

SCTMG 2020

International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism»

CATEGORICAL METHOD FOR CALCULATING THE TEXT EQUIVALENCE OF TRANSLATION TO THE ORIGINAL

Vladislav Igorevich Bortnikov (a)*, Alena Valeryevna Bortnikova (a, b)

*Corresponding author

(a) Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B.N. Yeltsin, 19, Mira st., Yekaterinburg, Russia, octahedron31079@mail.ru,

(b) Institute of History and Archeology, Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 16, S. Kovalevskoy st., Yekaterinburg, Russia

Abstract

The study lies with the problem of establishing text equivalence in the translation of English literary poetic text into Russian. The authors hypothesized that the text category, a mandatory attribute and property of the text, can serve as a tool for establishing the equivalence of the translation to the original. In the study, the categorical-textual method developed within the framework of the Ural stylistic school is combined with the comparative method and implies the allocation of mutually corresponding markers correlated with the same content: meaning or its shade, in the original and translation. The category of chosen topics is realized in the text through thematic chains: communicative lines lexically expressed through chains of nominations of the same subject, object, phenomenon. For comparative analysis, the authors chose the W.X. sonnet of W. Shakespeare. The structure of the sonnet (4 + 4 + 4 + 2 verses) contains 4 composition blocks which include two thematic lines: i-topic chain and you-topic chain. Each of these lines has a certain relationship with the corresponding composition block in three components: setting, combinatorics and layout. It is proved that these three parameters allow us to establish text equivalence. The article also received exact numerical data: the average equivalence for the first chain, addressant – I, is over 91 %, for the second, addressee – You, is over 85 %. The prospect of the study is the establishment of equivalence of the translation to the original text on other parameters: space (locativity), time (temporality), emotionality (tonality), etc.

2357-1330 © 2020 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Text, text category, theme, equivalence, Shakespeare.



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

1. Introduction

The issue of finding a translation unit remains invariably relevant for different types of translation: translation and interpretation, machine and literary, technical and documentary (Aleksandrova, 2019; Vardaro et al., 2019; Zhuk & Yermakova, 2019). So, from the Russian versions of English “to keep an eye on somebody” – «не спускать глаз» or «приглядывать» (Sakaeva et al., 2019), the first correlates with the strategy of preserving the translation at one language level, in this case, phrases, as a result, the translator uses an antonymic substitution; the second means lowering to the level of the word which often leads to some simplification, loss of imagery and expressiveness (Vyhrystyuk et al., 2019) but reduces the volume of the translated text. When translating into Russian, the English text, as it is known, is lengthened.

In the sixth issue of Translator's Notebooks, the famous Soviet researcher Barkhudarov (1969) wrote: there are cases when even sentences cannot act as translation units and when the translation unit is the entire translated text as a whole. As an example, Barkhudarov (1969) cites the last two stanzas of LXXIV of Shakespeare's sonnet and their Russian translation by S. Marshak. It is not possible to establish direct correspondences between these texts either at the level of words, or at the level of phrases, or the level of individual sonnet sentences. Such cases allow us to speak of textual equivalence, i.e. similar semantic filling of the source and translated texts with their possible formal mismatch (Kalegina et al., 2015; Sakaeva et al., 2019).

2. Problem Statement

In multi-level theories of equivalence did not support the textual concept but replaced it with a pragmatic, communication goal level, etc. This contributed a statement on the transfer of the same information: since it was not possible to determine its identity by proper linguistic methods, translation theorists turned to the methods of psycholinguistics, discursive linguistics, etc. In Soviet translation studies, they were no longer interested in the equivalence of the textual proper, since science did not have the methods to determine it, that is, for their identification: linguistics of the text. According to Barkhudarov (1974), in the 1970s it still took her first timid steps.

Modern linguistics of the text has more than 50 years of history and is firmly entrenched among linguistic disciplines. Our study looked at the problem of identifying textual equivalence from the perspective of modern science, which has its own developed and tested methodologies, methods, and technologies. One of the leading linguistic-textual concepts speaks of textual categories, significant features of the text reflecting a certain part of the general textual meaning by various linguistic, speech and composite means (Matveeva, 2017; Matveeva & Shirinkina, 2019).

3. Research Questions

As part of this study, we will try to answer three main questions:

1. Is text equivalence measured using text categories: composition, theme, space, time, etc., which serve as ways to implement textuality standards: connectivity, integrity, intentionality, informativeness, situationality, intertextuality (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981)?

