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ON TRANSLATING SACRED TEXTS

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The presented article is aimed at elaborating the problem of translating sacred texts in the contemporary linguistic paradigm. The main objective of the paper consists in investigating sacred texts as the object of translation studied in accordance with the communicative and translational aspects. The results of the carried-out research have proved that there exist common strategies and techniques of interpreting and rendering religious texts. The practical value of the research lies in the fact that the conclusions may be applied in the translation activity.

The urgency of this paper arises from the need for global synergetic all-sided review of sacred texts as a mental phenomenon in general and in contemporary translation studies. The object of the work is a sacred text viewed in the aspect of its translatability. The subject is the unique nature of sacred texts with their immanent features (coherence, cohesion and intertextuality). The immediate tasks of the article have been predetermined by the above-mentioned objective and include respectively: the disclosure of the specifics of sacred text; the outline of the typologically common strategies and tactics of translating sacred texts.

The methodology of this research involved the inductive and deductive methods, the method of contrastive analysis and ethnic methodological conversation analysis. In the course of the research it has been concluded and experimentally and statistically proved that there exist common strategies and tactics of translating sacred texts into different languages. It has also been postulated that the pragmatic and the expressive potential of sacred texts is preserved and rendered in translation.

The perspective is seen in reviewing this issue in different Germanic and Slavic languages. The further research in the matter of possible cooperation of philosophers and translators in the study of the sacred texts also seems promising.

Key words: *sacred texts, linguistic paradigm, strategies and techniques, contrastive analysis.*

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Problem-setting and recent papers survey. The objective of the following research is the systematization and unification of the existing approaches to the sacred texts translation. The theoretical grounding for the ideas supplied was formed on the basis of the fundamental scientific works by E. Benvenist, P. Serio, M. Foucault, G. Lyons, Ch. Fillmore, Teun van Dijk, J. Fisk, A. K. Zholkovskiy, G. Lakoff, N. Chomsky, I. B. Kashkin, Y. Lotman, M. Ilyin, R. Barthes, V. I. Karasik, Yu.S. Stepanov, V. H. Borbot'ko, F. S. Batsevich, Y. Andruhovich, T. Nekriach, E. Nida, M. Foucault.

Translation lies at the heart of speech. Every semiotic exchange, every communication and reception of meaning entails the model of translation. The receiver of any act of signification must, as best he can, decipher the message. Such decipherment demands the transfer of the signals which he has received into what he judges to be the context, the equivalences, the frames of reference most faithful to them. At the same time, dynamic equivalence should be preserved as well as formal equivalence. But translation in this sense presupposes implementation of the pattern, the preservation of the initial message which in its turn predetermines the audience's response.

Necessarily, the translator performs all the operations by means of both formal and mental constituting simultaneously his own personal speech-world, the part of idiolect in every human being's language, and the wider semantic field which he shares with the other speaker (or writer, or painter or composer). The resulting decoding will be more or less homologous with the emitted message. It will never correspond to it totally. The intentions of a speaker, in even rudimentary discourse, are never tautologically transparent even to himself.

The connotative context of even a 'simple' proposition always comports a hidden narrative, this is to say, an ambience of memory, association, phonetic choices, subconscious impulses or repressions, rigorously singular to 'an individual. The receiver 'reads' this vital sub-structure and surrounding as far as he is able. But the quotient of partial understanding or misprision can never be eliminated in any natural language-act. Only mathematical symbolism and the meta-algebraic algorithms of formal logic are transferable, that is, translatable in their totality.

Translation within the same tongue is indeed carried out more or less spontaneously. But its process and the obstacles encountered are paradigmatic and typologically common for the translation into all the languages. To attempt understanding is to attempt translation. The centrality of translator's

ego and the twist in both the language and translation theory to the personality marked the new era of anthropologically centered translation, now being of prime concern to philosophers, logicians, psychologists and to linguists. The debate over the untranslatability of certain notions grounds the ontological transcendence of the source and being of language, its alpha and omega.

The gift of speech and the interwoven with it gift of sensibility form the basis of the human dominance over the animals. To speak, to convey and apprehend the meaning of meaning, is to partake of existence in its non-organic essence. The sacred texts have always attracted much attention in translation field starting with the texts by Parmenides, St John Gospel, followed by English translated versions of the Koran and the Tora.

Traditionally lots of myths and taboos have been attached to the translation of religious texts. It need not have its assurance of life as it gradually becomes textuality subject to amendment and circumstantial revision. It is the unwritten which is sacred. Whenever any sacred notion is inscribed it inevitably ceases to be sacred, according to Sophocles' Antigone. In the English tradition, retranslations of Scripture after the Authorized Version have provoked incessant debate. As in the case of great poetry, but with graver implications, is it not the primary life of meaning which is left behind by the most skilful of translations? Very few have squarely addressed the dilemma, among them: Emanuel Levinas, Michelle Foucault, Karl Buber, Benjamin, Maritan. Since Benjamin and Maritan all have relinquished the idiom in which to formulate the challenge of revealed textuality.

