: “**Chứng khoán châu Á lao dốc (fall from the slope) trầm trọng sau khi xuất hiện thông tin lễ ký kết tuyên bố chung Mỹ-Triều bị hủy bỏ.**” (Vtcnews 02/28/19) – *The Asian stocks strongly roll down (or fall) after the ceremony of signing the agreement between the United States and the Chinese Democratic People’s Republic was canceled.*”

Another example: “**Giá vàng hôm nay 7/12: Vàng leo dốc (climbs up the slope), USD đổ đò (falls from pass)**” (Dantri.vn 07/12/18) – *Gold price today on December 7: gold will go up (or grows), the dollar rolls down*”.

6.3. Translation of a metaphor with a neutral, non-metaphorical expression

You should be aware of the big challenge in translating metaphors dealing with the process of creating images, as a result of which a completely different image may arise. In such cases, metaphors should be translated as neutral, non-metaphorical, often descriptive expressions. The problem is that the metaphorical images diverge in two cultures and it is not possible to provide the equivalent-based translation, even with substitutions. One of the four methods proposed by Komissarov and Korolova (1990) – translation with a non-metaphorical explanation. Consider the following practices: “**USD bật tăng, vàng trong nước trầm lắng**”, the literal translation into Russian is – “**US dollar jumps rebound, gold is protected.**”

Consider the metaphors: **bật tăng** – *jump rebound* and **trầm lắng** – *protect*. The meaning of the first metaphor is that in the market the price for goods or the exchange rate suddenly and rapidly increases. The second expression is **trầm lắng** – *to protect* means stability of something, in this case, the price for gold. These metaphors do not exist in Russian. This sentence can be translated into Russian with a non-metaphorical explanation: “*The dollar is rapidly rising, and the price for gold remains stable*”.

The following metaphor is considered to be an individual one, within the author's style of writing: “*Lãi suất ngân hàng lại “nhảy múa”*” (Vneconomy 03/06/19), the literal translation into Russian sounds like this: “*Bank interest rate dances*”. Here we are talking about the unstable change in the interest rate offered by banks. When translating into Russian, the Vietnamese expression *nhảy múa* should be used neutral *fluctuates*.

Other Examples: “*Daimler và BMW “bắt tay” phát triển công nghệ ô tô tự lái*” (Vneconomy 03/03/19). *Bắt tay* literally is translated as *shake hands*. In this sentence, a translator changes the metaphor with a non-metaphorical expression, keeping only the meaning of the metaphor: “*Daimler and BMW collaborate in the development of automated driving technologies.*”

6.4. Transmission of a metaphor through comparison, keeping the image in the source language. Translation of the metaphors with cultural elements

Metaphors used in the economic discourse are also culturally colored. Some metaphors in Vietnamese contain elements representing cultural realities. The translation of such metaphors can provide some difficulties for a translator. In Vietnamese culture, the images *ao làng* – village pond, *con đê* – dam or *trái ngọt* – sweet fruit they are all the agricultural symbols of the country.

In some cases, a translator can translate metaphors through comparison. This method was proposed by English professor Newmark (as cited in Shikalov, 2010). We call this translation procedure – the translation of a metaphor through comparison, keeping the image in the source language. With this method, sometimes you have to change the syntactic structure of a sentence when translating. During translation, “repeating the structure of the original sentence in its translation does not always allow to keep accuracy and expressiveness of the source language” (Perfilieva & Galankina, 2015, p. 175).

For example, the image *con đê* – dam represents protection against something: “*Con đê lễ hội dân gian ngăn chặn xu hướng văn hóa phương Tây hóa*”, the literal translation into Russian will sound incorrect – “*The dam of folk festivals slows down the process of westernization of society*”. In this sentence, the translator changes the structure of the sentence by using the union “as”, keeping the image in the translation: “*Folk festivals as the “dam,” which slows down the process of westernizing society.*”

The Vietnamese expression *mỏ vàng* – gold mine in the economic newspapers is often used to indicate some investment potential: “*Khách Ấn Độ, “mỏ vàng” mới của du lịch Thái Lan*” (vneconomy 8.7.19). If translated into Russian, it turns out to be: “*Indian tourists as a gold mine for the tourism industry of Thailand*” instead of “*a gold mine of Indian tourists*”.