2. How to measure this on the example of one category?

3. Is it possible to objectify the procedure for calculating textual equivalence based on the setting, combinatorics and layout parameters (Matveeva, 2017; Itskovich, 2018; Matveeva & Shirinkina, 2019) traditionally used in the analysis of each separate text category?

The material for the study was the XLIX sonnet of W. Shakespeare based on which Barkhudarov (1975) asserted the existence of text equivalence in the generalizing book Language and Translation. As well as in L.S. Barkhudarov's comparison 45 years ago, the subject of our comparison were two versions of this sonnet: the English original text and the Russian translation by S.Ya. Marshak.

As in many other Marshak's interpretations of Shakespeare's sonnets (Khanzhina, 2016; Egorova, 2019), in terms of vocabulary and syntactic structure, the original and the original have almost nothing in common (Table 01), except for a few random matches in italics:

Table 01. Comparable variants: Original and Translation of W. Shakespeare's XLIX Sonnet

Line	English source text	Russian target text
1	Against that time, if ever that time come,	В тот черный день (пусть он минует нас!),
2	When I shall see thee frown on my <i>defects</i> ,	Когда увидишь все мои <i>пороки</i> ,
3	When as thy love hath cast his utmost sum,	Когда терпенья истоцишь запас
4	Call'd to that audit by advis'd respects;	И мне объявишь приговор жестокий,
5	Against that time when thou shalt strangely pass	Когда, со мной сойдясь в толпе людской,
6	And scarcely greet me with that sun, thine eye,	Меня едва подаришь взглядом ясным,
7	When love, converted from the thing it was,	И я увижу холод и покой
8	Shall reasons find of settled gravity –	В твоём лице, по-прежнему прекрасном,
9	Against that time do I ensconce me here	В тот день поможет горю моему
10	Within the knowledge of mine own desert,	Сознание, что я тебя не стою,
11	And this my <i>hand</i> against myself uprear,	И <i>руку</i> я в присяге подниму,
12	To guard the lawful reasons on thy part:	Всё оправдав своей неправотою.
13	To <i>leave</i> poor me thou hast the strength of laws,	Меня <i>оставить</i> вправе ты, мой друг,
14	Since why to love I can allege no cause.	А у меня для счастья нет заслуг.

Like many other Shakespeare sonnets, the main lyrical content of this sonnet has the interaction of I and You. From such compositional content, it follows that the main subject of our research is the textual category of the theme developed in this sonnet in two of its varieties: I-theme and You-theme.

4. Purpose of the Study

The goal of this work is to calculate the textual equivalence of the given translation to the original. The topic category has become the basis of the calculation. Particular tasks that involve setting the named goal include dividing a sonnet into composite blocks; highlighting thematic elements that create chains; their comparative analysis in three parameters: setting (whether all elements are saved by the translator), combinatorics (interaction in the chain), the text layout.

5. Research Methods

Within the framework of the categorical-textual concept, the category of topics is closely connected with the category of composition. If the topic is the semantic core of the text, then the composition is the expression and development form of the topic (Itskovich, 2018). In a sonnet, a topic naturally obeys a rigid compositional structure — the mandatory fourteen lines. English sonnets, unlike Italian ones most often consisting of two quatrains and two tercets, have three quatrains and one couplet-castle. Thus, Shakespeare's original sonnet distinguishes four compositional blocks separated in each case by a unique punctuation mark: the only semicolon in the text separates block I (lines 1–4) from II; a single dash separates block II (lines 5–8) from III; a single colon separates block III (lines 9–12) from block castle IV (lines 13–14). The article discusses the manifestations of the textual category of topics in each of the 4 compositional blocks separately.

The category of the topic appears through the nomination chains, which each represents a sequence of names of the same object in the text (Bortnikov, 2019). Shakespeare's sonnets have two nomination or thematic chains: 1) the addressant, I and 2) the addressee, friend or lover. The original XLIX sonnet does not contain a clear indication of whether the friend or lover is the addressee, although "since to love" in line 14 suggests the lover; Russian translation indicates the addressee in line 13: *мб, мой друг* (you, my friend.).

The presence of a nomination can be implicit, not formally expressed, such cases are indicated by a \emptyset , the nomination of the addressant (chain 1) by underlining, and the nomination of the addressee (chain 2) by boxing.

