

TRANSLATOR'S FALSE FRIENDS: MISUNDERSTANDINGS IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION BASED ON ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES

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ЛОЖНЫЕ ДРУЗЬЯ ПЕРЕВОДЧИКА: НЕДОРАЗУМЕНИЯ В МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ НА ОСНОВЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО И РУССКОГО ЯЗЫКОВ

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The problem of intercultural communication is one of the most important issues of modern linguistics. The main means of intercultural communication has always been and will be the language. Communication is the process of transferring information through the language, the result of which is mutual understanding. The level of communicative competence in the context of cultural differences has a significant impact on the effectiveness of a communicative act.

Most often the obstacles to successful communication are pseudoanglicisms, or “translator’s false friends”. Translator’s false friends, or interlingual homonyms, are a pair of words in two languages that are similar in spelling and/or pronunciation, often with a common origin, but different in meaning [1]. At the same time, it is important to distinguish between interlingual homonyms in oral and written speech. For example, if in a conversation a person mentioned the word “chef”, he means «шеф-повар», not «шеф» in the sense of “boss, chief”. Or vice versa, when seeing the word “message” in a foreign text, a person may mistakenly think that we are talking about «массаж», while in fact it means «сообщение». And the confused «массаж» differs by the original by only one letter – “massage”.

A distinctive feature of the translator’s false friends is that the context doesn’t play an important role in their translation. Semantically similar words belong to the same group of concepts, but have different meanings, so they are often confused. For example, Russian-speaking people can translate the word “ammunition” as «амуниция», while it is translated from English as «боеприпасы». The words refer to the same area of life, but mean different things.

In many languages of the world, especially English and Russian, there are a number of words borrowed from Greek and Latin. Because of this, people who don’t know a foreign language well

enough may develop a false idea about the meaning of a certain word. Since many words of the two languages are similar in form or meaning, their native language forces them to draw an analogy and think out the text on their own. At times like this, misunderstandings usually occur. The main problem in translating pseudoanglicisms is that under the influence of familiar semantics, a person allows literalisms in translation, thereby violating the lexical compatibility of the word.

However, the problem of translating pseudoanglicisms lies not only in the fact that a person doesn't know the language sufficiently, but also in the imperfection of many existing dictionaries. For example, in A. I. Smirnitsky's Large Russian-English Dictionary, it is recommended to translate the word «благополучие» as "prosperity" or "well-being", in L. Segal's dictionary – "happiness, felicity, well-being, welfare", in V. K. Muller's dictionary – "well-being, security, happiness, felicity". At the same time, the word "health" is often used in this meaning [4].

Translator's false friends usually cause big problems for people studying a foreign language, since on the one hand, there is no specific rule for translating them, except for memorizing them by heart, and on the other hand, one can't rely on the context. A person either knows the definition of a given word or is mistaken.

It should be noted that "translator's false friends" is a problem not only for foreign language learners, but also for native speakers. This is quite natural because the first reaction of a person to a foreign word similar to his/her native one is considering its value to be the same as the value of a similar native word [5].

In Russian and English, the translator's false friends number several thousand words and occur within four parts of speech: nouns ("marmalade" – «джем», not «мармелад»), adjectives ("accurate" – точный, not «аккуратный»), verbs ("lift" – «поднимать», not «лифт») and adverbs ("originally" – «первоначально», not «оригинально») [2].

Besides individual words, phraseological units can also be misleading. A person who has enriched his/her vocabulary with a sufficient number of words can begin to study foreign phraseological units. At this point, another problem arises. At the initial stage of study, it is rather difficult to distinguish free combinations from phraseological units, which ultimately leads to literal translation. For example, the expression "wind in the head" is completely different from the Russian analogue «ветер в голове». It boils down to the word "arrogance". Similar examples: "to put oneself in smb's shoes" – «поставить себя на место другого человека, войти в чье-либо положение», not «обуть чужую обувь»; "to see eye to eye with smb" – «сходиться во мнениях», but not «встретиться взглядами».

There are also phraseological units that partially coincide with their external form with the units of the translated language. For instance, the idiom "to throw dust into smb's eye" and its Russian analogue «пускать пыль в глаза» have some similarities: both units contain the meaning "to deliberately deceive". However, the English phraseological unit has other meanings – "playing hard to get, to create a false impression of oneself, to confuse, to distract attention" [3].

Thus, we can say that the mistakes made due to the translator's false friends not only impede the communication process, but also lead to a rethinking of cultural differences and cause additional motivation to learn the language and penetrate into the cultural characteristics of the country being studied. Therefore, it is important to constantly develop professional horizons with the help of additional materials, because languages are in a state of constant development and in the course of time they acquire more and more polysemy.

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