

THE RUSSIAN FOLK TALES REALITIES AS AN IMPORTANT TRANSLATOLOGICAL PROBLEM

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The subject is a Russian folk tale. The article provides an analysis of its features and place in the culture of the people; examine of realities and approaches to their translation, as well as the difficulties with this. The analysis of various versions of the translation of realities is carried out on the examples of two famous Russian folk tales. Our survey shows the most frequently used translation shifts and their weaknesses.

Key words: gender; gender neutralization; socio-political text; euphemisms; gender markedness; political correctness.

Introduction. Nowadays the folk tale is of interest to many sciences. It becomes the subject of study of such sections of linguistics as the linguistic folkloristics, linguoculturology, ethnolinguistics, cognitive linguistics.

The language of the Russian folk tale is unique. Like other genres of folklore, the tale represents the ideas of the Russian people about the main life values: work, family, love, public duty, homeland. I would like to give an idea of the tale of the researcher E. V. Pomerantseva: “A folk tale is an epic oral artwork, mainly prosaic, magical, adventurous or lifestyle identity aimed at a fiction. The last feature distinguishes the fairy tale from other genres of oral prose: from the stories presented by the storyteller to the audience as a narration of events that really took place, however fantastic they were” [1, p. 36]. We can't talk about a folk tale without mentioning the concept of a linguistic and national picture of the world. Languages give us different ways to perceive reality. Features of individual language pictures are encoded in the dictionary and grammar of the language. That is why there is non-equivalent vocabulary in every language, which like “takes pictures” of the objective world. These are expressive vocabulary, metaphors, phraseological units, names and realities. Realities are “units of the national language denoting unique referents specific to a given linguistic culture and absent in a comparable linguistic and cultural community” [2, p. 25]. The mythological characters of the people can also be attributed to realities, although often we can confuse them with proper names (*Дед Мороз, Баба Яга, Жар-птица*).

The translating realities process is ambiguous, because in the source text these ethnic components are not explained by the author and exist as something natural and taken for granted. In translation studies, realities are traditionally classified as untranslatable or difficult to translate. The translation of

realities into another linguocultural environment requires the translator, on the one hand, to have a deep knowledge of the original linguoculture, and, on the other hand, professional skill in choosing the means of expression in the target language.

The equivalence problem is one of the key problems of linguistics. Especially a lot of difficulties arise regarding the non-equivalent vocabulary, and in particular the realities. Their transmission includes not only the transmission of conceptual content, the forms of realities, but also national and historical peculiarities. Unfortunately, there is no “perfect recipe” for translating realities. There are two approaches to translating realities. One approach says that realities should be translated so that the recipient reads the work as close to his culture. The second approach comes down to immerse the recipient in the culture of the source language.

Materials and techniques. We examined two Russian folk fairy tales – the fairy tale “The Frog Princess” and the tale “Maria Morevna”, as well as three versions of their translation into English. We chose these tales because they are some of the most famous and widely read, and we meet the realities characteristic of many Russian folk tales. The analysis of translations was complicated by the fact that, as part of folklore, Russian versions of fairy tales vary from source to source. Nevertheless, a majority of realities still remain unchanged. In the fairy tale “The Frog Princess” we examined the translation of such realities as *Василиса Премудрая*, *Баба Яга*, *Кощей Бессмертный*.

In the analyzed material, we distinguished the following realities translation shifts, as well as their combinations: 1) translation transformations (bypassing, additions), 2) selection of translation matches, 3) calquing, 4) transcription (transliteration).

Results and discussion. Let’s examine the realities and their translations in the tale “The Frog Princess”.

Table 1

Variations in translations for the reality *Василиса Премудрая*

Realia	Variation in translation 1 [4]	Variation in translation 2 [5]	Variation in translation 3 [6]
Василиса Премудрая	‘beautiful maiden’	‘the wise Princess Vassilisa’	‘Vasilisa the Wise’

As can be seen from table 1, in the first version of the translation, the character’s name is missed, thereby the national color is partially lost. In the second and third versions of the translation, the transcription method and the equivalent translation of a significant part of the name are combined, it allows

to convey to a recipient the character's nature, retaining information about her main qualities.

The next reality is the character of *Баба Яга*, characteristic of many Russian fairy tales (table 2).

Table 2

Variations in translations for the reality *Баба Яга*

Realia	Variation in translation 1 [4]	Variation in translation 2 [5]	Variation in translation 3 [6]
Баба Яга	'Old woman; Grannie'	'Baba Yaga'	'Baba-Yaga'

The translation of the first source is incomplete and unequal, because neither the national specificity nor the character of the hero are conveyed. The translation 'Old woman' is a generalization, at the same time meaning is lost, connotation is completely lost. The second and third variations in translation include a transcription method typical for the translation of proper names. You can also consider this reality in the second presented tale "Maria Morevna" (table 3).

Table 3

Variations in translations for the reality *Баба Яга* (2)

Realia	Variation in translation 1 [7]	Variation in translation 2 [8]	Variation in translation 3 [9]
Баба Яга	'Baba Yaga'	'a witch Baba Yaga'	'the old Baba Yaga'

The second translation using transcription and description seems to me better, because it retains the function of a hero preserving the specifics of the Russian folk tale. 'Baba-Yaga' is a character of Slavic mythology and folklore (especially a fairy tale) of Slavic peoples, an old sorceress endowed with magical powers, a witch, a werewolf. Most often a negative character. At the same time, the malice and aggressiveness of Baba Yaga are not her dominant character traits, but only manifestations of her irrational, non-deterministic nature [3]. Only after reading many Russian fairy tales, where this image appears, you can make an impression of it. Based on this, even the translation 'a witch Baba Yaga' can be considered close, but not entirely accurate.

Another character that is often found in Russian fairy tales is *Кощей Бессмертный*. Let's examine the translation of this reality in the tale "The Frog Princess" (table 4).

Table 4

Variations in translations for the reality *Кошей Бессмертный*

Realia	Variation in translation 1 [4]	Variation in translation 2 [5]	Variation in translation 3 [6]
Кошей Бессмертный	'Koschei the Deathless'	'Kashchey the Deathless'	'the Wizard; Koshchei'

In the first and second versions of the translation, as well as in the case of *Vasilisa*, transcription was used as a method characteristic of proper names. Moreover, thanks to the equivalent translation of the word *Бессмертный*, Koshchei's important characteristic is not lost. The differences in the transcription of the name can be explained by the fact that, being an object of oral folklore, the tale was recorded in writing by different authors, and the spelling of the word 'Koschey' also has variations in Russian. I consider the translation 'the Wizard' in the third source to be too generalized and not exactly reflecting this image, as is the case with 'Baba Yaga'.

Conclusion. It should be noted that the untranslatable elements of the language, namely, non-equivalent vocabulary, and in particular realities, reflect the culture of the language, customs and character of the people, so that is why their transfer to another language still remains one of the most difficult and controversial tasks of the translator.

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