THE ESSENCE OF METAPHOR AND ITS INTERLINGUAL TRANSLATION

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The present article is aimed at the investigation of the essence of metaphor, exploration of its conceptual aspect and its translation from a source language to a target language. The specific way metaphor is expressed in a work of verbal art, the manner of its use by the author have always attracted the attention of not only philologists specialized in literary studies but also translators. Having a multilayered semantic structure and being almost ubiquitously expressed in everyday life metaphors prove to be of certain value not only for linguistics but also the domains of psychology, philosophy, cognitive sciences, translation studies and many others. Their significance is paramount particularly for translation studies and translators. The objective of the present article consists in revealing the cognitive aspect of metaphor translation and the optimal methodology of accomplishing an accurate translation of metaphors from a source to a target language.

Keywords*: metaphor, cognition, conceptualization, hermeneutics, source language, target language, translation.*

Introduction

The language of literary works is marked with idiosyncratic authorial writing style, distinguished ingenuity of the expression of thought, synthesis of linguistic figurative elements. Enriched with a range of various figures and tropes, the literary language of a writer has the power of creating a peculiar aesthetic impact on the reader who develops unique comprehension of the world represented in the literary work. It has long been established that one of the elements of figurative language of literature is metaphor, which was traditionally considered to belong to and function strictly within the domain of verbal creativity.

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The present research is carried out on the basis of the observations in the sphere of the development of studies related to metaphor creation and their use in works of literature. Theories related to the classification of metaphors according to their use and novelty (M. Dagut) and the ones highlighting the associative-mental mechanisms elaborated in the process of metaphor creation (G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, G. Fauconnier, M. Turner) as well as their translation into another language (N. Mandelblit) are in the focus of the present article. The main findings of the research are achieved through the consideration and linguistic analysis of the novel *Martin Eden* by J. London (1916) and its translation into Armenian carried out by I. Barsamyan (2018).

Translation of metaphors of a work of verbal art from a source text into a target text is a complex creative procedure requiring a multi-step investigation of the original conceptual essence of the metaphors, hermeneutic analysis of their contextual meaning and validation of their veritable equivalents in the target text.

The present article has been accomplished on the basis of the methods of synthesis of the collected theoretical data on the main issue as well as analysis of the research component elaborated by means of the principle of concpetual metaphor theory, hermeneutic analysis of the texts of source (in English) and target (in Armenian) languages, their comparison and generalisation of the gained results.

Explorations on the essence of metaphor and its interlingual translation

The phenomenon of metaphor or metaphoric expression has always been in the focus of investigation in a number of contemporary issues of language. The nature of the study of metaphors is defined by examining the subject of metaphor not solely within the confines of language but also beyond them.

According to traditional approaches to metaphors, the latter are classified into conventional/dead and original/novel types, which are treated as the extreme poles of the classification, and the ones which are borderline cases. This classification has long served as a basis for clarifying the structure of metaphors in texts for carrying out not only their stylistic-interpretative analysis but also their accurate translation. The idea of transfer of the interplay between the content of metaphor and the way it concentrates conventional experience and semantic association underlies the core of metaphor translation methodology and their general *translatability* (Dagut, 1976, pp. 22-31).

At the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s a new branch of linguistics, namely, cognitive linguistics, which examines language as a medium for organisation, cultivation and communication of information, started to develop. Cognitive linguistics has defined language as a separate cognitive capacity (Geeraerts, & Cuyckens, 2007, p. 3). For comprehending the essence of human mentality, its functioning and peculiarities of the formation of perception, human associative mentality is prioritized, more precisely, its ability of constructing metaphors which is often referred to as "metaphorisation". In this regard, conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) developed by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, who brought forward the idea that the system of concepts underlying the mind outline everyday realities, plays a crucial role in the identification of the nature and structure of metaphors. In addition, CMT also suggests that the entire human conceptual system is profoundly metaphoric in its nature (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3-4).

The idea that metaphorisation is typical of human conceptual system leads to the assumption that the issue of metaphor translation, in its turn, may not be confined within the area of essentially translatological investigation but expand beyond its limits, encompassing not only basic language structure but also the sphere of conceptualisation mechanism operating in mind. Among the central ideas of CMT is the picturing of the formation of metaphors and concepts through conceptual metaphor mapping due to which the scheme of concept domains is delineated. Thus, metaphor translation requires a deep penetration into the processes of concept-formation and its reflection in the conceptual system.

