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THE APPLICATION OF THE SKOPOS THEORY RULES FOR THE BILINGUAL TEXT ANALYSIS

Summary. The article analyzes the self-translation not only as bilingual manifestation, but also as bicultural phenomenon. The auto-translation represents the mediation between two cultures: translation is seen rather as action between cultures than between languages. Translating from one language to another the author continues to express himself/herself by the means of the second language, therefore bilingual texts must be studied with the application of the skopos theory rules.

Key words: bilingual text, self-translation, bilingualism, biculturalism, skopos theory.

Introduction. The past decades have seen an unprecedented upsurge of research on bilingualism. A major reason for this is no doubt the acknowledgement by a growing number of researchers that bilingualism – the presence of two or more languages – is far more common, than was previously thought, and perhaps, even the norm. Individual and societal bilingualism are neither recent nor temporary phenomena. As linguists notice, bilingualism has always been with us. Still, the number of bilinguals at the turn of the third millennium is probably greater, than ever before and will continue to grow as a result of the combined forces of globalization, automation, increased mobility and migration and, in some parts of the world at least, the blurring of political borders [2; 1].

The topicality of the article. Traditionally researches on bilingualism are motivated by various concerns. First, the prevalence of bilingualism as an individual and societal state, and advantages it is thought to bestow, need further documenting, as do reactions to it from all quarters. Its study has practical applicability as well as general theoretical utility. Research on bilingualism contributes to theorising in other disciplines (e.g. linguistics, sociology, psychology, neurology, pedagogy) and related fields (e.g. language acquisition, speech processing). General theories of the human mind, language and behaviour must ultimately incorporate the basic facts of bilingualism, if they are to be comprehensive and viable. But distinguishing functional bilingualism with intellectual and emotional bilingualism i.e. “between reading a language and knowing it through and through”, Ramachandra Guha notes, that there has been a decline in intellectual bilingualism – in the ability to contribute “to literary or academic debate in that language” [6]. So, the scientific research of individual (literary) bilingualism (or intellectual and emotional bilingualism) as rare and understudied phenomenon seems to be important and relevant.

The previous studies. Contemporary cross-cultural writing and criticism identifies translation as an overarching trope that articulates the production of textual and cultural difference in-between dominant and subordinate cultures, global and local placements, mother tongues and foreign languages. In approaching translation as a wider practice of cultural representation and interchange, a concrete textual practice of transcoding and constructing meanings cross-culturally, these texts articulate the potential of translation to destabilize the primacy of nation, organic belonging and languages

of origin, while simultaneously problematizing the production of unequal cross-cultural exchanges between different languages and cultures. Bilingual texts have been left outside the mainstream of both translation theory and literary history. Yet the tradition of the bilingual writer, moving between different sign systems and audiences to create a text in two languages, is a rich and venerable one, going back at least to the Middle Ages. The self-translated, bilingual text was commonplace in the multilingual world of medieval and early modern Europe, frequently bridging Latin and the vernaculars. For centuries it has been practiced by many men of letters, such as Leonardo Bruni, Etienne Dolet, Thomas More, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, Vladimir Nabokov, Chyngyz Aitmatov, Elsa Triolet, Andrei Makine and others. Bibliography on self-translation peculiarities is long, but the problem still has more questions than answers, especially, when we investigate a particular author’s works and his/her manner of translation. If many multilingual writers have chosen a foreign language to write their texts and some have practiced self-translation, self-translation itself has not been of much interest by scholars, until the extensive focus on the self-translator author Samuel Beckett. Rainier Grutman, who wrote the entry “self-translation” for the first edition (1998) of the Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies claimed, that “translation scholars themselves have paid little attention to the phenomenon, perhaps, because they thought it to be more akin to bilingualism than to translating proper” [1, p. 103].

J. Hokenson and M. Munson in their work “History and Theory of Literary Self-Translation” point out, that monolingual literary critics extol the writers’ texts in one language, while neglecting their work in the other, even as theorists in linguistics and translation studies tend to ignore self-translators altogether, in their consensual focus on cultural and linguistic difference. As several scholars have shown apropos of single writers, it has been difficult even to classify self-translation as a literary and cultural endeavor: Are the two texts both original creations? Is either text complete? Is self-translation a separate genre? Can either version belong within a single language or literary tradition? How can two linguistic versions of a text be commensurable? [4, p. 2].