6. Findings

The analysis resulted in the following thematic chains that make it possible to calculate the actual textual equivalence:

Composition block I

Chain 1 of original text: I – my

Chain 1 of the translated text: MOU – MHE

Chain 2 of original text: thee – \emptyset – thy

Chain 2 of the translated text: \emptyset – \emptyset – \emptyset

Matches in a set of chains:

Chain 1: 2 in TT – 2 in OT (100 %);

Chain 2: 3 in TT – 3 in OT (100 %);

Similarities in the combinatorics of chains:

Chain 1: *I* (OT) – *MHE* (TT), *my* (OT) – *mou* (TT) (despite the permutation, they are combined, so the matches are 100 %);

Chain 2: only the middle element \emptyset coincides, the first and last elements do not coincide, therefore the equivalence is 33.33 % (1/3).

Matches in the placement of chains (relative to the verse line):

Chain 1: all nominations are in weak positions in the middle of the verse, so 100 % coincidence;

Chain 2: all nominations are in weak positions in the middle of the verse, so 100 % coincidence.

Already in the first compositional block, the matched chains have a rather high percentage of matches. It is connected not only and not so much with the lexical stability of the pronouns *I* and *You*, and not even with the similar syntactic structure of the translation and the original. It is a question of textual equivalence, preservation of the thematic core of the work by the translator.

Composition block II confirms the same observations:

Chain 1 of original text: \emptyset – *me*

Chain 1 of the translated text: *мною* – *меня*

Chain 2 of original text: thou – \emptyset – \emptyset

Chain 2 of the translated text: \emptyset – \emptyset – твою

Matches in a set of chains:

Chain 1: 2 in TT – 2 in OT (100 %);

Chain 2: 3 in TT – 3 in OT (100 %);

Similarities in the combinatorics of chains:

Chain 1: *me* (OT) – *меня* (TT), the second link does not match (50 % match);

Chain 2: despite the rearrangement *thou* – \emptyset – \emptyset (OT) → \emptyset – \emptyset – *твою* (TT), the combinatorics are not broken at any of the links (the translator employed symmetrical, mirror combination), therefore the equivalence is 100 %.

Matches in the placement of chains (relative to the verse line):

Chain 1: one nomination of the OT and the TT are in the strong position of the beginning/end of the verse, all the others are in the weak, so 100 % coincidence;

Chain 2: similar to block I, all nominations are in weak positions in the middle of the verse, so the match is 100 %.

Already the first two compositional blocks show such a high percentage of matches in thematic chains in terms of setting, combinatorics and layout, the three main characteristics of the text category. This proves the existence of textual equivalence, even though the translator seems to have deviated quite from the original text in almost all content elements. For this reason, L. S. Barkhudarov considered this translation to be nonequivalent to the original text in terms of both lexical and syntactic indicators.

The following two blocks demonstrate a consistently high percentage of equivalence:

Composite blocks III, IV

Chain 1 of original text: *I* – *me* – *mine* – *my* – *myself* – *me* – \emptyset – *I*

Chain 1 of the translated text: *моему* – *я* – *я* – \emptyset – *своей* – *меня* – *мой* – *меня*

Chain 2 of original text: thy – \emptyset – thou

Chain 2 of the translated text: себя – ты – мой друг

Again, the set of chains shows absolute coincidence, despite their quantitative lengthening:

Chain 1: 8 in TT – 8 in OT (100 %);

Chain 2: 3 in TT – 3 in OT (100 %);

We calculate the coincidences in combinatorics of chains:

Chain 1: *I*, *me*, *me*, *I* (OT) – *я*, *я*, *меня*, *меня* (TT); \emptyset (OT) – \emptyset (TT); *mine* (OT) – *мой* (TT), mismatch only on 1 link out of 8 *myself* – *своей* (87.5 % of equivalence);

Chain 2: coincidence in only one link of *thou* (OT) – *mbi*(you) (TT), 33.33 % (translation supplement is *мой друг* (my friend), which absents in the original).

As for the layout of the chains, it can be seen from the passage that the addition of *мой друг* (my friend) compensated for the strong position at the beginning of verse 13, thereby making chain 2 100 % equivalent. In chain 1, the nomination of the addressant of the translation was 1 time in a strong position at the beginning of the same 13th verse, unlike the original; however, for a chain of 8 links, the decrease in equivalence to 87.5 % is not significant but rather similar to the percentage of matches in combinatorics.