Today, translators don't get perplexed by difficulties, as they get on with their task knowing that difficulties of a philological, stylistic, historical sort are inevitable but still not fatal. One of the recent tendencies is to demythologize Bible retranslating it to meet the expectations of the contemporary target audience. In this concern the problem arises. How is the 'word of God', the Logos, to be translated into Newspeak? Should it be? Nothing is more enigmatic in that book of secrets we call the New Testament than the moment in which Jesus writes in the dust at the feet of the woman taken in adultery. Does it really matter in what language he wrote it and what the original message was. This, it may be, is the other side of necessary unknowing at the heart of translation.

What's the best way to translate a prayer or a sacred document. What should we look for? On Nov. 27, the Roman Catholic Church introduced a new English translation of the Catholic Mass. This is the third English ver-

sion. The church describes the new translation as more literal than the last English translation, closer to the Latin Mass word for word. This may seem surprising as many contemporary translations strive for common language and more poetic style. According to Cardinal Donald Wuerl, archbishop of Washington, D. C., "the reason why they had this new translation was precisely to see in the original language, the Latin language from which the translation comes, the very mystery, the depth of spirituality that is transmitted or at least touched on by specific words. And so the idea was to go back and capture again with a more exact translation the very mystery that the Mass and the text of the Mass are trying to communicate. Because it is precisely that spiritual encounter that is at the heart of what is happening.... Some words have a meaning all of their own. And it is not so much the translation of it, of the word, but the understanding. And I think for example the most preeminent word right now is 'kingdom.' Kingdom has a meaning all of its own, scripturally." By saying this the Cardinal meant that the original words, like the word "kingdom," have special meanings and it is important to use the same English words.

In accordance with all the above mentioned the following tactics of faithfully translating the sacred texts have been formulated.

Tactics I. To retain the special words.

Tactics II. To achieve the catharsis.

Tactics III. To preserve special language in translated sacred texts.

All these goals are masterfully achieved in the hermeneutic approach to translation which has integrated the translator's subjectivity with the ethnic and cultural background. Recent results in cognitive research and applied linguistics have proved the faithfulness of this approach. For instance, the neurophilosopher Hans Lenk has shown that, when we perceive an object, our brain decomposes it before it synthesizes it in order to bring it to our understanding. Some areas of our brain register the size of the object, others the color etc. If I see a golden delicious, which is a very common apple in Europe, I register its form, its color, eventually its smell, its weight, in different areas of my brain, and my brain associates it with the category *apple*, and saves it in this category. This is a process of categorization. According to John Lakoff, understanding presupposes categorizing. Understanding goes hand in hand with interpreting and involuntarily we all act as interpreters.

All these problems had been elaborated long before the fundamentals of the theory of translation were first formulated. These ideas had been ini-

tiated by H.-G. Gadamer, J. Lakoff, H. Lenk, G. Lyons, Heidegger, Ch. Fillmore, Derrida, Bachelard.

The perception is performed in the hermeneutical circle in such a way: in order to understand, we must already have an idea of the new object we are seeing or the new information we are getting, in order to categorize it, categorization being the basis of the understanding process, otherwise, if we have not the slightest clue, we will not be able to understand. For translators, this means that, when they try to understand the text, they unavoidably project already some fore-understanding on the text. Translators unavoidably approach the text with such a fore-understanding in their minds. This pre-understanding is, of course, unavoidably liable to change in the course of reading. The more the translators progress in the text, the more this preconceived meaning becomes complete, that means in harmony with what the text really means to them.

Another aspect of the translator's everyday life, which is often left aside by translation theorists is creativity. The hermeneutic approach to translation proves that creativity is nothing mysterious, but a problem-solving activity to overcome cultural barriers, fill in ethnic and cultural gaps or lacunas in translation and cross-cultural communication.

With an aim of encouraging creativity, hermeneutics also employs the so-called epistemological value of metaphors. Sometimes, the meaning that is “between the lines”, as Schleiermacher says, can better be communicated by using metaphors. Hermeneutics legitimizes the use of metaphors. As categorizing is the basis of each understanding process and categorization takes place on the basis of recurrent experience, which respectively leads to the formation of metaphors. These metaphors are interlinked. Conceptual metaphors in the mentality of each nation are grounded in correlations within its cultural and national experience and background knowledge. That means that the metaphor network which structures our understanding of the world is different from culture to culture, because of the different ecosystems. The conceptual systems of different cultures depend on the physical environment they have developed in. All these cognitive metaphors build the basis for the comprehensibility of associative-creative problem-solving strategies in translation. Connectionism and metaphor theory confirm and reinforce each other.