According to N. Mandelblit, translation demands "awakening" of an established mapping in the conceptual system. Hence, given the fact that metaphors belong to the domain of mind, their translation implies not only a shift from one language to another but also a shift from one way of world conceptualisation into another (Mandelblit, 1995, p. 486).

As a complex mental procedure, translation is regarded as activation of intellective operations directed at optimal decision-taking in the pursuit of genuine target-language equivalents. As I. Remkhe describes, the cognitive essence of the translation process is triggered by the mental structures of a translator who defines both the course of the process and the result of reaching a solution, and the subjectivity found in the way of problem-solving is interpreted by the euristic character of the combination of actions ranging from attaining knowledge through experience to the application of a necessary

strategy for accomplishing a felicitous translation (Remkhe, 2015, p. 11). The representation of translation as a continuum of problem-solving activities being undertaken in the translator's mind is grounded by the fact that translation as such carries a communicative function in its core, which in turn is realized through a number of choices and decisions ongoing in mind.

Human intellect capable of collecting and categorizing information turns out to show not only ingenuity in forming systematized and classified knowledge, but also creative and imaginative thinking peculiar to an individual. The uniqueness of thought-creativity found among authors of various artworks only proves that human mind operates in complex modes with the help of which, in certain cases, creative thought expression tends to demonstrate systematicity, i.e. can be categorized and observed as a rule-governed mechanism, and in other cases, namely in the process of creation of aesthetically coloured patterns of elements of figurative language, it is generated in an extemporaneous and at the same time irregular nature. One of the pecularities of human mentality is its ability to form models for enabling the mind to perceive the outer world the way it is. The ability of mind to model the outer world helps to organize everything that is implicit and complicated, find the explanation of unknown elements, reveal structural regularities of cognition, logics and construction of knowledge-frames (Remkhe, 2015, p. 28).

In the study of cognitive linguistics the ability of modeling is of no less importance[1]. The essence of metaphor-model consists in the fact that it expresses similarities, which bring about analogies between objects, phenomena and concepts. However, such sort of similarities do not claim to be of orderly, consecutive and predictable character so that they could be defined as a matter of logical, rule-governed phenomena, allowing to utterly determine the genuine human capacity of metaphor creation. In this regard an interesting observation has been made by B. Bowdle and D. Gentner, accoding to whom the model of metaphor, as compared to the idea of feature-matching, does depend on the "salience" of the properties/characteristics common between the phenomena having mutual metaphoric associations[2] and at the same time demonstrating ability of establishing connections between non-identical and domain-specific qualities (Bowdle & Gentner, 2005, p. 193-214). Hence, the focus of metaphoric associations does not simply consist in the idea of properties shared between the phenomena at issue but the distinction of the properties which claim to be central and explicit and due to which the resultant metaphoric association gets established.

The mechanism of concept-construction is one of the most complex issues examined not only in the domain of language but also in human cognition. The notion of "concept" is defined in various approaches, and is basically described as a compositional component of thought (Gifford, 2016, p. 8). According to the representational theory, concepts are understood as mental representations underlying the process of thinking. Prototype theory treats concepts as phenomena defined and identified by their typical properties. Based on the approaches demonstrated above it can be inferred that concepts, functioning as immanent components of human thought play a vital role both in meaning construction and perception of information.

In the study of the multi-component structure of human perception G. Fauconnier and M. Turner's conceptual blending theory deserves particular attention. Due to the mentioned theory, the procedures involved in the highly complicated concept-apprehension process of human mind were first interpreted and illustrated (Fauconnier, & Turner, 2002, pp. 40-48). Accordingly, human perception is generally understood as an operation which involves application of apprehension-forming mental spaces and frames the integration and interaction of which leads to the ultimate concept-perception. The integration of mental spaces leads to the elaboration of generic and blended spaces with the help of which the dynamics of concept-perception is outlined. By means of mental spaces and integration-interaction, framing and reframing processes undergoing between them, human mind carries out concept and thought categorisation.

The process of translation of metaphors supposes understanding of the structure of concepts in the source language and their consistent representation into the target language. Given this, it is of primary importance for a translator to adequately perceive the essence of the source text items, such as metaphors, and then carry out the search for the most appropriate equivalent in the target language. The process of seeking for the right equivalent in the target language presupposes the translator's full grasp of both the source text and utter knowledge of the target language together with its national, socio-cultural constituents. In this connection the latter requirement is of particular importance for carrying out translation of literary works, which supposes the translator's specific ability to inventively transfer the original sense of the source text elements into the target text. Hence, it is of no surprise that often translation is viewed as recreating of the source text in the target language. In this regard, of particular importance is the hypothesis brought forward by S.

