

Міністерство освіти і науки України
Сумський державний університет
Наукове товариство студентів, аспірантів,
докторантів і молодих вчених СумДУ

ПЕРШИЙ КРОК У НАУКУ

Матеріали
VIII студентської конференції
(Суми, 11 грудня 2016 року)



Суми
Сумський державний університет
2016

COMPRESSION AS A TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE

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It is well-known that the length of two texts in Ukrainian and English may not be the same. This can be explained by the use of the compressed forms in both languages [1, p.66]. Compression is very common in translating processes and is considered as a whole system of methods/techniques enabling to truncate the text without distorting or destroying its meaning. According to Nigel Armstrong, compression “generally occurs when the segment contains an unnecessary detail that might weary the reader, or information that is difficult to translate concisely because of culture-specific obstacles, or both” [2, p.72]. This transformation of the text can occur for various reasons. Grammar, syntax, choice of words, stylistic or pragmatic aspects, vocabulary, sentence structure – all these factors play a role.

When translating words, semantically redundant in terms of their semantic content, compression/omission often occurs. One of the examples of redundancy is the use of so-called “pair synonyms”, common to all styles of a written language of English. It is not typical in Ukrainian at all; therefore, when translating these cases, it is necessary to resort to omission (i.e. not to repetition of a synonym – to replacement of two words with one).

For example:

just and equitable treatment – справедливе відношення/ставлення;
brave and courageous – хоробрий/сміливий; *regular and normal* – звичайний;
by force and violence – насильницьким шляхом and so forth.

Certainly, redundant elements in the text are not just “pair synonyms”. Let's review the following example:

So, I paid my check and all. Then I left the bar and went out where the telephones were. – Я розрахувався і пішов до автоматів.

Would it sound better if you said... – Чи не краще сказати...

Such words and phrases as “so”, “and all”, “where the telephones were” seem to distort the sentence. That's why we have such comprehensible and brief translation: Я розрахувався і пішов до автоматів. And the construction “would it sound better if you said” is too piled up. While translating (literally) it makes a sentence “heavier” and the

recipient loses the main idea of this sentence. Therefore, in this case it would be appropriate to recourse to compression.

Translators often use omission when translating from English into Ukrainian in such cases as “you never know”, “you see” and so on omitting the pronoun “you” making a sentence defined or generalized personal one.

The elimination of semantically redundant elements of the source text enables the translator to carry out what is called “text compression”, i.e. the reduction of its total volume.

There is the tendency, common to English language, to pursue the maximum concreteness revealed in the use of numerals, and also names of measures and scales. And, the translator should sometimes resort to omission. For example:

About a gallon of water was dripping down my neck, getting all over my collar and tie. – Вода з голови лилася за комір, промочла вся краватка, весь комір ...

So, we can come to conclusion. Compression is:

1. capturing the essence and filtering out what is non-essential;
2. condensing the content into shorter phrases with as few words as possible (shortening of the total volume of the text) without distorting the meaning of the text;
3. making the translation comprehensible, laconic, and euphonical.

Nobody can't deny the importance of the topic “translation techniques/transformations”, especially in the process of teaching translation students possessing only basic translation skills. However, even highly qualified translators with comprehensive experience and serious practice quite often have to use all sorts of gimmickry including compression to make their translation readable, clear, harmonious, and having a twist. So, live and learn. Knowledge is no burden.

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