On the linguistic level, these recurrent experiences are reflected as phraseological metaphors. However, our experiences are not stored in isolation, but are interwoven within the conceptual network by means of which we understand the world. If after Paul Valéry's conception we perceive a work of

art as being left over to the understanding of the recipient when it has left the artist's hands, then every creative translation — like every new metaphor — is a “highlighting” in the sense of aspects of the original which have hitherto been hidden and which can lead to a new understanding of this original from the target-cultural perspective.

The methodology of this research involved the inductive and deductive methods, the method of contrastive analysis and ethnic methodological conversation analysis. The latter is the most recent technique initially used in the domain of ethnic linguistics. It consisted of studying the naive representations that the common language user visualized behind the words s/he used, especially when talking about things of everyday life which triggered her/his imagination. This methodology provides not only a possibility for studying the process of translating but also exposes the naive representations the implicated translators have in their minds regarding the process of translation, language and the relationship between culture and language.

Conclusions and perspectives for the future. The perspective is seen in the better cooperation between philosophers and translators for the benefit of both disciplines. Schleiermacher drew philosophical hermeneutics from his discussion with Schlegel about his translation of Plato. Contemporary translato-logists — as for instance, Paepcke — have been feeding on philosophers like Gadamer, but the interest of hermeneutic philosophers in translation is very limited. On the other hand, an interdisciplinary contact with cognitive sciences would be helpful, since cognitive sciences are confirming the heuristic function of hermeneutics.

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О ПЕРЕВОДЕ САКРАЛЬНЫХ ТЕКСТОВ

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Представленная статья посвящена проблеме перевода сакральных текстов в современной лингвистической парадигме. Цель статьи в изучении священных текстов как объекта перевода в неразрывной связи с коммуникативным и переводческим аспектами. В результате проведенного исследования выявлены общие стратегии и тактики перевода и интерпретации религиозных текстов. Практическая ценность полученных результатов в том, что выводы могут быть использованы в переводческой деятельности.

Актуальность статьи подтверждается необходимостью в синергетическом всестороннем обзоре сакральных текстов как ментального феномена в общем и в частности в современном переводоведении. Объектом исследования является сакральный текст в аспекте переводимости. Предметом исследования является уникальная природа сакральных текстов с их имманентными характеристиками (когерентность, когезия и интертекстуальность). Непосредственные задачи данной статьи были обусловлены вышеуказанной целью и включают следующее: раскрытие особенностей сакрального текста; обзор типологически общих стратегий и тактик перевода сакральных текстов.

Методология данного исследования включала индуктивный и дедуктивный методы, а также метод контрастивного анализа. В ходе исследования были сделаны и экспериментально и статистически подтверждены выводы о наличии общих стратегий и тактик перевода сакральных текстов на разные языки. Также было сделано заключение, что прагматический и экспрессивный потенциал сакральных текстов сохраняется и воспроизводится при переводе.

Перспектива в исследовании данной проблемы в различных германских и славянских языках. Дальнейшая разработка вопросов возможного сотрудничества философов и переводчиков в изучении сакральных текстов также представляется перспективной.

Ключевые слова: священные тексты, лингвистическая парадигма, стратегии и тактики, контрастивный анализ.

ПРО ПЕРЕКЛАД САКРАЛЬНИХ ТЕКСТІВ

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Представлену статтю присвячено проблемі перекладу сакральних текстів у сучасній лінгвістичній парадигмі. Мета статті у вивченні сакральних текстів як об'єкту перекладу у нерозривному зв'язку з комунікативним і перекладацьким аспектами. У результаті здійсненого дослідження виявлено спільні стратегії та тактики перекладу й інтерпретації релігійних текстів. Практична цінність одержаних результатів у тому, що висновки може бути використано в перекладацькій діяльності.

Актуальність статті підтверджується необхідністю у синергетичному всебічному огляді сакральних текстів як ментального феномену в цілому та зокрема у сучасному перекладознавстві. Об'єктом дослідження є сакральний текст в аспекті перекладності. Предметом дослідження є унікальна природа сакральних текстів з їх іманентними характеристиками (когерентність, когезія та інтертекстуальність). Безпосередні завдання цієї статті, обумовлені вищезазначеною метою, є такими: розкриття особливостей сакрального тексту; огляд типологічно спільних стратегій і тактик перекладу сакральних текстів.

Методологія цього дослідження включала індуктивний та дедуктивний методи, а також метод контрастивного аналізу. У процесі дослідження було одержано і експериментально й статистично підтверджено висновки про наявність спільних стратегій і тактик перекладу сакральних текстів на різні мови. Також було констатовано, що прагматичний і експресивний потенціал сакральних текстів зберігається та відтворюється у перекладі.

Перспектива у дослідженні цієї проблеми в різних германських та слов'янських мовах. Подальша розробка питань можливого співробітництва філософів та перекладачів у вивченні сакральних текстів також убачається перспективною.

Ключові слова: сакральні тексти, лінгвістична парадигма, стратегії та тактики, контрастивний аналіз.

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