

Ткачук Т. І.,

кандидат філологічних наук,

доцент кафедри іноземної філології та перекладу

Вінницького торговельно-економічного інституту

Київського національного торговельно-економічного університету

REALIA TYPES AND STRATEGIES OF THEIR TRANSLATION IN FRAMES OF CULTURAL TRANSLATION

Summary. The article highlights the issue of realia and the challenges a translator faces attempting to render them into target language and culture; the definitions and classifications of realia have been revisited in frames of cultural translation; realia are also discussed in the article in terms of translation equivalency concept; the strategies and procedures of realia translation are outlined in the article as well as the criteria affecting the choice of the translator when applying them in translation practice.

Key words: cultural translation, realia, source language, source culture, target language, target culture, translation strategies, equivalency.

Problem statement. When cultural differences exist between the two languages, it is extremely difficult to achieve a successful transfer of meanings and cultural connotations, if not impossible (depending on the competence of the translator in the two languages involved). Sometimes even the slightest deviation from the source language (SL) cultural term can be taken as an act of subversion against the culture it represents.

Language is an expression of culture and the individuality of its speakers which in its turn, creates problems involved in the translation of the cultural realia when there is a lack of equivalence between two languages and cultures [3, p. 28]. *Cultural translation* represents the practice of translation, which recognizes cultural differences.

The linguistic relativity principle largely underlies the challenge each translator or interpreter finds him/herself facing at some point. The linguistic relativity principle (also known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis) holds that the varying cultural concepts and categories inherent in different languages affect the cognitive classification of the reality so that speakers of different languages think and behave differently as the result. Thus, the translator has to be fluent in reading the cultural connotations of the target language in order to render them adequately into the source language, which implies interpreting the realia of the target language by means of the source language.

The analysis of recent publications. Roughly speaking, realia are words and expressions used to denote culture-specific items. Carrying a very local specific overtone, realia often present a challenge for translators and have been in the center of linguistic research and discussions for decades (S.I. Vlachov, S.P. Florin, Z.H. Proshina, O. Denti, A.F. Guerra, A.G. Macedo, M.E. Pereira, S. Maitland, P. Newmark). Though, they are not to be confused with terminology, the latter being predominantly characteristic of scientific literature to nominate notions pertaining to the scientific sphere, only appearing in other kinds of texts to serve a very specific stylistic purpose. Realia, in their turn, arise out of popular culture, and are increasingly found in all kinds of discourse, serving their predominant purpose of conveying an exotic flavor.

The purpose of the article. Thus the aim of the current article is to highlight the most comprehensive existing classifications of realia, summarize the strategies of realia translation and unveil the criteria affecting the translator's choice of the appropriate strategy.

The term realia referring to cultural elements has been suggested by S.I. Vlachov and S.P. Florin [6]. The term has evolved to refer to objects, customs, habits and other cultural and material aspects influencing the shaping of a certain language.

Realia can be also discussed in frames of equivalent-lacking units. Equivalent-lacking units are those concepts lacking in the target language and culture. They are also sometimes referred to as untranslatable units.

Depending on the criteria used several classifications of realia are distinguished in the current linguistic research.

According to the semantic fields, realia are classified into:

- toponyms, or geographical terms (Cologne, Mount Kosciuszko, Shanghai);
- anthroponyms, or people's names (Michael Riffaterre, Democrates, Aristotle Onassis);
- zoonyms, or animal names (kangaroo, grizzly, cougar);
- social terms (Верховна Рада, House of Parliaments);
- military terms (сотник, отаман, Brigadier General);
- education terms (junior high school, CPA test, група продовженого дня);
- tradition and customs terms (Jack-o'-lantern, Водохреща);
- ergonyms, or names of institutions and organizations (Облдержадміністрація);
- history terms (Майдан, War of Independence)
- words for everyday life (cuisine, clothing, housing, etc.) (sushi, kilt, шапавари).
- titles and headlines (Catcher in the rye, Кобзар) [7, p. 86].

Olga Denti outlines three types of realia:

1. Geography:

- a) physical geography (pampa, fjord, mistral, steppe, tornado, tsunami);
- b) geographic objects tied to man's activity (polder);
- c) endemic species (kiwi, koala, sequoia).

2. Ethnography:

- a) everyday life (paprika, spaghetti, empanada, sauna, kimono);
- b) work (carabinieri, concierge, machete, trade union);
- c) art and culture (tarantella, banjo, gong, commedia, allegro, Santa Claus, vampire, murals);
- d) ethnic characterizations (cockney, gringo, yankee);
- e) measures and money (mile, kilometer, lira, peseta, talent).

3. Politics and society:

- a) administrative divisions (region, province, county, department, state, promenade);

b) organs and functions (agora, forum, дума, senate, chancellor, царь, pharaoh);

c) political and social life (Ku Klux Klan, lobbying, lord, untouchables, samurai);

d) military (cohort, phalanx, marines) [7, p. 113–115].

