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SPECIFICS OF TRANSLATING COLOR NAMES IN ENGLISH TEXTS

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Abstract

The article considers a topical aspect of translation - translation of color names and synonymous chains, which is one of the most problematic and insufficiently studied aspects; as this vocabulary has a national component, it has no equivalent in other linguocultures. The article deals with specifics of purple, red, blue color names in English and Russian cultures in their general and specific aspects. The paper contains an analysis of translation of these color names using the material of G.G.Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and its translation into Russian. The problem of transmission of color names into Russian is determined and justified in the article. Quantitative and qualitative changes occurring in the process of translation are revealed, which can be conditioned by the attitude to a particular color in a certain linguoculture, as well as linguocultural adaptation in the transmission of color names of purple, red, blue in the English linguistic view of the world and their equivalents in the Russian one. It has also been established that when translating into Russian, the number of synonymous chains groups increases when there is a light component of color in the Russian linguistic view of the world, which testifies to a greater degree of nuance in the Russian linguocultural view of the world. The identified linguocultural adaptation is inevitable and is due to differences in the national and linguistic views of the world; without it, a text of another culture cannot be part of new cultural and linguistic environment and cannot be understood by the recipient.

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1. Introduction

In the studies of translation problems, color, in particular vocabulary with a color component, has a special place. Color is part of the communicative message, but the specificity of color lies in its non-universal connotative understanding by members of different cultures. People see color almost equally as a physical characteristic, but the awareness and connotative meaning of the color component can be opposite or simply different (white clothes in European cultures symbolize purity, celebration, joy, while in the East they are a symbol of death, mourning, grief). The specifics of color in different cultures is shown in color filling of universal abstract concepts. For example, in English melancholy is blue (to feel/be blue) and in Russian it is green. In all cultures, visual perception is important for people and a description of what they see is important, but they do not necessarily have a special name for color as a separate designation of one side of their visual experience, and in case such an analogue exists, it should not be the equivalent to the first one. It is caused by the fact that when a color group is selected, having a single name does not always satisfy the need for a color meaning. Various names are needed and necessitated by life - in such cases a person resorts to on distraction and generalization of signs of lightness for color designation, as our eye is primarily a light-separating organ. In English, as well as in Russian, most names denote color by a color tone: lightness, saturation, or both of them (Frumkina, 1984). And this similarity, on the one hand, may seem productive in translating texts, while, on the other, it can be the reason for complete misunderstanding. as is the case of the English phrase "to be blue".

Despite the fact that all people as a single biological species are able to see and distinguish existing colors, color shades are presented in the language in a specific way, and the vocabulary shows national and cultural specificity, so, speaking about the translation of color names, we primarily speak about changes and adaptation, namely linguocultural adaptation, of the text.

2. Problem Statement

The reason for changes when translating is the differences in the view of the world, cultural view of the world and linguistic view of the world. This process is necessary and inevitable, because "linguocultural adaptation of the text" is defined as incorporation of the translation text into the structure of the receiving linguoculture. In translation theory, the concept "adaptation" have mainly two meanings (Fenenko, 2001). First, it can define a specific translation means, which consists of replacing the unknown with the known, unusual with habitual (Shchetinkin, 1987), and second, emphasize a way for achieving equality of communicative effect in the text of translation and in the text of the original (Komissarov, 1999). And in this context scientists consider adaptation as the process of the text adaption by means of different procedures to the most coincident, appropriate, identical perception of it by the another culture reader (Nikonov, 1999). And more regularly the concept "adaptation" is understood by researchers in this second broad sense suggesting that the original text should be adapted and be part of the representation of objective and social activity to the cultural and social conditions of the translator-people's social reality (Timko, 1999). And at the same time, the vector of linguocultural adaptation can be directed both to the linguoculture of the original and to the linguoculture of the translation. Regardless of the adaptation vector, there is the process of text adaptation - linguocultural adaptation to the national color view of the world, and this process is due to the influence of the interaction between the two languages and the two cultures.

Linguoculturological differences between the original text and the translation, as well as the necessity for incorporating the original into a different linguocultural environment, may cause a certain deformation of the original text. As Garbovsky (2007) says, deformation is characterised by the translation concept, which implies understanding of the purpose of translation and selection of a certain general line of action - translation strategy in accordance with this purpose. The translation strategy specificates the nature of translation losses, since translation is a constant sacrifice, the only question is what the victim is and what the victim is for. Either the shape of the original or its semantic level are supposed to be deformed. According to Frost (1969), the peculiar feature of the poetic text is that you cannot separate the form from the context. Context is closely related to language, and this poses a serious problem when translating a poetry text.

