

PROCEDURES OF TRANSLATING LEXICAL AND SYNTACTICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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The present article seeks to outline the theoretical and practical framework of the procedures used in translating lexical and syntactical figures of speech in political discourses with the purpose of persuading the public opinion by means of emotionally colored words. The process of translating figures of speech deals with finding secondary meaning in the source language, and cultural meaning and appropriate equivalence in the target language. Thus, we aim at determining and applying the most adequate and efficient procedures the translator may resort to in the process of rendering vivid examples of stylistic devices from English into Romanian.

Keywords: *translation procedures, political discourse, lexical stylistic device, syntactical stylistic device.*

PROCEDEE DE TRADUCERE A FIGURILOR DE STIL DE NIVEL LEXICAL ȘI SINTACTIC ÎN DISCURSUL POLITIC

În articol sunt identificate și analizate procedeele de traducere în limba română a figurilor de stil selectate din discursurile personalităților politice britanice și americane. Astfel, încercăm să prezentăm într-o manieră explicită felul în care procedeele de traducere directe și indirecte, printre care traducerea literală, transpoziția, modularea și calchiera, afectează figurile de stil și influențează rezultatul traducerii acestora. În contextul discursului politic, care este o componentă esențială a comunicării în secolul actual, este important să stabilim rolul, funcția și impactul pe care îl au instrumentele retorice lexicale și sintactice asupra audienței și să observăm în ce măsură imaginea, sensul elementelor verbale în contextele concrete sunt transferate din textul sursă în cel țintă prin intermediul diferitelor tehnici de traducere.

Cuvinte-cheie: *procedee de traducere, discurs politic, figuri de stil de nivel sintactic și lexico-semantic, text sursă, text țintă.*

Political discourse is an essential component of the 21st century speech act and is regarded as one of the most spread, varied and spectacular form of communication. Political speeches express group ideologies and beliefs, especially in collective forms of text and talk. But many forms of political discourse are produced by individual speakers who resort to various linguistic tools in order to achieve particular discursive functions. In this respect, the use of different emotionally colored words and figures of speech represents a common and powerful means of producing the intended impact on the audience.

In the process of translating literary or non-literary texts, the translator deals with particular categories that allow him/her to examine the relations between the source text and the target text.

These categories are widely known as 'translation procedures' or 'translation techniques' and they are used for sentences and the smaller units of language. Translation procedures are discursive and contextual by nature; they affect both the micro-units of text and the result of translation.

Subsequently, for a better rendering of the message and for achieving and transmitting the desired impact on the target audience, it is important to choose appropriate and adequate translation procedures. In this respect, P. Newmark devoted an entire chapter to 'the translation of political language'. He characterizes political concepts as 'partly culture-bound, mainly value-laden, historically conditioned and [...] abstractions in spite of continuous efforts to concretize them' [3, p.149].

Since many linguists determined and studied techniques and strategies of translating political speeches, we made use of their theoretical background to assert the translation procedures used in different political discourses on the example of stylistic devices. Morneau, for instance, states five techniques for translating figures of speech present in political speeches: the stylistic devices are translated exactly, that is, word-for-word; re-phrasing one stylistic device as another one, let's say metaphor as simile; translating one figure of speech into its equivalent in the target language; translating a stylistic device using literal language; using a stylistic device but providing all the necessary referents so that any listener will understand it [2, p.176].

Analyzing British and American political discourses we found out that the most used lexical rhetorical tools are *metaphors*, *metonymies* and *epithets*. The speaker makes use of stylistic devices in the political speech with a certain purpose, aiming to highlight attitudes and opinions; to make them more vivid; to convey a clear

and understandable point to the audience; to arouse sympathy for a particular situation; to impress the listener or to make a more obvious train of thought to the audience.

