

THE PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATING A BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

Марина Карпенко,

студентка Сумського державного університету

Науковий керівник – ст. викладач Кириченко О.А.

The business sphere is one of the vital spheres of human activity, and the business letters and documents remain its integral part. Writing or translating a business correspondence deals with the peculiarities of the lexical and grammatical structure of individual languages and includes a number of difficulties to be overcome.

Any type of business or formal cooperation involves a constant exchange of information, in particular the usage of correspondence or different kinds of documentation. Since English is generally accepted as the language of business communication, special attention should be paid to the peculiarities of the official style, vocabulary and terminology characteristic for the business discourse, rules and norms of compiling and translating business letters of different types.

The relevance of the research regards to the widespread use of an e-mail, the most reliable and affordable means of business communication that is an integral part of the functioning of the modern world. The modern linguistics is focused on the study of the peculiarities of texts of various styles, including official one, and the specifics of their reproduction in translation. There is a need to study the problems of business communication due to the growth of intercultural ties in the modern world, which leads to the intensification of information exchange in the field of professional communication.

The purpose of this research is a study and an analysis of the basics of business correspondence writing; a definition of the concept of business letter and its subspecies; an overview of the main problems and features of the translation of English and Ukrainian business correspondence.

The assignment of the research is the analysis of the principles of translation (according lexical, grammatical, general aspects) and writing the business letters. Correspondence is one of the most important parts of business documentation. Official correspondence of various types, which is sent on behalf of one organization or institution to another organization or institution, although it may be addressed to one official and signed by one official, is business correspondence.

A business letter is a special type of document that is less strictly regulated than a contract or decree, but has a legal significance.

Business correspondence is recorded and stored in both organizations, so outbound, as inbound documentation. This is important because business letters act as an instrument regulating economic, legal and social relations between correspondents (contractors, partners, participants in social relations).

There are certain restrictions on the style and lexis concerning the process of writing a business letter in any language. In general, the ideal letter is one that combines friendliness and dignity [3, p. 323]. In addition, business correspondence requires clarity, conciseness and courtesy. That is why the author of the letter should follow these rules and express the content of any correspondence concisely and clearly, without using unnecessary words and expressions. Of course, when concluding both Ukrainian-language and English-language business letters, the familiar style of writing is unacceptable. According to B. C. Bean., the message of the letter should be set out in a simple and natural language [2].

A characteristic feature of modern business correspondence, both Ukrainian and English, is that the language style of letters confidently tends to the conversational version. Business correspondence of both languages intensively displace high-sounding stamps, phrases and expressions that have lost any meaning long ago, although in the recent past were still common [2]. Typical examples are *to inform* or *to state* instead of *to advise*, *mentioned previously* instead of *aforementioned*, *according to – as per*.

The use of synonyms in business correspondence, to avoid ambiguity of perception, is minimized. There is no emotionally expressive vocabulary. The business correspondence is characterized by clearly regulated placement and structure of the text, the presence of standard stable phrases, and certain language clichés [3]. They have a pragmatic orientation and serve to implement the category of business courtesy in correspondence (*I am writing with a request to / We were pleased to learn your interest in / We are looking forward to hearing from you / Our proposal is valid till / I especially call your attention to*).

The translation of business correspondence is a special form of translation that requires not only perfect knowledge of a foreign language, but also mastery of business style from the translator. The main difficulties encountered by a translator, when working with business correspondence, may include several equally possible translation options and the need for stylistic and lexical equality in the target language. Researchers note that the problem of having several translation options is in second place, in terms of frequency, after the problem of information lack [3].

Specialists increasingly emphasize that taking into account only the peculiarities of the source and target languages does not ensure high-quality results.

An effective translation requires the achievement of communicative and pragmatic equivalence of the source and target texts. For this purpose, pragmatically conditioned transformations can be used.

Lexical transformations are various changes of lexical elements of the source language during translation in order to convey the semantic, stylistic and pragmatic characteristics adequately, considering the norms and speech traditions of the target language [1]. Translating the business correspondence, lexical transformations are used when the dictionary equivalents of a word in the original language cannot be used in translation due to inconsistencies in terms of meaning and context. Among the lexical transformations used in the translation of business letters the following should be noted:

- differentiation of the meaning (*Department of Justice* – Міністерство юстиції, *the Court of justice* - суд);
- specification of meaning (*We have had the meal with our partners in the restaurant* – Ми вже поснідали з нашими партнерами в ресторані);
- concretization or generalization of meaning (*I am certain that you will find a position which suits you soon and I believe that you have a great deal to contribute* – Я впевнений, що скоро ви знайдете посаду, яка задовільнить вас, і вважаю, що ви можете зробити великий внесок);
- semantic development (*The state by election was an acid test for the Labor Candidate* – Додаткові вибори у штаті були лакмусовим папірцем для лейбористського кандидата);
- antonymic translation (*It was not until yesterday when his colleague signed the papers* – Це було аж тільки вчора, коли його колега підписав документи);
- integral transformation (*How old are you?* – Скільки вам років?);
- addition and omission of words for lexical reasons (*takeover* – поглинання одного підприємства іншим – addition; *You can clearly see the results of his work* – Ви бачите результати роботи вашої компанії – omission);
- calque (*self-help group* – група взаємодопомоги);
- transcription (*Mary* – Мері, *management* – менеджмент, *computer* - комп'ютер);
- transliteration (*Lord* – лорд, *Mister* – Містер, *Miss* – Міс, *London* - Лондон).

Actually, from the stylistic point of view, despite the impersonality of the official business style, the business letter, depending on the pragmatic purpose of the addressee may be marked by a certain complementarity, contain manifestations of positive, neutral-friendly or somewhat negative connotation. However, the types of English and Ukrainian business correspondence mostly coincide, because, as

already mentioned, the purposes of writing letters are universal. Therefore, when translating the letters, there should be no major problems provided that international standards are met.

The main results and conclusions of the study. Writing a business letter, or even translating business correspondence, is usually a complex and difficult process that requires appropriate competence, which should be based not only on knowledge of native and foreign languages, but also on a deep understanding of lexicographic and stylistic features of official style.

Due to the fact, that the main purpose of writing the business letters is clear, concise and understandable (from a grammatical and lexical viewpoint) presentation of certain information, the translator, guided by the appropriate purpose, should choose the most established and stylistically appropriate translation. Overcoming the problem of achieving stylistic and lexical correspondence requires knowledge of all the features of business correspondence listed in this research paper, and paying attention to the study of the native language no less than a foreign one.

Specialists increasingly emphasize that taking into account only the peculiarities of the source and target languages does not ensure high-quality results.

An effective translation requires the achievement of communicative and pragmatic equivalence of the source and target texts. For this purpose, pragmatically conditioned transformations are to be used.

References:

1. Bryan Garner. HBR Guide to Better Business Writing. US: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013. 240 p.
2. Burt Clifford Bean. Business Correspondence. London: Forgotten Books, 2017. 224 p.
3. Sinee Sankrusme. International Business Correspondence. US: Anchor Academic Publishing, 2017. 496 p.

Карпенко, М. The Problems of Translating a Business Correspondence [Текст] / М. Карпенко наук. кер. О.А. Кириченко // Соціально-гуманітарні аспекти розвитку сучасного суспільства: Матеріали восьмої Всеукраїнської наукової конференції студентів, аспірантів, викладачів та співробітників, м. Суми, 15–16 квітня 2021 р. / Уклад. М. М. Набок. - Суми: СумДУ, 2021. - С. 61-66.