TRANSLATING METAPHORS IN SCIENTIFIC LANGUAGE

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The purpose of the study is to determine the role, function and stylistic effect of the metaphor from the perspective of the translation of scientific texts from Romanian into English, as well as identifying techniques of metaphor translation. The typology of the linguist P. Newmark was applied to examine the corpus of selected examples from the abstracts of doctoral theses of the National Council for Accreditation and Attestation of the Republic of Moldova website.

1. Theoretical approach to metaphor translation in the scientific language

The language of science is largely metaphorical. To make sense of scientific phenomena and convey their discoveries to one another and the general public, scientists frequently use metaphor and analogy. Philosophers, linguists, rhetoricians, and experts in science communication and public comprehension of science such as P. Newmark, J. Dickens, A. Goatly, V. den Broek, Z. Kovecses, J. Lakoff and M. Johnson have all extensively studied the use of metaphor in scientific cognition and communication.

According to P. Newmark [3, p.106], any word can be a metaphor and therefore its primary meaning has to be matched against its linguistic and cultural contexts. A metaphor is defined as an indirect comparison between unrelated things. P. Newmark's paradigm, the metaphorical components of the topic-vehicle-ground model are referred to as *'object', 'image',* and *'sense'*, respectively [3, p. 105]. Also, the linguist divided metaphors in the following types:

Dead metaphors have lost their images due to overuse. *Cliché metaphors* are those that have lost their aesthetic value and are simply employed in connotative ways to express ideas more clearly and frequently with a greater degree of passion. A s*tock metaphor* is defined by P. Newmark [2, p.108] as one that "has certain emotional warmth and which is not deadened by overuse". *Adapted metaphors* are standard metaphors that the speaker or writer has changed to fit a new situation. One can include proverbs in this group. *Recent metaphors* are categorised by P. Newmark [2, p.110] as *live metaphors*. They are produced via coining or, as P. Newmark elaborates, "they are neologisms fashionable in the SL community". The *original metaphors* are the SL's original work, and are unique and creative.

Moreover, metaphor translation has always been a topic of debate and contention. With relation to metaphor translation, various theories and methodologies have been offered, each addressing the subject from a different perspective. K. Reiss, M. Dagut, P. Newmark, R. van den Broeck, M. Snell-Hornby and others published several articles on translation studies in the late 19th century. They carried out that:

- Metaphors are difficult to translate [1, p.21],
- Metaphors are fully translatable (i.e., metaphor translation is similar to ordinary translation) [4, pp.393-395],
- Metaphors can be translated, but they have a lot of inequivalence [5, pp. 78-82; 2, p. 45-48].

2. Examining strategies of metaphor translation from Romanian into English

A corpus of 100 metaphors from the fields of medicine, economics and politics were analysed. We have identified 47 examples of dead metaphors, 22 of stock, 14 cliche, 5 original and 0 adapted. Another finding is the types of translation techniques applied to metaphors. So, we conclude that in 64 metaphors the word-for-word translation technique was used; 17 metaphors were translated by calque and 8 by equivalence; 2 metaphors by transposition, 2 by neutralisation. In addition, with each translation technique mentioned below, a metaphor was translated. These are: compression, functional replacement, description, omission, generalisation, synonymy, partial equivalence. As follows, we shall examine several selected examples from our paper.

RO: *“Programul combinat a inclus programul terapeutic convențional și tehnici ale terapiei manuale, selectate de noi, care au fost axate pe mărirea barierei funcționale a țesuturilor și restabilirea* ***“jocului articular” al genunchiului.”***

EN*: “The complex program included techniques of the conventional therapeutic program and adapted manual techniques, aimed at increasing the functional barrier of tissues for gaining the* ***“joint play” of the knee.”***

This is a cliche metaphor, because the word *‘play’* carries a connotative meaning. This metaphor suggests the process of movement and flexibility of the knee, where its articulations contribute, each having its function exactly as in a game. In this way, the metaphor fulfils a stylistic function. From the perspective of translation, the metaphor was rendered literally.

RO: *“**Mobilitatea academică** a studenților din învățământul superior din Israel **a atins noi înălțimi**.”*

EN: *“**The academic mobility** of higher education students in Israel **has reached new heights**.”*

The metaphor above is a *stock metaphor*, being characterised by its pronounced emotional effect.

The metaphor suggests the success and performance of students due to academic mobility. The metaphor is translated by equivalence. In addition, the translation keeps the same grammatical parts and the same syntax. The function of the metaphor is purely stylistic and emotional.

RO: *“[…] iar competitivitatea – un* ***factor cheie al succesului în lupta concurențială.”***

EN: *“[…] and competitiveness, a* ***key factor of success in the competitive struggle.”***

This is a dead metaphor, because it is overused, due to the word ‘*key’*. This word is not used in its denotative sense. A *‘key factor’* is an indisputable basic condition, a

solution that leads someone to success. The function of the metaphor is stylistic. The translation technique used is word for word.

RO: *"Urmărind cu atenție schimbările din ultimele două decenii prezente pe mapamond, devine evident faptul că* ***metamorfozele geopolitice afectează sistemul și structura relațiilor internaționale.****"*

EN: *"Observing the changes taking place in international relations over the past two decades,* ***the rapid changes affecting the system and structure of international relations****… ."*

The example above illustrates an original metaphor, as it implies the author's own thoughts. The combination of geopolitical metamorphoses means the changes and political transformations in a state. It was used for the same purpose: to demonstrate rapid changes affecting international cooperation. The translator chose the description as translation technique in order to explain this term. Analysing the example, we can conclude that the function of this metaphor is sociological. The metaphor highlights the belonging of a researcher to a certain scientific community or point of view.

3. Conclusions

Metaphors have a major role in scientific texts. They give a new meaning, because they are used to describe phenomena or features of objects. Following the study undertaken, we have concluded that the metaphor in the scientific text differs from that in a literary text. The scientific metaphor has a conventional, reflexive or transitive nature. Also, scientific metaphors fulfil different functions compared to the literary ones, which are stylistic in nature. The functions scientific metaphors fulfil are conceptual-theoretical, metatheoretical denominative, educational, stylistic, sociological etc.

We have concluded that *dead metaphors* prevail in scientific texts. Due to the fact that they are used so often, it is practically no longer perceived as a metaphor. The mechanisms underlying the metaphorical expressions that determine the generation and interpretation of scientific texts are their level of difficulty, translatability and their linguistic and aesthetic functions.

References:

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Recommended

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