ABSTRACT

Subject matter for research: Culture specific language units in O’Henry’s “Selected Stories” and techniques of their translation into Russian.

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Research relevance. It is common knowledge that translating fiction suggests translating problems of its own and involves special translation techniques the choice of which still remains one of the eternal most difficult tasks for a translator. All attempts to give a good translation of any literary work come up against the obvious fact that the literary functions of words do not coincide in the source and target languages because of their quite different associative force in both languages, especially when it concerns the translation of different culture specific language items, that have no direct counterparts in the target language. In this cast either a translator has to create forms that could retain as much as possible of their source features or he has to create some particular manner of presenting them in a target text. Despite the fact that there are many work devoted to the problem render analyses in linguistics and the theory of translation, some general ideas about basic principles of translating units with implications quite unconnected with the normal meanings of the words themselves, especially those words the meaning of which implies the facts pertaining to the national life and culture of a foreign country appear to be more or less subjective, more over. Such language units not only suggest translation problems but they also require special translation techniques of a linguist to achieve a close relationship between the source and the target texts. In view of all this the matter under review should be subjected to a more detailed linguistic analysis in order to identify the linguistic status, place and role of the given language units in the stylistic system of
the English language and to define what translation techniques are necessary to convey their meaning in another language.

**Aims.** The aim of the work is to define the functioning of different types of culture specific language units in O. Henry’s “Selected Stories”, their linguistic status in language and to study and choose the appropriate techniques of their translation into Russian deciding at the same time what needs to be retained in translation and what has to be omitted or transformed in it.

**Tasks:**
1. To reveal the secret of O. Henry fame as one of the best known writers in America and outside it in the late 19th and early 20th century.
2. To show that stylistic peculiarities used in O. Henry’s short stories are a clear indication of the writer’s dependence on a 19th century literary movement in English literature, the main idea of which was the rejection of Natural Art which was opposed to what was considered to be good taste and ideal principles in life.
3. To select culturally charged language units in O. Henry’s short stories and identify those which may present a translation problem of a certain linguistic status.
4. To identify the difference in the meaning of the two notions: “a culture specific language unit” (word, phrase, concept) and “a term” in view of their basic characteristics and functions at all linguistic levels in language.
5. To analyse different types of classification of given language units as they are treated by Russian and foreign scholars and to define the ones which play a meaningful role in selecting those culture specific language units which brand themselves as the reflection of national identity of American culture and are subject to a detailed investigation and translation in the work.
6. To analyse different types of such culture specific items as words, phrases or concepts of measurement, money, household goods (products, etc., alongside with other language units, namely, deviations from the literary words, foreign inclusions, phraseological units, slangisms, proper names (toponyms, anthroponyms), etc., and to define appropriate techniques of their translation into Russian.
7. To study those language items which do not coincide with the target culture traditions in order to create forms that retain as much as possible of the source features.

8. To point out the techniques used to convey of irony, humour and other stylistic peculiarities in the source text and choose their Russian counterparts.

9. Pick up those language units in the source text that requires the translator’s comments or references.

10. To analyse the peculiarities of O. Henry’s two short stories translation “The Ransom of Red Chief” and “Gift the Magi” done by Russian translators N. Daruzes in 1983, J. Kashkin in 2003 and I. Gurovoi in 1996, E. Kalashkinoi in 1993, accordingly, to assess the extent to which their abilities to preserve the unerring faithfulness of the target text to the source text may be good and to see what basic translation methods they have used in their choice of the target language substitutes for their counterparts in the source text.

Scientific novelty. The novelty of the work can be defined by making an attempt to present a more serious approach to the study of culture specific language items (words, phrases or concepts) so widely used by writers in their literary works and long debated by scholars in linguistics. Although the types of knowledge of the problem under consideration are not significantly different in linguistics and theory of translation they still remain critical within the framework of a number of issues concerning their functioning in language as cultural units and the use of methods of their translation into a target language. The given phenomenon in the work is analysed as an attempt at trying to solve some of disputed issues on the problem posed to linguists ad translators through studying it as the necessary component of O. Henry’s short stories and as the one which requires basic translation techniques to make the target text stay true to the source one.

Theoretical and practical value of the research. From the theoretical point of view the work is characterized by: 1) the incorporation into the analysis of culturally charged language items some mild criticism, of scholars’ arguable ideas about some discrepancies in their classifications in relation to other levels of linguistic structure; 2) the identification of their language status, role and usage;
3) the choice of the translator’s preferences and appropriate translation techniques used by him in his translation practices.

The practical value of the research is characterized by the fact that the results of investigation can be applied in university lectures and seminars on stylistics, lexicology, spoken English, in professional and cross-cultural communication in future.

**Results of the research.** A detailed analyses of the use of culture specific units in O. Henry’s stories and their translation into Russian has shown that their treatment in their work will help linguists and translators to define what existing drawbacks in dealing with the problem have been avoided, what has remained still controversial or unclear about it and what requires careful thought and further investigation. The choice of appropriate techniques for translating culture specific language units of a foreign language plays an important role in a better understanding and reflection of the cultural identity of another country, its people and traditions and will contribute to further development of linguocultural studies.