Peter Newmark suggest the classification of foreign cultural words, establishing such categories:

1. ecology (flora, fauna, winds, climate, etc.);

2. material culture (food, clothes, houses, towns, transport;

3. social culture (work and leisure);

4. organizations, customs, activities, procedures or concepts (which include artistic, religious, political and administrative sub-categories);

5. gestures and habits [5, p. 48].

As can be drawn from the above suggested classifications, emphasizing local coloring, manners, cultural and temporal distance between two linguistic communities is what they have in common. Furthermore, each of them acknowledges more or less explicitly, the focus on dominant cultures, which inevitably results in the loss, or at times the impossibility of translating these terms. As perfect translation of culturally-bound texts is practically impossible.

This brings us to the issue of equivalency in translation. Equivalency is used as a measure of semantic similarity between the source language and target text. Equivalents are functional substitutes for SL units [4, p. 19]. Since the complete identity of situational context and meaning system between cultures is impossible, the complete equivalence is equally impossible.

The procedures or strategies discussed in academic publications serve both to analyze and catalogue translation equivalence and to improve the acquisition of translation competence, since knowing them and being able to compare them is unarguably necessary to complete an adequate translation.

The linguists suggest various approaches to translating realia, some of which overlap and can be summed up in a more or less comprehensive classification.

Ana Fernández Guerra outlines the following procedures or strategies employed for translating realia.

Adaptation is employed when the type of situation being referred to by the SL message is unfamiliar to the TC representatives thus the translator creates a new situation that can be viewed as situational equivalence. It actually refers to a SL cultural element being replaced by another term in the TC. For instance, this applies to weights and measures, musical notation, titles, geographical names, etc. The basic goal of the translator in attempt to “adapt” the translation is to produce a similar effect on the TL readers, “domesticating” the cultural terms in a way.

We speak about **borrowings** when taking a word or expression directly from another language, without translating it. The procedure is normally used when a term is non-existent in the TC, or when the translator attempts to render a stylistic or exotic effect. The terms foreign word, foreignism, Anglicism, Germanism are at times preferred when referring to pure borrowings that have not been fully assimilated into the TL system while borrowings or loans are used when the words are naturalized in the TL, i.e. when the term has been incorporated and adapted to the TL. With that being said, borrowings are one of the main sources of enriching a language.

Calque could be considered a special type of loan or borrowing, since the translator borrows the SL expression or structure and then transfers it in a literal translation (either lexical or structural). The basic difference between loan/borrowing and calque

is that the former imitates the morphology, signification and phonetics of the foreign word or phrase, while the latter only imitates the morphological scheme and the signification of that term without preserving the original pronunciation. Calque is not only an acceptable form of translation, but a productive way of enriching the TL, whereas borrowings are not really translation procedures, but actually giving up on the translation task.

Compensation is a translation tool aimed at compensation in order to balance the semantic losses that translation involves either in the content of the message or its stylistic effects. Compensation introduces a SL element of informative or stylistic effect in a different place in the TL text since it cannot be reflected in the same place it originally appeared in the SL. Compensation is usually employed while translating dialects, irony, puns, values, etc.

Compression/reduction/condensation/omission take place when the translator synthesizes or suppresses a SL information item in the TL text, mainly when the information it translates is considered irrelevant as the cultural term does not perform a relevant function or may even mislead the reader. These tools are typically used to avoid repetitions, misleading information, or lack of naturalness.

Compression/reduction/condensation/omission is opposed to **explicitation/expansion/amplification/diffusion**. Explicitation implies expressing in the TL something that is implicit in the context of the SL, or introducing details such as more information, translator's notes, or explicative paraphrasing that are not expressed in the SL.

As for expansion, amplification and diffusion, the essence of those tools is using more words in the TL than in the SL to express the same idea. Description can be regarded as a sort of paraphrase, or even as an amplification or explanation and consists in the term or expression being replaced by a description of its form or function.

Equivalence refers to a strategy that describes the same situation using completely different stylistic or structural methods for producing equivalent texts, which basically means that the translator uses a term or expression recognized as an established equivalent in the TL. It is to some extent similar to adaptation and to modulation in that it expresses the same situation in a different way. It can be fruitful in cases of idioms and formulaic language.

Modulation consists in using a phrase in the TL that differs from the SL phrase to convey the same idea. It often involves a change in the point of view, focus, perspective or category of thought in relation to the SL.

Generalization and particularization are two sides of the same coin: generalization occurs when a word or phrase (hyperonyms/more general or neutral terms) in the ST is translated into a broader and more general term in the TT normally for stylistic reasons, or to avoid unnecessary repetitions or ambiguity; while particularization occurs when a word or phrase in the ST is transferred into a more specific and particular term in the TT (hyponyms/more precise or concrete terms).