7. Conclusion

As a result of our research, we found out. Despite a significant external discrepancy, the two selected thematic chains demonstrate significant commonality in the aspects of the setting, combinatorics, layout which can be displayed in the form of the summary Table 2. It also shows the results of averaging text equivalence over two analyzed chains:

Table 02. Comparable variants: Original and Translation of W. Shakespeare's XLIX Sonnet

Composition block	I-topic			You-topic		
	Setting	Combinatorics	Layout	Setting	Combinatorics	Layout
I	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	33,33 %	100 %
II	100 %	50 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
III, IV	100 %	87,5 %	87,5 %	100 %	33,33 %	100 %
Average	≈ 91,67 %			≈ 85,18 %		

Interestingly, in the setting aspect, all chains in all blocks show a 100 % match. It means that despite the difference in external manifestation reflected in the other two parameters, all subjective nominations of the original without exception: 13 in chain 1 and 9 in chain 2 are reflected in the translation. The thematic core remains so stable that it can serve as proof of the secondary character of S. Marshak's text, its derivation from the Shakespearean original. Thus, we could solve the questions posed at the beginning of the article about the possibility of measuring text equivalence using text categories and objectification of this procedure, which we developed in this paper based on three parameters: set, combinatorics, layout.

Of course, thematic equivalence correlates with only one semantic line of a work of art. For further objectification, the establishment of equivalence will require other text categories: locality, temporality, tonality. In this context, the Study of translations of English poetry is the prospect of further study.

Acknowledgments

The reported study was funded by RFBR according to the research project № 18-012-00382 A "Speech life of a family: axiological reality and research methods (by the material of live speech of the Ural city)." It is also supported by Act 211 Government of the Russian Federation, agreement № 02.A03.21.0006.

References

- Aleksandrova, E. M. (2019). “Quasi-Translation” of the Pun: The Specificity of Using Algorithms *Tomsk State University Journal*, 445, 5-11.
- Barkhudarov, L. S. (1969). Levels of the language hierarchy and translation (based on translation from English into Russian). *Translator's Notebooks*, 6, 3–12.
- Barkhudarov, L. S. (1974). Text as a unit of language and a unit of translation. In *Linguistics of text. Materials of the scientific conference* (pp. 40–41). Maurice Thorez Moscow State Pedagog. Instit. of Foreign Languages.
- Barkhudarov, L. S. (1975). *Language and translation*. IMO.
- Beaugrande, R.-A., & Dressler W. (1981). *Introduction to Text Linguistics*. Longman.
- Bortnikov, V. I. (2019). Forms of Narration in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's Miniatures as the Author's Way to Evaluate Soviet Reality. *Izv. Uralskogo Feder. Univer. Ser. 2-Gumanitarnye Nauki*, 21(1), 70–86.
- Egorova, L.V. (2019). Shakespeare's Sonnets in Russian. *Philol. class*, 55(1), 188–192.
- Itskovich, T. V. (2018). Proto-Textuality as the Constructive Principle of Religious Style *Vestnik Volgogradskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta-Seriya 2-Yazykoznanie*, 17(1), 6–16.
- Kalegina, T. E., Takhtarova, S. S., & Zaglyadkina, T. Y. (2015). Denglish and Franglais in the framework of the modern European linguistic landscape *Journal of Language and Literature*, 6(3), 195–198.
- Khanzhina, T. V. (2016). The comparative analysis of poetry interpretations of the 130-th W. *Shakespeare's Sonnet Yazyk i kultura-Language and Culture*, 33, 95–110.
- Matveeva, T. (2017). Measuring the Energy of a Text. *Quaestio Rossica*, 5(3), 838–850.
- Matveeva, T. V., & Shirinkina, M. A. (2019). Principle of Thematic Correspondence in Dialogue of Official Letters (on Material of Citizen's Appeals and Responses to Them) *Nauchnyi Dialog*, 1, 61–72.
- Sakaeva, L. R., Yahin, M. A., & Bazarova, L. V. (2019). Modes of Expression of Interlingual Transformations in the Translation of The Novel “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research*, 8(3), 242–250.
- Vardaro, J., Schaeffer, M., & Hansen-Schirra, S. (2019). Translation Quality and Error Recognition in Professional Neural Machine Translation Post-Editing *Informatics-Basel*, 6(3), 41.
- Vyhrystyuk, M. S., Parshukova, M. M., Telitsyna, E. L., & Onina, S. V. (2019). Features of the Translation of Comparisons and Emotional and Evaluative Vocabulary from Russian to English in an Artistic Text *Amazonia Investiga*, 8(20), 422–431
- Zhuk, N. Y., & Yermakova, L. Y. (2019). The issue of transfer phenomena euphemia in the translation of poetry from Russian into English. *Dilemas contemporaneos-educacion politica y valores*, 7(1), 132.