Gasparyan, according to whom literary translation is interpreted as a metaphoric displacement. As S. Gasparyan mentions, "a translator faces the problem of finding similar units which transfer the necessary shades of meaning in the original use of the word to the target language, particularly if the features specific to the national mentality are taken into consideration, and thus the translator has no other option than to be guided by the principle of metaphoric displacement, giving thought to the internal correlation between the peculiarities of the source and target language units" (Gasparyan, 2021, p. 37). With this in mind, it is once again demonstrated that translation and especially the one of literary works supposes execution of complex mental operations the ultimate goal of which consists in finding the genuine target-language equivalent appropriate at the levels of both general sense transmission and the representation of nation-, society- and culture-specific elements in the target language. In this regard the issue of metaphor translation still remains in the focus of attention.

Main observations and resultant findings of cognitive-conceptual method of interlingual translation of metaphor

Considering all the approaches mentioned above we face the fact that translation of metaphors in literary works is of vital importance as with the help of them the translator transfers all the emotional, national, socio-cultural and other extra- and intralinguistic specificities characteristic of the source-text. Consequently, it becomes imperative for a translator to have a particular strategy or methodology for accomplishing appropriate translation of metaphors in the target texts. With the regard of all the theories and approaches mentioned in the present article we suggest a linguo-cognitively oriented methodology for metaphor translation which supposes the following stages:

1. targetting and clear understanding of the profound sense of the metaphor in the source-text,
2. examination of the conceptual interaction/integration mechanisms of the meaning expressed by the metaphor at issue (exploration of the conceptual domains – source and target),
3. finding out the target-text equivalent for the source-text metaphor, focusing on the preservation of the functional and aesthetic equivalence between the target- and source-texts,

4. outlining and refining the translated metaphor-equivalent keeping in the focus the uttermost transmission of the aesthetic impact of the original source-text.

In order to test the efficiency of the abovementioned principles it is convenient to refer to works of literary fiction. In this regard the metaphors of some extracts from the novel *Martin Eden* by J. London and their corresponding translation into Armenian carried out by I. Barsamyan have been chosen to be examined in accordance with the principles listed above.

One of the examples of metaphor manifestations is illustrated in the following extract:

> *The wide rooms seemed too narrow for his **rolling gait**, and to himself he was in terror lest his broad shoulders should collide with the doorways or sweep the bric-a-brac from the low mantel.* (London, 1916, p. 1)

> *Թվում էր, թե հսկայական սենյակներն նեղվածք էին նրա **լայնաթափ քայլվածքի** համար. նա շարունակ վախենում էր ուսով դիպչել դռանը կամ որևէ առարկա ցած գցել բուխարուց:* (Լոնդոն, 2018, p. 5)

In the Armenian translation the component *"լայն"* of the compounded adjective *լայնաթափի* is added in the meaning of "expanded", "wide". In this particular perception of the translator, based on the principles of word-compatibility the manner of the character's walking is understood as *rolling* but at the same time paralleled with wide and free movements. From another perspective the word *gait* is interpreted not only as a person's manner of walking but also "a sequence of foot movements by which a dog or a horse move forward". Here we observe the ascription of the meaning of an animal's moving manner to a person. In such a way the picture of a little free and relaxed, nonchalant and careless at the same time wide, natural and sloppy walking is created. In this context we observe the transmission of concepts of "horse walk", "dog walk", "relaxed walking", "nonchalant walking", "the manner of making wide steps", etc. into the mental space of the translator's concept sphere as a result of the elaboration of the latter, and the following Armenian equivalent is discovered by the translator: *"լայնաթափի քայլվածք"*.

Here one-to-one correspondence of concepts functioning in the source- and target- mental spaces is found.