Thus, the *word-for-word* or *literal* technique is used in translating the following example: "*The left continues to refer with relish to the death of capitalism.*" In this case, the metaphor from the source language was entirely preserved in the target language: "*Partidul de stînga continuă să se bucure de moartea capitalismului.*"

Another metaphor identified in Margaret Thatcher's discourse "*Inflation is the parent of unemployment. It is the unseen robber of those who have saved*" where the Prime Minister refers to the economic situation in a very explicit way is also *literally* translated into Romanian since it touches on elements of similarity and analogy that are maintained in the target language as well: "*Inflația este părintele șomajului. Aceasta este fîlharul nevăzut al celor care au avut economii.*" The role of this metaphor is to encapsulate the essence of the issue treated by the politician and consequently to transmit a clear message to the receiver.

Here is an example taken from David Cameron's discourse *Leadership for a better Britain* where the Prime Minister, in order to make an impact on the listener, resorts to means of persuasion via elements that correlate somehow from the semantic point of view: "*They called our economy the sick man of Europe.*" *Transposition* is the translation technique used to transfer the source language expression unit into Romanian: "*Ei au catalogat economia țării noastre drept omul bolnav al Europei.*"

Another case of *transposition* as a translation procedure is used in rendering the image of the following compound epithet into Romanian: "*In his warm-hearted and generous speech [...]*" – "*În discursul său cald și generos [...]*"

Calque is also often used in political discourses in the case of metaphors and epithets like in the following examples: "*Iron Curtain*" – „*Cortină de fier*”, "*Cold War*" – „*Război Rece*”, "*money-laundering*" – „*spălarea banilor*".

A widely used lexical stylistic device in the political discourse is metonymy. The example: "*The left [...]*" is translated using the procedure of *explicitation* that, according to J. P. Vinay and J. Darbelnet, resides in the process of introducing information into the target language which is present only implicitly in the source language: "*Partidul de stînga [...]*".

The procedure of *expansion* occurs when the translator tries to move from the implicit into the explicit used with the purpose of not misleading the reader and be more specific: "*Those ideals still light the world [...]*" – "*Acele idealuri luminează și acum calea omenirii [...]*".

When it comes to metaphors that have a persuasive effect on the audience, we can mention the following example: "*The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms.*" The most adequate technique to transfer the image and effect of this stylistic device is *modulation* as it has the purpose of generating a change in the point of view of the message without altering its meaning and without generating a sense of awkwardness in the reader of the target text: "*L-au rostit [jurământul] când valul prosperității era în creștere și apele calme ale păcii se așterneau la picioare. Când și când însă jurământul este rostit când norii stau amenințători deasupra capului și furtunile se dezlanțuie.*"

We have detected another instance of *modulation* in G. Bush's discourse: "*Not because history runs on the wheels of inevitability [...]*" Though in the process of translating this stylistic device, the emotional charge was somehow diminished, the effect of persuasion was preserved namely due to the change in point of view: "*Nu pentru că mersul istoriei ar fi inevitabil [...]*".

Changing the point of view of what is expressed in one language resorting to means of expressing the same phenomenon in the two languages in a different way is also obvious in the this example of metaphor: "*But we came back and turned this country into a beacon of enterprise.*" – "*Însă noi ne-am întors și am transformat această țară într-un simbol al prosperității.*"

All of the above mentioned techniques have some common points, as all include *substitution*, *paraphrase*, *conversion* or *deletion* which helps the translator to have knowledge of how to translate figures of speech and also how they are dealt with in translation.

In this respect, we mention an example of *paraphrase*, a translation procedure suggested by P. Newmark, we came across the political discourses we analyzed: "*I joined this party because I love my country. I love our character. I love our people, our history, our role in the world.*" The translated version presupposes the following paraphrase: "*M-am alăturat acestui partid pentru că îmi iubesc țara. Iubesc firea poporului nostru. Iubesc oamenii noștri, istoria noastră, rolul pe care-l avem în lume.*"

M.Larson suggests some other techniques to translate figures of speech and namely: the figure of speech may be kept if the receptor language permits; a figure of speech may be translated resorting to another figure of speech; a stylistic device of the receptor language which has the same meaning may be substituted; the figure of speech may be kept and the meaning explained; and the last technique when the meaning of the stylistic device may be translated without keeping the figurative imagery [Ibid].