The aim of the article is to investigate self-translation not only as bilingual manifestation, but also as bicultural phenomenon, underlining the importance of the application of the skopos theory rules to its analysis.

Discussion. As a phenomenon, self-translation has a long tradition and continues to be widespread in several cultures. Previous investigations of self-translation have mainly been confined to two areas. Wilson describes these areas, as: one is concerned with what drives an author towards self-translation, while the other considers issues of textual status and relationship, i.e., the self-translated text as having a different status to a “proper” translation since it is instilled with the author’s intention, and being a repetition rather than

a reproduction [8]. In his seminal work on translation "After Babel" George Steiner remarks, that the essence of translation is repetition: a translated text is a repeated text, repeated in a different language, but repeated nonetheless [7]. The very existence of two versions of the author's text opens up a whole area of investigation relating to translation, translation theory, bilingualism, and the double inscription of each text: two texts united by their similarities, but always differentiated by their language.

In principle, self-translation is not very much different from translation proper. Both involve rendering source tongue into target tongue. The traditional approach is based on the concept of equivalence, when comparing the source text and the target one. It underlines the asymmetric positions in artistic freedom and creative independence of an author and a professional translator. As a rule, a translator excludes his/her own subjectivity and tends to explicit the author's subjectivity. R. Federman brightly illustrates this thesis: "We always admire the faithfulness of a translation in relation to the original, and quickly deplore and criticize the liberties a translator takes with the original work of a writer" [3].

It is argued, that the process of self-translation is often associated with the problematization of identities, and that bilingualism is sometimes used as a way to regenerate writing. For a human being possessed of several native tongues and a sense of personal identity arrived at in the course of multilingual interior speech, the turn outward, the encounter of language with others and the world, would necessarily be very different, metaphysically, psychologically different, from that experienced by the user of a single mother tongue... In what language am I, when I am inmost? What is the tone of self? [7, p. 125].

This thesis also draws a clear-cut line between ordinary bilinguals, who often shift languages with no conscious decision to do so, and the bilingual writers, who deliberately decide, which language to use at a time. Consequently, those writers should equally make vigilant a decision, when they self-translate. Unlike the translator per se, the self-translator has the privilege of access to the intention of the source language text prior to its production. All these prerequisites contribute to the self-translator's decisions of introducing shifts and changes in the target language text through cultural mediation. Translation becomes an integral part in the creation, embodiment, and voicing of meaning and identity. So, the remark made by V. Feschenko is very significant: "Translating from one language to another the author continues to express himself/herself by the means of the second language" [9, p. 202].

There are many reasons for the author to make the self-translation of his or her work. E. Khovanskaya and O. Pratchenko distinguish among them the political situation, the author's desire to combine two different cultures, educational status and others [10]. Exile has often been a motive for self-translation. For instance, it has played a major role in Vladimir Nabokov's choice to write and translate his works in more than one language. Raised a polyglot, the originally Russian Nabokov is seen to represent a cosmopolitan image of a writer. He was forced to leave Russia after the Revolution. Then, he wrote in Russian, but his readership turned out to be limited in scope: only the Russian émigré' community in Europe read him. Living in the Russian emigration in Germany in the 1930s, V. Nabokov found the first English translation of one of his novels so bad, that he translated a second himself, then re-wrote from scratch in English the first novel translated, then another novel directly in English, although he was still also writing in Russian. When he moved to the US in 1940, he decided to renounce

writing in Russian prose, to force himself to write English, but the best way for him to earn money as a writer was to translate from Russian. V. Nabokov was the strict judge for his own self-translated works. Dissatisfaction with others' translations of one's own text may be a very good reason for taking up the task of self-translation. Self-translation is practiced to increase the number of readers or to escape the confines of one language (or its censorship) to another. It is a manifestation of the essential human desire for recognition in another language and culture, or simply the desire to conquer nostalgia, loss of identity and invisibility of the exiled author.

The author-translator has to mediate between the two texts to maintain the purpose of the translation action; he/she must master not only the two languages, but also their cultures and, consequently, needs not be only bilingual, but also bicultural to be able to facilitate cross-cultural understanding. The self-translator's competence in the languages and cultures of the source tongue and target tongue should assist him/her to mediate between the two texts. Therefore, investigating self-translation in terms of the equivalence-based paradigm alone will not be fruitful. In his work "The Self-translator as a Cultural Mediator: In Memory of Jabra Ibrahim Jabra" A.M. Nibras notices, that the application of the *skopos* theory rules may provide more tangible results in this respect [5].