Translation of words with a color component poses a special difficulty, as in different cultures color is perceived differently, and is specifically interpreted by people by means of language in the form of color names, therefore in different languages we have both equivalent color names (black/черный, white/белый, green/зеленый, etc.) and the color names existing only in a certain language, but either group of color names can be a problem in translating a text.

3. Research Questions

The fields of the main colors in Russian and English languages are the same. Despite this fact, there are significant differences in the perception of color space by speakers of these languages. In addition, the translation of color names should take into account the factual knowledge that the meaning of some words is not clear, they correspond not to any one point of color space, but to its whole area (Vasilevich, 1987). A special place in the question of the specifics of the translation of color names is given to non-equivalent color names, to which purple definitely belongs to.

Nowadays there are lots of definitions, which define purple as a blend of red and blue, and what is very important that the proportional composition of these colors can be different regardless to what part of the spectrum it may shift to red or blue. The Teaching Dictionary of Modern English defines purple as any group of colors with color tint between that of red and violet, and none of the mentioned dictionaries speaks about the color proportion. The Longman Active Study Dictionary of English states that purple is a blend of blue and red, i.e. it is a mixture of blue and red. The Muller's English-Russian dictionary presented the following definition of purple - 1. Magenta color, magenta, 2. crimson, 3. violet color. The modern electronic dictionary says that purple is purple; crimson; violet; lilac; purple; crimson (www.multitran.com).

Purple has a special place in the English culture, which is enshrined in the very meaning of the word. The Multitran dictionary, along with adjectives, gives such definitions as cardinal's attire; porphyra; power of the monarch; royal purple; abounding with jewelry; cardinalate; royal cloak; stained with blood" (www.multitran.com). It is known according to the survey results which were received within the research (Mishenkina, 2006), 60% of the interviewed British people consider this color positive and 26.66% negative, 11.11% consider the color neutral. Within the Russian color view of the world, the English purple is two different colors: violet and magenta (which can be classified as red). Speaking about the attitude of Russians to the purple color, it is considered positive by 46.51% of interviewers, negative by 38.37%, and

neutral by 15.11%, while the attitude to the red color is as follows: 62.79% perceive this color as positive, 30.23% as negative, 6.97% as neutral. In this regard, every time the translator encounters the word “purple”, he or she faces the question of how to translate it into Russian.

There are many works devoted to differences in the perception of colors and to problems encountered when translating color names. In particular, they are devoted to the means for translation, but there is too little information on changes concerning synonymous chains and changes of color in these names during translation. In the practice of such analysis scientists speak about linguistic and speech synonyms. Speech, in turn, is subdivided into 1. typical and 2. atypical (semantically close). An operating definition of these synonyms can be the following: a language synonym is a word that has been defined in relation to its equivalent (to another word with an identical or extremely close meaning) and can be set off against it by any trait - a subtle shade of meaning, emotional color, articulated expression, stylistic affiliation or combination (Dictionary of synonyms of Russian language, 1970).

Speech synonyms are meant as semantically close words in model contexts (Gavrilova, 1989). These synonyms can be found in the Dictionary of Synonyms.

Contextually semantically close words are synonyms characteristic of a given particular text, a given work of fiction.

There are vivid examples of rendering the purple color in the translation of Byron's (1988, 2015) poem Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and translation by V. Levik into the Russian language. Totally, the adjective “purple” was presented 5 times in the whole poem and was used in combination with nouns in direct and indirect meanings.

1. Throughout this purple land... (Canto I, XXI) – И вопиют о крови пролитой Кресты ...
2. ... array'd in many a dim and purple streak (Canto II, ILII) – в тюрбане белом, черный и ЛИЛОВЫЙ возник вдали.
3. ...Unless aside thy purple had been thrown...(Canto III, XLI) – Но циник, узурпировавший трон.
4. In purple was she rob'd... (Canto IV, II) – ... гордиться честью мог.
5. The odorous purple of a ... rose (Canto IV, XXVIII) – И льнет... к пурпурным розам.

