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Philological Readings

PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS AS MEANS OF CREATING COLLOQUIALITY IN THE LITERARY TEXT

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Abstract

The paper deals with the peculiarities of stylizing colloquial language in a literary text and finding specific features of using phraseological units as means of this stylizing. The main functions of colloquial phraseology and the possibility of their realization in a literary text taking into account the influence of individual author's manner of narration are determined. The genre of L. Ulitskaya's novel *Daniel Stein, Interpreter*, which serves as a source of practical material, is grounded. Dependence between the requirements for translation and the functional range of the translated text, and the possibility of creating a text that is a reflection of the original are determined. The paper gives the analysis of phraseological units found by the method of continuous sampling in the novel under study in comparison with their translation equivalents. The conclusion is made about the predominance of colloquial and expressive phraseological units which have special expressiveness and emotionality and about quite frequent usage of phraseological units which have stylistically understated characteristics and are on the periphery of the literary language. Special attention is paid to the peculiarities of translating phraseological units in the English version of the novel, and possible stylistic shifts in the translation. As a result of the study, the authors conclude that the translated version of the novel has practically equal proportion of phraseological units with different motivating factors and stylistically unmarked phraseological units used as translation equivalents.

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Keywords: Colloquiality, neutralisation of colloquiality, phraseological units, stylizing colloquial language, translation equivalent.



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1. Introduction

The problem of using diverse units, certain constructions of different language levels as means and methods to create colloquiality in a literary text has been repeatedly considered by a large number of researchers.

Literary language is a far from ambiguous phenomenon. Fictional prose is the highest manifestation of the national language, in the sense that it is influenced by all the sources presented in it. There are no fundamental prohibitions in addressing any of them for it (Lapteva, 2003).

In this research, phraseological units are considered as stylistic markers of colloquiality, as means of stylizing colloquial language in the original and translated English literary text.

Having prominent stylistic nuances, phraseological units are in a position to bring additional expression to the literary text. At the same time, colloquial language in literary adaptation appears to the reader in a stylized form: the proportions of the content plane are changed, which causes changes in the plane of expression and its characteristics.

First of all, stylizing is a literary technique used by the author to realize his conception. And its main functions include reproducing any era atmosphere; transferring local colors; expressing national consciousness or consciousness of an individual character; featuring a certain literary style; creating speech portrait of the character, reflecting his speech pattern which refers to a certain social group, nationality, etc. The functions of speech stylizing, as well as the methods of its creation in the text (imitation of the characteristic features of someone else's speech manner; copying syntactic structures; borrowing grammatical forms; selection of lexical elements) are the most important tools for creating the outline of a literary text (Guseva, 2016).

The writer, following the idea of his work, selects the language material that will best help to express the idea and concept of his creation. Colloquial speech, being an integral part of the literary language, has features and peculiarities realized by each writer in his own way and being a part of his style (Logacheva, 2017).

It should also be noted that the peculiarities of stylizing colloquial language, the frequency and specificity of means and methods to create colloquiality in a literary work are directly influenced, among other things, by the writer himself, the individual writer's manner of narration. And the problem to convey colloquiality in the translated text has a number of additional features. Here, as it seems, it is important to take into account not only the peculiarity of displaying stylized colloquial language in both the original and the translation, but also the process of translation itself as a phenomenon of speech reproduction, in which the high author's individuality is inevitably complemented by the translator's individuality.

2. Problem Statement

It is traditionally believed that the colloquial language is rich in phraseological units. In this paper, we stick to the opinion of Molotkov (1977) that mostly phraseological units are the phenomenon of the colloquial language. Therefore, they can be characterized as colloquial. It is difficult to distinguish them from stylistically neutral phraseological units used in different registers. Only phraseological units with stylistically reduced characteristics, being on the periphery of the literary language, are more or less

clearly distinguished from colloquial phraseological units (Molotkov, 1977). Phraseological units of conversational style also include proverbs, sayings, and folkloric elements as units functioning in speech. These phraseological units contribute to a relaxed description of events, bright and brief description of a phenomenon, bring the author's description closer to the speech of his characters (Mikheeva & Panina, 2017).