The concept of "walk" is also indicated in the following example:

> *"Hold on, Arthur, my boy," he said, attempting **to mask** his anxiety with facetious utterance.* (London, 1916, p. 2)

> *«Արթո՛ւր, բարեկամս, մի քիչ շունչ առնենք», - ասաց նա կատակի ձևով՝ փորձելով **վարագուրել** իր շփո-թությունը:* (Լոնդոն, 2018, p. 6)

In the given example the metaphor of "mask" referring to the concept of "hide" is presented, which is translated through the Armenian metaphor *վարագուրել* which in fact covers the concept of "թաքցնել". As can be inferred, the original concept of "hide" reflected in the metaphor of *mask* is not mirrored in the Armenian target text. Here a discrepancy is observed between the mental spaces of *mask* and *վարագուրել* (meaning to cover with a curtain). The perception of the Armenian translator differs from the one of the original writer, and in this way the subjectivity and non-regularity of mental perceptions of individuals come forward. The given example proves that for the translation of metaphors not only the exact trasmission of the conceptual connections existing between the metaphors and the concepts to which they refer functions but also the translator/interpretor's peculiar nation-culture specific, individual perception of the literary text does play a crucial role in transferring both the genuine authorial intention and the aesthetic impact enclosed in the work.

> *This is too much all at once for yours truly. Give me a chance **to get my nerve**. You know I didn't want to come, an' I guess your fam'ly ain't hankerin' to see me neither.* (London, 1916, p. 2)

> *Առաջին անգամվա համար չափազանց շատ է այս ամենը: Թույլ տվեք մի քիչ **սրտապնդվել**: Սիրտ դուք գիտեք, որ ես չէի ցանկանում գալ, իսկ ձերոնք էլ, բնակաբար, ինձ անհամբեր չեն սպասում:* (Լոնդոն, 2018, p. 6)

Trite metaphors *սրտապնդվել* and *get my nerve* are brought forward in the given example. The literal translation of the Armenian *սրտապնդվել* is "to make one's heart harden" whereas the original English metaphor *to get a nerve*, which is rephrased from the original expression "to have a nerve", means "to have audacity, to show effrontery". The corresponding metaphoric connections are reflected in Armenian as "to harden one's heart" meaning "to be courageous" and the English variant focusing on the metaphor *to get one's nerve*. In this special case the subjective perception component of national-cultural level comes to the fore. Consequently, the translation of metaphors is relied upon the phraseological equivalents which are clichéd in both the source and target languages.

> He **cursed** himself for having come, and at the same time resolved that, happen what would, having come, he would carry it through. **The lines of his face hardened,** and into his eyes came a **fighting light.** (London, 1916, p. 2)

> Նա կշտամբում էր իրեն այն բանի համար, որ եկավ այստեղ, բայց իսկույն ևեթ որոշեց՝ եկել է, ուրեմն պիտի տոկա մինչև վերջ: **Նրա դեմքը ստացավ խիստ արտահայտություն,** և աչքերի մեջ փայլատակեց **զայրալից մի հուր:** (Լոնդոն, 2018, p. 7)

In this context the phrase *fighting light* represents particular interest as it encapsulates a metaphoric meaning. By its nature the mentioned word sequence is an occasionalism, which means that its meaning is relevant only for the specific context of the extract mentioned above. The presence of the words and phrases such as *cursed, the lines of his face hardened* disclose the meaning of "irritation" underlying the phrase *fighting light*.

The Armenian equivalent of the abovementioned phrase under discussion is *զայրալից հուր*. A question arises: why is the original English variant *fighting* reflected in the Armenian translation through the equivalent *զայրալից* which means "irritated, furious"? The link between the original English *fighting* and the Armenian translation *զայրալից* (furious) is explained by the fact that the translator carried out an interpretative-hermeneutic analysis of this particular piece of text. As can be observed such words and phrases as *cursed, carry it*

through, *the lines of his face hardened* as well as *fighting light* drive a reader and comprehensibly translator to make inference about the emotional state of the main character which, after the generalization of the given phrases and words is approximated to "dissatisfaction with the situation, irritation". In this particular instance the translator has objected his interpretation to the principle of hermeneutic circle – from words and phrases to the generalization of the paragraph and backwards – which resulted in the bringing about the Armenian equivalent *զայրալից* for the English source *fighting*. Given this, it can be assumed that the translator, considering the overall perception of the character's emotional state expressed in the highlighted words and phrases in the abovementioned citation, discovered the appropriate Armenian equivalent *զայրալից*. Hence, the metaphor *fighting light* is translated into Armenian as *զայրալից հուր*.