Comparing the text of the original text and the translation, it should be mentioned that purple in none of the given examples was translated into Russian as violet. In the Russian version there are equivalents such as blood, lilac and magenta, and purple was translated into Russian descriptively in two cases, eg. - to be proud of pride. Only in one case in the translation of the poem there is the word with the "violet" element, it is "lilac". In Russian there are no color names with the "violet" element and it can be reasoned by the value and meaning of this color in the Russian view of the world and that is why other color names in Russian which do not comprise a violet but instead a red element in their basis (magenta) are used. So it is obvious according to difficulties encountered when translating purple into Russian that in the text of the translation color names may be different, as in the Russian language there is "magenta" and "violet" as two independent colors, where "magenta" belongs to the color group with the "red" element and "violet" belongs to the group with the "blue" element, and in English there is one word – purple.

4. Purpose of the Study

Collective ideas and perceptions, including those of color and its perception, are a fundamental part of the linguistic view of the world of any culture. The linguistic view of the world fully and objectively reflects the perception of the world by the representatives of this culture, and human reflection is not mechanical because this reflection is creative, which to some extent is subjective.

In direct connection with the abovementioned is the problem of national and specific awareness of color. In the materials received by researchers from different countries (H. Helmholtz, F. Gillen, I.A. Izmailov, E.D. Lubimov, E.N. Sokolov, B. Spencer, V. Turner, A.M. Chernoglazov, etc.), the assumption is proved that as the so-called "naive view" of the world in different cultures does not even coincide, each people defines colors in their own way, and even the number of "basic" colors is not the same. The so called basic colors are considered as a consequence of the abstraction of color signs from objective realities, which prove themselves as essential in the activities and life of the language group, and this demonstrates the functioning of the color-ethnic component in the sense structure of the basic names (English Language Active Learning Dictionary, 1988). These so called basic colors represent a person's basic psychological needs, that is satisfaction with or attachment to something, self- activity, assertion, expectation of something good, desire for a goal, the need for success (Frumkina, 1984). The main colors can be considered as these ones when they have proved their psychological uniqueness and are not easily decomposed into constituent color elements (Schiffman, 2003). The "basic" colors form the color picture of the world, which is part of the linguistic vision of the world and, accordingly, is included in the cultural and conceptual worldview. The linguocolor view of the world is realized in the form of color names in individual lexemes, phrases, idiomatic expressions and other verbal means.

In English, D. Berlin and P. Kay say that the "basic" names of colors can be considered the following: white, black, red, pink, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown, grey. This list was compiled by these researchers based on four criteria:

1. The "basic" color name must be non-derivative and not refer to complex words.
2. Its meaning should not be narrower than the meaning of another color name indicating any close shade.
3. The "basic" color name must have a wide collocation.
4. The "basic" color name must be psychologically identified, meaningful to speakers of a given language (Berlin & Kay, 1969).

As Frumkina (1984) points out, according to the existing consensus, "basic" colors in Russian, are quite traditional seven colors. They are yellow, orange, red, green, blue, dark blue, violet and also pink and brown colors, and also basic colors comprise white, black, and gray, they are achromatic.

The possibility of successful communication, including translation, between different cultures depends directly on the universality of the basic set of semantic primitives, from which each language can create an infinite number of "idiosyncretic" concepts (Wierzbicka, 2001). Linguistic and cultural systems are different, but there are semantic and lexical universals that point to the general conceptual basis on which human language, thinking and culture are based on, whereby it is possible to achieve the adequacy of the translated text, including adequate transmission of color names in translation.

The analysis allows tracing and identifying general and specific features in perception of color in English and Russian linguocultures, as well as determining changes due to linguocultural adaptation of text, which occurs when translating color names.

5. Research Methods

Today, the issue of the relationship between language, mental information and objective reality is topical in modern linguistic science. Many scholars, including as Berlin and Kay (1969), Frumkina (1984) and others, made linguistic experiments with color names in linguoculturological aspect. Yet in translation process the translator faces color names of two linguocultures whose correlation is substantially defined by the context and is complicated by the existence of culturological aspect as purple can be translated into Russian as фиолетовый (violet), пурпурный (purple), and лиловый (lilac), etc., while red can be translated as красный (red), but also рыжий (foxy).

A comparative analysis of color names and synonymous chains in the translation of Byron's poem Childe Harold's Pilgrimage reveals qualitative and quantitative changes in color names used in the process of linguocultural text adaptation, and instances of nuance in the process of translation.