So, in this paper the main research attention is paid to idiomatic phraseological units (as a rule, phraseological unities and fusions, as well as collocations used in figurative meaning).

Defining the problems of this study, it should be noted that in speech colloquial phraseology mainly performs two functions: expressive-evaluative, when the speaker does not just report anything and not just listen to anything, but gives a subjective evaluation of the situation, action, act, person in question, and the function of "emotional signal" expressing the mood, emotional state of the speaker (Razgovornaya rech' v sisteme funkcionalyh stilej sovremennoho russkogo literaturnogo jazyka. Leksika, 2003).

A specific feature of using fixed expressions in colloquial language is liberal use of them, shown in two opposite trends: on the one hand, a phraseological unit is used elliptically (the speaker omits certain components), on the other hand – a phraseological unit acquires various kinds of clarifying words, which leads to a distant arrangement of components (Razgovornaya rech' v sisteme funkcionalyh stilej sovremennoho russkogo literaturnogo jazyka. Leksika, 2003).

At the same time, the study of comparative phraseology against the background of colloquial speech is of great interest in general, and in terms of learning the culture of native speakers, since many linguistic units reflect the national identity of lifestyle of a certain people, the facts of the country's history, natural and geographical features, culture, economy (Revina, 2017).

It is also important to identify the distinction of the literary work, which serves as a source of practical material for our paper. According to Ulitskaya (2011), the author of the novel *Daniel Stein, Interpreter*, it is largely based on real facts and events. Behind some of the characters are real people, including Daniel Stein. His prototype is Daniel Rufeisen, a Jew, a Catholic priest, in the past a "mole" in the Gestapo, a partisan who "until the last day remained a merciful soldier" (Ulitskaya, 2011).

In its structure, *Daniel Stein, Interpreter* is a novel based on written sources. Some of them are the result of the author's imagination, some are real authentic documents (records of Brother Daniel's conversations with schoolchildren, letters of Rita Kowacs and a number of others). However, it should be noted that, despite the high degree of biographical data and documents authenticity, all of them were subjected to literary adaptation, and, therefore, it is legitimate to write about stylization, and not about the authenticity of written genres of colloquial language, and the phraseological units presented in the novel should be considered as one of the most striking and expressive means of this stylization.

3. Research Questions

The main research questions of this study include the problem of translating phraseological units in general and as a means of creating colloquiality in particular.

It should be noted that successful translation practice on a global scale has proved that there is incomparably much more that can be translated than what cannot. This is also confirmed by the fact that

people, speaking different languages, successfully communicate with each other at international meetings and conferences, coordinate their actions, and exchange cultural values, etc. (Evteev & Latyshev, 2018).

The category of figurativeness can also be considered fundamentally translatable, as it can be classified as cross-linguistic universal phenomenon. The figurative component of the word meaning can have shades which are quite difficult to catch, and which are, however, of great importance in the author's worldview. The need to preserve figurative means in the translation will, first of all, depend on the nature of the translated text, on its belonging to a particular functional style. Inaccurate transfer of figurative means or their neutralization in the translation can result in distortion of characters' speech, the relationship between them and the author's point of view on what is happening (Turchaninova, 2017).

On the other hand, the characteristic of a linguistic unit according to its belonging to a certain stylistic layer (slang, colloquial, bookish, poetic, etc.) is an important component of its semantic structure, and its reproduction can be a prerequisite for the communicative equivalence of the translation (Komissarov, 2016).

It should also be mentioned that understanding of the elements of substandard vocabulary in speech requires reliance on the situation, taking into account the maximum number of situational factors that motivate the use of these elements. And the translation of colloquial words often needs transformations, including compensating translation. Particularly rude lexical units can be translated using euphemization and neutralization (Zakharova & Ermoshyna, 2016).