Skopos is the Greek for purpose or aim. It has become the title of a translation theory, that shifts the interest in the age-old equivalence-based translation paradigm towards the priority of target tongue's purpose. According to this theory, translation is not only a process of transcoding, but also a specific form of action, the purpose or *skopos* of which must be determined before translation begins. H.J. Vermeer insists, that the *skopos* is not in the source tongue, but it may arise from the initiator's intention, and it is the task of the translator to make the target tongue fit in the intended *skopos*. The translator has been dubbed as the "expert", who is supposed to know, how to bring about cultural communication and lead it to its intended *skopos*. In an elaborate statement, the *skopos* rule is, when "Each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. The *skopos* rule thus reads as follows: translate/interpret/speak/write in a way, that enables your text/translation to function in the situation, in which it is used and with the people, who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function" [5, p. 214].

The second rule of the theory, coined by Schaffner, is "coherence rule". It states, that the target tongue must be sufficiently coherent to allow the intended receivers to comprehend it, given their assumed background knowledge [5, p. 214]. The target tongue must be consistent with the cannons and moral and ethnic principles of the target language and culture. Hence, the target tongue is expected to consider the target readership's background knowledge and situational circumstances.

To avoid accusations of unfaithfulness, the *skopos* theory offers a third rule: the "fidelity rule". It concerns "intertextual coherence" between target tongue and source tongue; and merely states, that there must be some relationship between the two [5, p. 214]. Such relationship can be described in terms of presumed match between the source tongue information as received and interpreted by the translator and his encoding of it for the target tongue readers. The fidelity rule is considered secondary to coherence rule, and both are subordinate to the *skopos* rule.

The traditional analysis of bilingual texts are concentrated on "gaps" between texts, languages and cultures. One must start from a point closer to the common core of the bilingual text, that is within

the textual intersections and overlaps of versions. Real translators live and work not in a hypothetical gap between languages, between source and target cultures, but in the midst of them; they combine several languages and cultural competencies at once, and constitute a mid-zone of overlaps and intersections, being actively engaged in several cultures simultaneously. Hence every translator is “a minimal intercultural”. In R. Federman’s opinion the bilingual writer allows his readers (if he has any) to listen to the dialogue, which he entertains within himself in two languages, even though in most cases the readers (who are usually not bilingual) only hear half of this internal (one should almost say infernal) dialogue [3]. Explaining his practice of self-translation R. Federman notes: “Usually when I finish a novel <...>, I am immediately tempted to write (rewrite, adapt, transform, transact, transcreate – I am not sure, what term I should use here, but certainly not translate) the original into the other language. Even though finished, the book feels unfinished, if it does not exist in the other language” [3].

Conclusion. A bilingual author is not merely a sum of two complete or incomplete monolinguals, but rather a unique and specific linguistic and cultural configuration. Mediation and maintaining the *skopos* in self-translating may result in significant changes in the target tongue. Accordingly, the translator proper may be blamed at least by the equivalence-based paradigm proponents, for not being faithful to the source tongue. Judged from the *skopos* theory perspective, the self-translator should be impregnable to such criticism.

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Нечипоренко В.О. Застосування правил *skopos*-теорії для аналізу білінгвальних текстів

Анотація. У статті проаналізовано авторський переклад не тільки як прояв літературного білінгвізму, а також як бікультурний феномен. Автопереклад являє собою посередництво між двома культурами, а не тільки між двома мовами. Доводиться думка, що робота над власним перекладом – це продовження творчої праці письменника, вдосконалення і збагачення оригінального твору. Доцільним є використання правил *skopos*-теорії для дослідження авторських перекладів.

Ключові слова: білінгвальний текст, авторський переклад, білінгвізм, бікультуралізм, *skopos*-теорія.

Нечипоренко В.А. Применение правил *skopos*-теории для анализа билингвальных текстов

Аннотация. В статье авторский перевод анализируется не только как проявление литературного билингвизма, но и как бикультурный феномен. Автоперевод представляет посредничество между культурами, а не только между языками. Аргументируется тезис, что работа над собственным переводом – это продолжение творческой работы писателя, совершенствование и обогащение оригинального произведения. Обоснованным представляется применение правил *skopos*-теории для анализа билингвальных текстов.

Ключевые слова: билингвальный текст, авторский перевод, билингвизм, бикультурализм, *skopos*-теория.