This method allows us to consider more deeply the national and cultural specificity of color names, which is mostly presented in the process of translation of the literary work, as well as to trace all transformations when translating color names of one linguoculture into another.

6. Findings

Keeping in mind that purple any combination of red and blue colors, we consider cases of use of synonymous chains with the "red" dominant and with the "blue" dominant in order to understand the specifics of perception of purple color and, accordingly, its manifestations in language. Then we study the specifics of color names with the "red" and "blue" component. Both colors are present in both views of the world and have separate color names, but despite the presence of colors and color names, there is also the national specificity, as red traditionally relates to red, but red can assume orangey or foxy shades. The situation with blue is also ambiguous, as blue means both light blue and dark blue.

The paper represents the analysis carried out on Byron's poem Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and its translation to identify color names with the "red" and "blue" dominants.

The analysis of the work in English revealed 5 groups of color names with the "red" dominant:

1. medium between orange and purple -

a. red - the total number of use in the text was 11 cases. This color name was used with nouns the direct meaning, such as: cross, cloak, wine, blood, gash, waters and also with nouns in the indirect meaning, such as: battle, slaughter, burial blent.

b. blush - the number of use in the text was 3 cases. This color meaning was not used with direct nouns, only with one noun in the indirect meaning: blushing toil.

2. no light in color:

a. thick-red blood, bleed (ing): the number of use in the text was 20 cases. These color names were combined with nouns in the direct meaning such as: shroud, stream, banners, and also with a noun in the indirect meaning such as: strife.

- b. gory was used in the text in 1 case with a noun in the direct meaning: face.
- 3. lack of light in color and existence of a shade of another color: densely red with violet: crimson in the text was used with nouns in the direct meaning: plumage, badge, scarf and with a noun in the indirect meaning: torrent.
- 4. light in color: light red:
 - a. rosy was used in 2 cases in the text in combination with such nouns in the direct meaning as: sealing-wafer's drying, and there were no cases of use with nouns in the indirect meaning.
 - b. pink was used in the text once in combination with a noun in the direct meaning: rays.
- 5. presence of gloss in color and mixing of two colors: glow (ing) was used in the text in 7 cases combined only with nouns in the indirect meaning: lap, hours, clime.

Analyzing the poem in Russian, 8 groups of color signs were revealed:

1. medium between orange and violet: красный (red), краснеть (to get red), красноречивый (eloquent), 14 cases of use in combination with nouns in the direct meaning: плюмаж (plumage), пламя (flame), лента (ribbon), шарф (scarf), крест (cross), месиво (mess) and with nouns in the indirect meaning: Рейн (Rhine), скорбь (sorrow), Цицерон (Cicero).
2. presence of gloss in color: ряной (scarlet), рдеть (to get scarlet), there were 4 cases of use with noun in the direct meaning in the text: виноград (grapes), no cases of use with nouns in the indirect meaning were revealed.
3. having gloss in colour with shades of a different color: bright red with violet.
 - a. пурпурный (magenta) was used in the text in 3 cases, combined with a noun in the direct meaning: розы (roses) and with a noun in the indirect meaning: закат (sunset).
 - b. багряный (purpureal), there were 5 cases of use with nouns in the direct meaning: зарево (glow), лозы (vines) and with nouns in the indirect meaning: ночь (night), глубина (depth), зрачки (eyes).
4. absence of light in color: thick-red: there were 6 cases of use and only with nouns in the direct meaning: грязь (mud), жрец (oracle).
5. presence of light in color: light red - румяный (blush) was used in 2 cases in the text with the noun in the direct meaning: щеки (cheeks).
6. presence of gloss in color and mixing of 2 colors.
 - a. огненный (fire): there were 2 cases of use and only with nouns in the direct meaning: буря (storm), пята тирана (a heel of the tyrant).
 - b. пламенный (flame) there was only 1 case, also only with a noun in the direct meaning: речь (speech).
7. presence of light in color: yellow-red is рыжий (foxy) in combination with a noun in the direct meaning: волосы (hair).
8. mixing of 2 colors: red-brown - it is заржаветь (rust) and was used in the text without a noun.