In addition, there is the following dependency between the functional range of the text and the degree of equivalence in general: the more complex and contradictory are the requirements for translation, and the wider is the functional range of the translated text, the less likely it is to create a text that will be a mirror image of the original. It is often necessary to sacrifice in the process of translation for the sake of transferring functional dominants of the text (i.e. its functional parameters, which appear to be the most relevant in this communicative context). Moreover, in the translation, the very purpose of communication is sometimes modified, which is influenced by targeting another recipient, which results in certain deviations from the full equivalence of the source and final texts (Schweitzer, 1989).

4. Purpose of the Study

The main purposes of this linguistic study are as follows:

1. Finding phraseological units in Ulitskaya's (2011) novel *Daniel Stein, Interpreter*.
2. Description of the functioning peculiarities of phraseological units as means of stylizing colloquiality in a literary text.
3. Detailed study of translation equivalents of phraseological units in the English version of the novel.
4. Determination of the frequency to use different ways of translating phraseological units in the texts under study.

5. Research Methods

The problems stated define the use of a complex of research methods, including:

1. The method of analytical linguistic description, containing techniques of observation, comparison, generalization.
2. The method of continuous sampling (for collecting language material and when working with lexicographical sources).
3. Theoretical analysis of linguistic works.
4. The method of philological analysis of fiction.

6. Findings

By means of linguistic analysis we have found that the greatest number of phraseological units in the literary texts under study is colloquial and expressive ones; their figurativeness is characterized by special expressiveness and emotionality. Phraseological units, which have stylistically understated characteristics and are on the periphery of the literary language, are also quite commonly used. At the same time, both are mostly used in their usual metaphorical meaning as fixed expressions.

Having considered the cases of using figurative lexical units in comparison with their translation equivalents, we revealed the following features:

1. Quite often, figurative lexical units are translated by means of figurative equivalents with preserving the principle of the unit construction. It is also important to understand that for appropriate translation of the figurative lexical unit absolute match of visual representation is not necessarily, as the subject of comparison is different, it is important to preserve the lexeme color and the image uniformity (Devkin, 2000). In the literary works under study, examples confirming this statement are very frequent:

No tak obernulos, chto ele nogi unes. – But as things turned out I nearly came to a bad end.

Ne budu privodit primery, v zubakh navyazli. - I won't give examples, I'm sick and tired of it.

No kogda my podplyli k ostrovu Santorini, u menya prosto perekhvatalo dukh. – ...but when we got to the Santorini islands, they simply took my breath away.

The same phraseological unit *to take one's breath away* is used in the novel under study for translating the Russian phraseological unit *dukh zakhvativayet*:

Vid suroviy, dukh zakhvativayet. - The view was barren but it took your breath away.

On stroil vozдушные замки, которые один за другим рухнули, и он при этом упал в истерику, мордушился. - He built castles in the air which collapsed one after the other, and every time this reduced him to a nervous wreck.

Kogda moya mat prishla v priyut na svидание, ya umolyala ee kupit mne ehto neshestnoe plate – она наотрез отказалась. – When my mother came to the orphanage to visit, I implored her to buy me that wrecked dress but she refused point blank.

It should be noted that the translation of the collocation *point blank* is based on metaphorical transfer. The given translation equivalent is used in direct meaning in gunnery. When the gun is aimed at the target over open sights, the shot in English is called *point blank*.

Oni seli na kortochkakh mezhdju kamnyami i smotreli vo vse glaza. – They squatted among the rocks and stared avidly.

- Konechno, - govoryu, - videla. Ne ya odna, ves gorod chut ot smekha ne lopnul! – «Of course,» I said, «and it wasn't just me. The whole town was laughing itself silly! ».

As the previous examples show, it is possible to use for translation figurative collocation which is not established, but which reveals the basic semantic parameters of the phraseological unit in the source language.