Literal translation, or word for word translation takes place when a SL word or phrase is translated into a TL word or phrase, without taking the style into consideration while adapting the text to the TL syntactic rules with minimal adjustments so that it sounds both correct and idiomatic.

Linguistic-paralinguistic substitution is the translation procedure involving linguistic elements being replaced by paralinguistic elements (intonation, gestures, etc.) or vice versa. It is typical for oral speech rendering.

Transposition involves changing a grammatical category or replacing one part of the speech for another without changing the meaning of the message.

Variation is a procedure employing which the translator changes elements affecting several aspects of linguistic variation: changes in tone, style, social dialect, geographical dialect [2, p. 5–12].

Strategies used by a translator are skills and procedures that promote the acquisition and use of information, and may be associated both with the product (the translated text), as well as with the process of translation itself, whose strategies are a set of (loosely formulated) rules or principles which a translator uses to reach the goals determined by the translating situation and can be global or local strategies: global strategies refer to general principles and modes of action and local strategies refer to specific activities in relation to the translator's problem-solving and decision-making.

S.I. Vlahov and S.P. Florin suggest the following strategies of reality translation.

Their **substitution** with realia of the target culture, which may cause an unacceptable "substitution" of the original text coloring with a different coloring. Nevertheless, realia substitution can make sense, especially if the text has a pragmatic dominant, and the style can be given a low priority. Such a strategy, nonetheless, tends to flatten the cultural differences, altering the reality in order to render a text understandable without the effort to accept its diversity.

Approximate translation of realia on the other hand allows to translate the material content of an expression, leaving the color is nearly always lost, because instead of the original text connotation the target text is deprived of that intended connotation, having a neutral style.

A few specific tools can be outlined within approximate translation strategy. **Substitution with a generic expression** of broader meaning is basically resorting to generalization. This approach consists in the translator's arbitrarily decision not to translate the local color in view of preserving an objective, material reference.

Substitution with a functional analogue entails the substituted element arousing a similar reaction in the TC reader to the one aroused by the original text on the SC reader. It is a rather subjective strategy to be chosen by the translator since neither objective confirmation nor distinguishing the reactions of one reader from those of another can be strictly measured or predicted.

Description, explanation and interpretation of the realia elements instead of realia or a periphrasis are used explicating the denotative content.

The next translation strategy consists in **contextual translation** of the realia. With this approach instead of translating the lexical meaning, the systemic, relational, contextual meaning is translated, which obviously cannot be found in the dictionary. This option is preferable when the translator considers the context to be the dominating factor in a given message [1, 94–96].

The following criteria influencing the choice of the appropriate strategy of realia translation can be outlined:

- the type of text;
- the significance of the realia in the context;
- the type of realia, their systemic role in the source culture and in the target culture;
- the languages, the collocations, and the collocabilities;

– the degree of acceptance of unusual collocations and exotic expressions in the target culture;

– translator's will to "force" the reader to overcome mental laziness in favor of a richer world awareness

– the metatext model reader (with possible differences of the linguistic picture of the world as compared to the original text reader) [1, p. 92].

Conclusions. To conclude, the underlying principles guiding all translation choices dealing with realia is that it does not make much sense to establish general rules but rather to consider pros and cons of each possible strategy individually.

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Ткачук Т. І. Типи культурних реалій та стратегії їх перекладу в межах культурного перекладу

Анотація. У статті висвітлено питання культурних реалій та проблем, з якими стикається перекладач при передачі їх цільовою мовою та культурою; у статті проаналізовано визначення та класифікації реалій у рамках культурного перекладу; реалії також розглядаються у статті з погляду концепції еквівалентності у перекладі; у статті описані стратегії та процедури перекладу реалій, а також критерії, що впливають на їх вибір перекладачем у перекладацькій практиці.

Ключові слова: культурний переклад, реалії, вихідна мова, вихідна культура, цільова мова, цільова культура, стратегії перекладу, еквівалентність.

Ткачук Т. И. Типы культурных реалий и стратегии их перевода в рамках культурного перевода

Аннотация. В статье освещена проблема культурных реалий и проблемы, с которыми сталкивается переводчик, стремясь передать их в рамках целевого языка и культуры; определения и классификации культурных реалий были рассмотрены в статье в свете культурного перевода; культурные реалии также обсуждаются в статье с точки зрения концепции эквивалентности перевода; в статье систематизированы стратегии и процедуры перевода реалий, а также критерии, влияющие на их выбор переводчиком в практике перевода.

Ключевые слова: культурный перевод, культурные реалии, исходный язык, исходная культура, целевой язык, целевая культура, стратегии перевода, эквивалентность перевода.