The data collected make it possible to draw the following conclusions: in translation, the amount of color signs increased from 5 groups to 8 groups. It should be noted that Russian lexemes with this dominant are different not only in terms of extent of availability of light in color (that is the main sign of difference

of lexemes in English), but also existence of gloss in color. A similar sign of differentiation of lexemes was not determined in English. Degree of metaphoricity of red in Russian is higher than in English where red, mainly, is used with nouns in the direct meaning. The fact is obvious that in the Russian linguistic worldview red has more nuances and it is the reason for the specifics in perception of red by British and Russians, and here we can speak about linguocultural adaptation of the text. But the fact should be mentioned that in the original the total number of the use of a color names with the "red" dominant was 48, while in translation this quantity was reduced to 39, demonstrates the loss in the target text of a part of a coloristic component of the text, but it can be explained with the general attitude of British and Russians to red. It is proved by a survey (Mishenkina, 2006), according to which red color is considered positive by 71.11% of British and 62.79% of Russians, negative by 17.77% of British and 30.23% of Russians and approximately identical percentage considers it neutral: 8.88% of British and 6.97% of Russians.

Then we analyzed the words with the "blue" color dominating element. It should be mentioned that lexemes with the "light blue" and "dark blue" dominating element have been combined, as "light blue" is derived from "blue," and there is no stand-alone lexeme in English to denote light blue.

As a result of the analysis of the work in English, 1 group of color names with the "blue" dominant was identified:

1. medium between violet and green; dark-light blue - there were 20 cases of its use in the text. It was used in combination with nouns in the direct meaning: eyes, sky, water, waves, eyed maid, sea, ocean, and also with nouns in the indirect meaning: serene, mountains, Symplegades.

The 3 groups were identified in the Russian translation are the following ones:

1. medium between violet and green; dark –light – blue: синий (blue as an adjective), синь (blue as a noun), синева (blueness). Totally, there were 18 cases of use, utilized with nouns in the direct meaning: воды (water), небо (sky), глаз (eye), небосклон (skyscraper), взор (eye sight), блеск воды (shine of water), мгла (darkness) as well as with nouns in the indirect meaning: день (day), лоно (womb), глаза фиалки (eyes of violets), зной (heat).
2. presence of light in color - голубой (light blue) there were only 7 cases of use and only with nouns in the direct meaning: волна (wave), дымка (mist), валы (ramparts), пучина (bosom of the sea), мгла (darkness), источник (source), пространство (space).
3. light blue color of clear sky – лазурный, лазурь (azure as a noun and an adjective) there were only 7 cases of use and only with nouns in the direct meaning: высота края (height of edge), простор (wide open spaces).

As a result of the analysis of lexemes with the "blue/light blue" dominant, it was determined that in Russian "blue" and "light blue" are used with nouns in the direct meaning: голубые глаза (blue eyes), голубое небо (the blue sky), голубой дым (blue smoke), синие льды (blue ices). In English, blue is used not only with nouns in the direct meaning: eyes, water, waves, skies, sea, ocean, but also in the indirect meaning: serene, mountains.

As is the case of color names with the "red" dominant, in translation there was an increase in groups of the color characteristic of blue, which once again indicates a greater nuance of color in the Russian

linguistic view of the world. Considering the test data, according to which blue is considered positive by 75.55% of British and 70,93% of Russians, negative – by 22.22% of British and 18.60% of Russians, neutral – by 2,22% of English and 10.46% of Russians, but taking into account that blue for the Russians is blue, and light blue, it is necessary to mention that the light blue color is considered positive by 88.88% of British and by 88,37% of Russians, negative –by 6.66% of British and 6.97% of Russians, and neutral – by 4.44% of British and 4.65% of Russians. It seems an interesting fact that there were only 20 cases of blue use in the original work, when in translation the number increased to 35, and here we may speak about increasing the coloristic component of the text. At the beginning of the article we said that purple is a variation of the combination of blue and red, regardless of the shift of emphasis towards the first or the second; if we look at the total use of red and blue in the original text, it is 68 times, while in translation the amount of its use is 74, that is, the overall coloristic component is preserved.

7. Conclusion

Thus, in the transmission of purple, red and blue colors into Russian, context and attitude to color play a key role, because in English and Russian-speaking cultures these colors are not absolutely identical. Translation of color names and color indicating words in the text is one of the difficult tasks, considering that color is not only designation of objects, but also a means for creating an artistic image, and it is important to preserve it in translation. The analysis of the transmission of purple, red, and blue shows that there is some linguocultural adaptation in the process of translation of the literary text, this adaptation is inevitable and is due to differences in the national and linguistic views of the world, without which a text of another culture cannot be a part of the new cultural and linguistic environment and cannot be clear for the recipient.

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