TRANSLATION OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN DISCOURSE

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Summary

Translation is one field of activity where the stylistic competence of the language user is clearly seen. It also includes such a topical issue as translation of terminological Pus or, in other words, phraseological terms (mostly based on metaphor). An acute practical need exists for adequate translation of new figurative EU terminology, as my own experience as a translator and simultaneous interpreter has shown. Translation of phraseological terms reveals the role of cognitive theory in translation practice (Naciscione 2003b: 102–115, 2006a: 102–118). In the cognitive linguistic framework, metaphorical terms reflect a figurative mode of thinking, the same as all Pus. However, translation of phraseological terms is not the aim of this research as they usually do not reach a discourse dimension.

Key words

translational stylistics, an odd/strange fish, to take the plunge.

Translational stylistics:

As to literary translation, existing explorations focus on various aspects of language and style, and their translation. In 2004, a special issue of Language and Literature 13(1) was dedicated to style and translation, revealing widely differing views and approaches. Malmkjær, for instance, argues the need for a special stylistics of translated texts to account for their relationship to a source text, which she calls translational stylistics (2004: 13–24). In translation studies the innovative line is mostly concerned with a stylistic dimension and a cognitive approach to both the translation process and translation theory (see, for instance, Oncins Martínez 2005; Boase-Beier 2006). This section will focus on the discoursal properties of instantial stylistic use of Pus and the relevance of a cognitive approach to Pus in teaching and learning translation skills, and translation practice as an area of applied stylistics. Thus, a cognitive approach is especially important when we deal with discourse phenomena that lie at the fringe of phraseology,

stylistics, and translation studies. In order to develop skills in translating Pus in both literary and noniterary texts it is necessary to be able to read them with comprehension and stylistic awareness, that is, with an eye to the stylistic features and meaning of Pus in the source text to avoid possible semantic and stylistic loss. Instantial use does not often lend itself to translation very well. The aim is to learn to process cases of instantial use and develop an ability to fuse literary, linguistic, and stylistic considerations. A better trained translator is more likely to have a subtle understanding of instantial meaning in the SL and use the TL appropriately.

An odd/strange fish:

Awareness of difficulties must be a prime concern. A metaphorical network presents a major hurdle in comprehension and translation; this especially refers to translation of literary texts. Let me illustrate a process-oriented translation approach to extended metaphor in D. H. Lawrence's novel The Lost Girl. In portraying Albert Witham, D. H. Lawrence creates the image of a fish using the PU an odd/strange fish and extending the phraseological image over a large stretch of text, that is, over 25 pages (Lawrence 1920: 82–106). The PU first appears on p. 83, creating an effect of audible stillness:

An odd/strange fish:

He spoke in a slightly m o u t h I n g way, not well bred in spite of Oxford. There was a distinct Woodhouse twang. He would never be a gentleman if he lived for ever. Yet he was not ordinary. Really an odd fish: quite interesting, if one could get over the feeling that one was looking at him through t h e G l a s s w a l l o f a n a q u a r I u m : that was most horrifying of all boundaries between two worlds. I n a n a q u a r i u m f I s h s e e m t o c o m e S m I l I n g b r o a d l y t o t h e d o o r w a y , a n d t h e r e t o s t a n d t a l k –I n g t o o n e , I n a m o u t h I n g f a s h I o n a w f u l t o b e h o l d . F o r O n e h e a r s n o s o u n d f r o m a l l t h e I r m o u t h I n g a n d s t a r I n g C o n v e r s a t I o n . Now although Albert Witham had a good strong voice, which rang like water among rocks in her ear, still she seemed never to hear a word he was saying. He smiled down at her and fixed her and swayed his head, and said quite original things, really. For he was a g e n u I n e odd fish. And yet s h e s e e m e d t o h e a r n o s o u n d , no word from him: nothing came to her. Perhaps as a matter of fact fish do actually pronounce s t r e a m s O f w a t e r y w o r d s , to which we, with our aerial-resonant ears, are deaf for ever.

D. H. Lawrence, The Lost Girl, p. 83

The whole page is saturated with an extended metaphor of a PU whose translation poses a number of difficulties for the translator. The major challenge is that there is no equivalent PU in Latvian. The translation savādnieks (a strange

person) given in dictionaries for "an odd (strange) fish" is non-idiomatic and what is more it is in no way connected with fish or the underwater image which D. H. Lawrence employs across novels, creating transdiscoursal relationships, See Mr Noon (1984), The Plumed Serpent (1933). Replacement of the metaphor by a simile, like Viņš patiesi bija savādnieks, kā dīvaina zivs… (he was truly a strange person, like an odd fish), would be a way out, as it would provide a basic image to be extended in this particular case of discoursal use, though it might raise an objection that no additional stylistic techniques should be introduced in the target text. Once translation of the PU itself is solved, care should be taken to encompass the whole web of complementary images or rather sub-images and metaphoric elements which all go back to the PU:

The odd thing was that this odd fish seemed from the very first to imagine she had accepted him as a follower. And he was quite prepared to follow. (…) if only she could have got into the right state of mind, she would really rather have liked him. He smiled at her, and said really interesting things between his big teeth. There was something rather nice about him. But, we must repeat, it was as if t h e g l a s s w a l l o f a n a q u a r I u m divided them.

To take the plunge:

Development of the phraseological image (little half-fishes) goes together with reiteration of the prop-words which reinforce perception of the fish world. The metaphorical network is further sustained by the PU to take the plunge.

To take the plunge:

None the less, as Christmas drew near Alvina worked up her feelings. Perhaps she would be reconciled to him. She would slip across and smile to him. She would take the plunge, once and for all – and kiss him and marry him and B e a r t h e l I t t l e h a l f – f I s h e s, his children. She worked herself into quite a fever of anticipation. But when she saw him, the first evening, sitting stiff and staring flatly in front of him in Chapel, staring away from everything in the world, at heaven knows what – just a s f I s h e s s t a r e – then his dishumanness came over her again like an arrest, and arrested all her flights of fancy. He stared flatly in front of him, and flatly set a wall of oblivion between him and her. She trembled and let be.

Taken separately, these prop-words are seemingly unambiguous and unrelated to the PU. However, in these contexts they are rendered salient. They cluster around the central image, they prompt and guide, acting as ties and performing a cohesive function.

THE LIST OF USED LITERATURE:

1.See Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary ([1987] 1988: 1582).

2.For word recognition and priming, see Harley (1995:Ch. 3).

3.Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms (1998) gives exercises on pages 456–469 to train the base form and core use with the correct answer supplied by the answer key.

4.For literary awareness, see Zyngier (1994, 1999: 35). She argues for the emergence of a new discipline – Literary Awareness – and shows how it can be beneficial to L2 students (Zyngier 1994: 95).