As it was mentioned above, stylistic devices may be translated without keeping the figurative imagery as in the following example of epithet "*we [...] emerged from that dark chapter [...]*". It is a good example for the case when the meaning of the stylistic device may be translated without keeping the figurative imagery. Thus, the Romanian target language will be rather neutral and vague from the emotional point of view "*am ieșit din acele vremuri [...]*".

Referring to the syntactical stylistic devices analyzed in this article and namely *repetition*, *enumeration* and *antithesis*, we may say that they represent widespread stylistic devices in the English political language, being preserved in the translated version and rendering the same desired effect intended by the speaker.

The following repetition: "*Time and again [...]*" is substituted for a negation into Romanian "*Nu o dată [...]*". Thus, the technique used in the target language is the *antonymic translation* which renders the same meaning as in the source language but has an opposite effect on the audience.

Another translation technique worth to be point out in the translation of political discourses is *omission*. It is obvious in translating this epithet: "*It is time [...] to lighten our punitive tax burden.*" – "*Este momentul [...] să ușurăm povara fiscală.*"

Here is an example of synonymic repetition in David Cameron's speech where the politician resorts to the syntactical stylistic device in order to emphasize a very long period of time: "*For years, politicians have been talking about this problem. Time after time, they've come up with the same diagnosis.*" The same rhetorical tool and its repetitive connotation is preserved in the Romanian translation by means of an indirect procedure - *equivalence*: "*Ani la rând politicienii au discutat această problemă. În repetate rânduri ei au constatat același diagnostic.*"

Enumeration is another syntactical figure of speech that has the main function of highlighting ideas. In order to underline its emphatic effect, the speaker chooses to interrelate it with the repetition of the word "interest": "*That is in Israel's interest, Palestine's interest, America's interest, and the world's interest.*" It is *transposition* that the translator uses in rendering the message from one language into another one: "*Aceasta este în interesul Israelului, în interesul Palestinei, în interesul Americii și în interesul lumii.*"

The next quote which appears as a syntactical stylistic device was identified in Margaret Thatcher's discourse and reveals the speaker's state of mind: "*If ever a nation has spent, spent, spent and spent again, ours has.*" The same rhetorical effect rendered by the repetition is felt in the target text of the Romanian version where *transposition*, i.e. change of the grammatical structure appears to be the choice of the translator: "*Dacă a existat vreodată o națiune care să cheltuie, să cheltuie, să cheltuie și iar să cheltuie, să știți că a noastră a fost aceea.*"

The following antithesis is a vivid example of *literal translation* in Barack Obama's speech: "*That does not mean we should ignore [...]. Indeed, it suggests the opposite: we must face [...].*" The politician is firm and insistent in his declaration and consequently, the effect of the translation is exactly the same: "*Asta nu înseamnă că ar trebui să ignorăm [...]. Într-adevăr, asta sugerează exact opusul: trebuie să facem față [...].*"

In the result of the analysis of political discourses we concluded that the most commonly used translation techniques in the process of rendering examples of stylistic devices from English into Romanian are *word-for-word translation*, *transposition*, *modulation*, *calques*.

In conclusion, we may say that the process of translating stylistic devices in the context of political speeches deals with finding appropriate equivalence in the target language with the use of adequate translation procedures so that the message is accurate, the intention of the speaker and the intended effect on the audience is not altered and the quality of the translation is not diminished. Since it is not very easy to accomplish this task, figures of speech are considered to pose some of the most challenging translation difficulties. Usually, these difficulties people face in the process of translating stylistic devices reside in the informational background provided by the political discourse and namely the intended discourse function, the addresses, that is, speaker and audience of the discourse; the time and the place of discourse reception; the speech medium; the motive of the speaker to deliver his discourse and the reason it was translated.

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