SPECIAL ENGLISH TEXTS TRANSLATION INTO ROMANIAN VIA BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

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Articolul este dedicat traducerii în limba română a textelor engleze specializate din domeniul economiei, principiul de bază al traducerii fiind eliminarea barierelor lingvistice şi culturale între oamenii de diferite naţionalităţi. S-a observat că echivalenţa şi precizia traducerii sunt rezultatul analizei formale, semantice şi paradigmatice a termenilor în cauză.

Am analizat termeni cu un element, două, trei şi patru elemente în prepoziţie sau postpoziţie faţă de nucleul termenului. Traducerea lor a fost perfectată conform dicţionarelor, dar şi de asemenea ca rezultat al consultării cu specialişti din domeniu.

Cuvinte-cheie: *traducere, cunoştinţe complementare de fond, metode de traducere, structura sintactică, morfologică şi semantică.*

The dominance of the English language has significantly increased over other languages in the era of globalization. "English is the world's lingua franca in commerce, technology, and diplomacy" [1, p. 15]. As the life is constantly advancing there is a great demand in good and qualitative translation.

This demand conditioned the necessity of this research; namely, the translation of special economic texts from English into Romanian. These special texts have sentences that begin with long pre-modified and post-modified noun groups that present great difficulties in translation. From the point of view of applied linguistics perspective it is the "how" and perhaps more important, the "why" of application of this or that method of translation. That is why we consider these texts from two points of view: referentially and linguistically, because normally there are only some degrees of equivalence. Complete equivalence cannot always be achieved. That is why translation implies the background knowledge of the texts and languages.

This background knowledge consists of five ingredients of equal importance: 1. Thorough knowledge of the source language; 2. Competence in the subject matter of the text to be translated; 3. Writing skills in the target language; 4. Mastery of the technique of translation; 5. The knowledge of the culture of the source and target language countries.

Besides, for a translator it is not enough to know the above-mentioned languages, but it is necessary to also know the methods of translation, to provide identity, faithfulness towards the source and target languages and cultures.

Throughout the history translation has been one of the means through which people from different countries could share their thoughts, customs, ideas. Without it, the flow of information from one nation to another would be impossible, thus the world would be divided into small groups that have very little in common and that have no idea what is going on beyond the borders.

Teaching translation should have a strict goal, the ultimate goal to achieve translation competence. Translation theory under the linguistics regime has focused on the issue of "transfer", text-linguistic insights coming into translation studies have ensured that text analysis is reinstated as an aspect of crucial importance in the work of the translator.

In the process of translation one must pay attention to the micro-means elements of the texts: semantic, grammatical, lexical, textual meanings of the vocabulary. The micro-dimensions characterize the text as a whole: alongside situational and pragmatic categories. The micro-means, on the other hand, function as instruments which facilitate the realization of the major dimensions (pragmatics) to the usual grammatical and lexical means the textual and semantic means are also added. The semantic means deal with information selection in conformity with the needs of the readership, in contrast to the lexical means which focus on the type of vocabulary and types of collocational patterning.

Translation occupies a central and prominent position in the conceptualization of a universal, enlightened civilization. Translation expands our ability to explore through literature the thoughts and feelings of people from another society or another time. It expands and deepens our world, our consciousness, in countless, indescribable ways. Translation is also an imperative.

Octavo Paz begins his essay "Translation: Literature and Letters" with the sentence: "When we learn to speak, we are learning to translate" [3, p. 152].

Nowadays translation is used in every domain, this includes economy, economic texts, so to say specialized texts from economy.

As a consequence, the ability to understand and interpret specific information from this domain entail some knowledge as deep as possible about the syntactic and morphological structure of the foreign word combinations. The best way of doing so is by analyzing the text and evidentiating the terms for translation which is the first step in our research.

Step I – Background Preparation.

If the linguistic field related to economics is based on the use of universal terms and their equivalents we need as a consequence to obtain a one-to-one translation that contains no ambiguities, so to say, an exact and precise translation, f.e. price – preț; advertising – reclamă; inaccuracy – inexactitate, imprecizie, eroare.

As we can see from above, we can get one-to-one equivalence not taking into consideration the polysemy of the terms.

Step II – Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis.

By making a quick inventory of the noun groups found in the text, we discovered a reasonable number of example in which several nouns are combined to designate one single concept into Romanian:

f.e. $N_1+N_2 \rightarrow N_0$

brain worker – intelectual;
display window – galantar/vitrină;
dock worker – muncitor;
quay-side worker – docher;
show window – vitrină;
test weight – greutate-etalon.

These terms seem to be simple but if we look at their meaning we see that they do not express the meaning of their constituent words, also their structure doesn't coincide.

Besides, there are also terms composed of two nouns which can be translated in another way, f.e. by a noun and an adjective in the vice versa order. We know that their structures do not coincide because English and Romanian are from different groups of languages:

f.e. $N_1+N_2 \rightarrow N_2'+A_1'$

animal wastes – deșeuri animaliere;
bond warrant – certificat vamal;
customs warehouse – depozit vamal;
field warehousing – depozitare externă;
market-clearing wage – salariu flexibil;
reinvestment warrant – warant reinvestițional;
short-term contrast – contrast scurt / de scurtă durată.