> *His eyes were wide apart; nothing in their field of vision escaped; and as they **drank in** the **beauty** before them the fighting light died out and a **warm glow** took its place. He was **responsive to beauty**, and here was cause to respond.* (London, 1916, p. 2)

> *Նրա լայն բացված աչքերից ոչինչ չվրիպեց, և քանի նայում էր սիրուն առարկաներին, այնքան նրա աչքե-րի ցասկոտ հուրը հանգչում էր, և դրա փոխարեն **ջերմ փայլն** էր շողում. **գեղեցիկը միշտ ջերմ ընդունելություն էր գտնում նրա հոգում**, իսկ այստեղ հիացմունքի արժանի իրեր շատ կային:* (Լոնդոն, 2018, p. 7)

In this extract we observe that the metaphor *fighting light* in the course of the narration gets replaced with the phrase *warm glow* which is literally translated into Armenian *ջերմ փայլ*. Here we observe the way the author of the original text plays upon the idea of energy/feeling evoked within the character, and the coneptual metaphor "light/glow – emotion" is literally translated into Armenian *հուր/փայլ*. Hence, it can be inferred that the concepts "furious, fighting light" are interpreted as negative emotions of wrath and anger, which get softened and transformed into the entirely opposite emotions of "admiration, peace and warmth".

Conclusion

The investigation of the cognitive aspect of metaphors, their emergence in mind and their reflection in imaginative writing plays a crucial role in the process of interpretation of works of literature. From another perspective, cognitive-linguistic approach to metaphor structure and formation functions as a clue to the translator's understanding of the specificity of the author's imaginative and metaphorical thinking, the aim of the translator, which consists in the transfer of both the exact original aesthetic impact and genuine sense of the original text into the target text. The findings of the present investigation of metaphors expressed in a work of literature, namely, J. London's *Martin Eden* and their corresponding translation into Armenian carried out by I. Barsamyan demonstrate that for the effective translation of the metaphors found in the original text application of not only the competent knowledge of the source and target languages is required but also implementation of textual analysis, interpretation of metaphors in the context at issue and afterwards realisation of the search for the ultimate and felicitous equiavalents in the target language are considered as other essential procedures necessitated in the process of translation. The methodology of revealing the cognitive aspect of metaphor creation and translation demonstrated in the present article and relating to the spheres of cognitive linguistics, literary studies and translatology will be of use for linguists, literature interpretors, reviewers and translators.

Notes

1. According to G. Lakoff's theory on idealized cognitive models, four types of cognitive models are distinguished in language: frame models (predicative-argumentative relations), image-schemes, metaphors, metonymy (Lakoff, 1987, p. 68).
2. According to A. Ortony, metaphoric feature-matching is limited by salience imbalance. The properties which are essential, "salient" for the base concept rather than target concept are important for the meaning of the given metaphor. E.g. *Dew is a veil* implies the general notion of "covering" but not the common property "silent" because the first is of high salience for the base and of low salience for the target, whereas the second is of low salience for both items (Ortony, 1979, p. 180).

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ՓՈԽԱԲԵՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԷՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԵՎ ՄԻՋԼԵԶՎԱԿԱՆ ԹԱՐԳՄԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ

Նելլի Սարգսյան

Տվյալ հոդվածը միտված է ուսումնասիրելու փոխաբերության էու-թյունը, դրա հասկացությային բնագավառը և թարգմանությունը բնա-գրից թիրախ լեզու: Գեղարվեստական տեքստում փոխաբերություննե-րի յուրօրինակ արտահայտման եղանակները, հեղինակի կիրառած ձևերը միշտ գրավել են ոչ միայն գրական ստեղծագործությունների ու-սումնասիրությունններում ներգրավված բանասերների, այլև թարգմա-նիչների ուշադրությունը: Ունենալով բազմաշերտ իմաստային կառուց-վածք և լինելով առօրեական իրականության մեջ համասփյուռ՝ փոխա-բերությունները իրավամբ հատուկ նշանակություն ունեն ոչ միայն լեզ-վաբանության այլև հոգեբանության, փիլիսոփայության, ճանաչողաբա-նական գիտությունների, թարգմանաբանության և այլ գիտությունների ոլորտներում: Սույն հոդվածը նպատակաուղղված է բացահայտելու փոխաբերությունների՝ բնագրից թիրախ լեզու թարգմանության ճանա-չողական բնագավառը, ինչպես նաև սահմանելու փոխաբերությունների հնարավորինս համապատասխան թարգմանության համապատշաճ մեթոդաբանությունը:

Բանալի բառեր՝ *փոխաբերություն, ճանաչողություն, հասկացությ-նացում, հերմենեւտիկա, բնագիր, թիրախ լեզու, թարգմանություն:*