2. If there are no corresponding equivalents in the target language or if there is no figurative meaning in one of the languages while there is one in the other, figurative lexical units are translated with the help of stylistically unmarked linguistic means:

Zato odin ego polskij priyatel, syn polskogo ofitsera-kavalerista, sam togo ne vedaya, sosluzhil emu khoroshuyu sluzhbu. – However, one Polish friend who was the son of a cavalry officer, did him a big favour without realizing it.

To do a favour (be kind enough, do a kindness, to do/to render sb a service) is an established collocation without any figurative meaning, which affects the nature of the entire statement: in the translation it is not colloquial any more.

The same situation can be seen in the following examples:

Khilda, a ty svoim yazykom osobo ne razmakhivaj pro to, kak ya khasida vez. – Hilda, don't go telling everyone I gave a lift to a Hassid.

Slovom, dva goda Aleks stradal i portil nam s Grishej krov. – In short, for two years Alex was very put out and made life difficult for Grisha and me.

Ya znayu neskolkikh nemtsev, kotorye ne smogli uekhat iz nashej strany, potomu chto prirosli k nej serdtsem. – I know several Germans who have been unable to leave our country because they have come to love it so much.

Zhara pod sorok, a u menya zub na zub ne popadaet. – ... the heat was 40 degrees, but I felt a terrible chill.

In this example we can see that along with using stylistically unmarked translation equivalent *to feel a chill* the adjective *terrible* (unpleasant) is added that makes the whole phrase sound colloquial.

3. In the novel under study there are also some modified phraseological units. The ability of a phraseological unit to transform actively in speech largely depends on the features of the verb. The most frequent and predictable are transformations based on synonymous and antonymic substitutions of verb-components (Tretyakova, 2016).

However, such cases are not very frequent in the novel under study. Let us consider some examples:

Vot, Pavel, pishu, kak kuritsa. Zato sama. – There Pawel I write like a chicken but at least I can write.

In this case the phraseological unit *pisat, kak kuritsa lapoj* is used in a contracted form, and in the English version we can find word-based translation.

It should also be noted that loan translation, the adoption by one language of a phrase or compound word whose components are literal translations of the components of a corresponding phrase or compound in a foreign language, plays an important role while comparing phraseological units of the English and the Russian languages. Literal translation of phraseological units is necessary when the image used in a phraseological unit is significant for understanding the text, and the replacement of this image is impossible due to the lack of effect (Shustova, 2015).

Let us see one more example:

Pri ehtom ne mogu otdelatsya ot vnutrennego bespokojstva: ty zhe znaesh, ya chelovek veruyushhij i formalno katolichka, no besporyadochnost moej zhizni prepyatstvuet povsednevnoj praktike – molyus ya togda, kogda menya petukh zharenij klyuet v zadnitsu, a chitat Rozarij – izvinite. – As you know, I am a religious person and formally a Catholic, but the disorder of my life gets in the way of my everyday practice. I pray only once in a blue moon, and as for reciting the rosary, well, no thanks.

In the example given above the boundaries of the phraseological unit are expanded due to the use of a rude, colloquial lexical unit *zadnitsa*. A stylistically unmarked phraseological unit *once in a blue moon*, which means very rarely, is used as a translation equivalent.

7. Conclusion

As the linguistic research has shown, colloquial phraseological units are very common in L. Ulitskaya's novel *Daniel Stein, Interpreter*. Having bright expressive and evaluative stylistic connotation, phraseological units act as means of stylizing colloquial language, giving the whole story a special flavor. At the same time, modified phraseological units are especially stylistically marked, but they are not so common in the work under study, which, on the one hand, is explained by the individual author's writing manner, and on the other, by the novel genre, generally built on written sources.

Having analyzed the peculiarities of the translation equivalents of the phraseological units in the English version of the novel, it can be concluded that in almost half of the cases they are translated by figurative equivalents, but the motivating factors here can be different due to different linguistic views of the world of Russian and English speakers.

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