And still the English terms expressed by two nouns may have quite another translation into Romanian:

f.e.: $N_1+N_2 \rightarrow N_2'+prep+N_1'$

consumer wants – necesitate de consum;
irrigation water – apă pentru irigare;
Internet stock – fond din Internet;
Internet commerce – comerț prin Internet;
job wage – salariu în acord;
offer wants – aviz de cumpărare;
truck wage – salariu în natură.

Some terminological expressions of this kind may be translated,

f.e.: $N_1+N_2 \rightarrow N_2'+N_1'$

business world – lumea afacerilor;
standard warranty – garanție standard;
cargo weight – greutatea încărcăturii;
consumer welfare – bunăstarea consumatorului;
tax withholding – reținerea impozitelor.

But there are noun clusters composed of more than two nouns,

f.e.: $N_1+N_2+N_3 \rightarrow N_3'+N_2'+prep+N_1+A_1$

self-service wholesale warehouse – depozit angro de mărfuri alimentare.

$N_1+N_2+N_3 \rightarrow N_3'+N_2'+prep+N_1'$

America online stock – fond online din America.

$A_1+N_2+N_3+N_4 \rightarrow N_4' +prep+N_0'+prep+N_2'+A_1$

high capacity railway wagon – vagon pentru încărcături de gabarituri mari.

There exist terms expressed by nouns modified by words in postposition,

f.e.: $N_1+prep+A_2+N_3 \rightarrow N_1'+prep+N_3'+prep+N_2'$

waste in monopolistic competition – risipă în concurenţă de monopol;
withdrawal of the driving license – lipsire de permisul de conducere;
write-off plant value – amortizare a fondurilor fixe / a capitalului fix;
work on the bonus system – sistem de muncă bazat pe prime;
work on a contractual basis – muncă pe bază contractuală;
warehouse of unbonded goods – depozit de mărfuri nevămuite;
warehouse of spare parts – depozit de piese de schimb.

Such noun clusters usually form part of both scientific and economic documents, since it is often necessary to give a large amount of information in a restricted space. The problem arises when trying to translate these noun clusters as correctly as it is necessary and possible. In English the more specialized the topic, the greater the number and complexity of noun clusters.

Step III – Organizational Collocation.

The widely spread tendency is to start translating the last element of the noun cluster and then continue in reverse order until we get to the first element, keeping in mind the fact that we must produce a piece of information which can be clearly and properly understood:

f.e.: British Trade Union Congress – Congresul Uniunii Comerțului Britanic.

Step IV – Socio-Linguistic Analysis.

The process calls for cross-cultural expertise on the part of the translator, and this is where translation becomes interpretation, using an exact word is not as efficient as creating the appropriate whole. In other words, an exact, precise and concise text is the backbone of such a creative activity as translation, f.e. "wealth as determinant of consumption" may be divided into three parts: the first part is "wealth" translated as "bogăţie"; the second part is "determinant" translated as "ca factor determinant" and the third part is "of consumption" translated as "a consumului". These particular parts require interpretation for the exact translation of the term – "bogăția ca factor determinant al consumului".

The quality of translation depends on the essential characteristics of:

- reading comprehension ability in the foreign language;
- knowledge of the subject;
- sensitivity to the language (both foreign language and the mother tongue);
- competence to write the target language resourcefully.

Background knowledge is of major importance for the translator and is of vital importance for an interpreter.

Equivalents in translation may be achieved by:

a) Transcription and literate translation,

f.e.: preference dividend – dividend preferential;
duty-free – scutit de taxe.

b) Choice between transcription and descriptive translation,

f.e.: clearing – clearing = transcription;
clearing – sistem de decontare fără numerar.

f.e.: know-how – know-how = transcription;
know-how – ansamblu de cunoștințe, experiențe şi specificaţii de ordin tehnic şi organizatoric dobândite în urma unor cercetări sau a aplicării lor în producție.

c) Descriptive translation,

f.e.: dollar export drive – lupta pentru mărirea exportului în țările zonei de influență a dolarului.

In conclusion we must say that the ability to render the contextual meanings is an essential element of the translator's professional skill. Thus, the professional skill in using both the dictionary data and the information extracted from the context to solve the translation problems while dealing with the economic texts is the hallmark of a good translator.

References:

1. GROSSMAN, Edith (2010) – *Why Translation Matters*? New Haven, 135 p.
2. PATRAŞ Mihai; PATRAŞ, Corina (2008) – *Dicţionar Economic şi Financiar-bancar Englez-Român*, Chişinău, Editura Arc, Editura Gunivas, 792 p.
3. PAZ, Octavio (1971 (1992)) – *Translation: Literature and Letters*. (Traducción: Literatura y Literalidad), Barcelona: Tusquets.