We use the second method for the next example: “*Từ cuối năm 1980 đến nay, cá tra, basa Việt Nam đã từ ao làng vươn ra thị trường thế giới cá ba tra*” (Vneconomy 28/04/19) – “*From the late 1980s to the present time the Vietnamese pangasius came out from a rural pond to the world market.*” Metaphor *rural pond* personifies the familiar internal environment in which low standards are accepted. People or things belonging to this environment are usually conservative and low competitive. This metaphor is absent in the Russian language while translating one also has to use a neutral, non-metaphorical expression *domestic market*. Metaphor *sân nhà* – home yard means: “*Doanh nghiệp bán lẻ Việt Nam và “cuộc chiến” thị phần ngay trên sân nhà*” – “*Vietnamese retailers face the war at the domestic market*”.

We also use this method to translate the expression *trái ngọt* – *sweet fruit*, which is used to indicate that you get good results after a long working: "*Trái ngọt 'đầu đời' trong tiến trình hòa bình Syria*" (Dantri.vn 26/04/19). The translation is as follows – "*The first successful steps in establishing peace in Syria.*" Another example: "*Trái ngọt trong hợp tác đầu tư Việt Nam – Lào – Campuchia*" (vietnamnet 25/2/19) – "*Success achieved in investment cooperation between Vietnam – Laos – Cambodia*".

Considering the metaphors that contain cultural elements, one cannot but mention proverbs, adages, and phraseological units that are based on metaphors. Example One. "*Nguồn vốn như muối bỏ bể*" (Vneconomy 30/5/19), the verbatim translation into Russian will be: "*Capital resources – dumped salt into the sea.*" The phraseology unit "*dump salt in the sea*" is built on a metaphorical comparison, which expresses a very small amount of something in comparison with something else. In the Russian language, there is an expression "*a drop in the sea*", which is similar to the Vietnamese phraseology unit in terms of a form and a sense. Here we use the second method – translation by replacing the equivalent metaphor: "*Capital resources like a drop in the sea*".

As the following example, we cite the Prime Minister of Vietnam when he was speaking about the export issues in the country: "*Thủ tướng: Chống lại những con sâu làm rầu nồi canh trong xuất khẩu*" (Vneconomy 04/23/18) - "*the Prime Minister: Fighting with worms spoiling a pot of soup*" in export." Here we are talking about existing problems that slow down the development of Vietnam's export industry. This phraseological unit is built on a metaphorical image; it can be translated as follows into Russian: "*Struggle with the situation "one bad sheep spoils the whole herd"*".

Besides, there are expressions in the Vietnamese language that are formed by using metaphors, but when they are translated into Russian, they will become non-metaphorical expressions, for example, "*bỏ túi*" – "*put into a pocket*", "*rót tiền*" – "*pour money*".

7. Conclusion

Having examined the metaphors found in the Vietnamese economic journalism, we can conclude that the optimal ways to translate them into Russian are:

- Literal translation, in which the figurativeness sense of the primary metaphor is kept.
- Translation by substitution with an equivalent metaphor (culturally appropriate target language).
- Translation of a metaphor with a neutral, non-metaphorical expression.
- Translation of a metaphor through comparison, keeping the image in the source language.

The analysis showed that the metaphors in economic journalism are very common. The following can be concluded:

- When translating metaphors, a translator may encounter some difficulties indicating the impossibility to translate verbatim. Based on the analyzed examples, we revealed that when translating metaphors and the economic metaphors, in particular, from Vietnamese in Russian, some difficulties arise due to the differences in the realities of the two languages, different cultures, and value systems.

- The Vietnamese language differs from the Russian language and any European language in terms of lexical and grammatical structures, syntax, therefore, in translation; in some cases, it is necessary to change namely the structure of sentences.
- There are individual author's metaphors that are used only in the Vietnamese language, metaphors that contain cultural elements like "dam" or "village pond" ... or phraseological units based on metaphors, but you can always find a translation method that as accurately as possible will help to convey the meaning and sense of a metaphor.

We proposed four ways to translate an economic metaphor from Vietnamese into Russian, which can facilitate the task of a translator. Therefore, the result of the study is justified by the possibility of using its materials in translation practice, in a textbook on the stylistics of the Vietnamese and Russian languages.

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