Subject matter: Preserving Comic Effect while Translating Literary Text (based on Mikhail Bulgakov’s novel “Master and Margarita”).

Author: Maya V. Gabuyeva, 5th year student, Institute of Translatology and Multilanguage Studies.

Supervisor of the project: A.F. Artyomova, Professor of the Chair of Theory and Practice of Translation and Interpretation.

ABSTRACT

Translating humor is of great challenge for literary translators. The translation of humor is a difficult endeavor, not least because of the close links between humor and identity and between humor and culture. Translating humor is difficult partly because being able to appreciate humor does not mean that one is able to create that same effect. What makes humor translation a challenge is the linguistic features as well as cultural concepts bound with humor. This research is devoted to the analysis of the challenges faced by linguists and translators in the process of transferring humor and comic elements of the source text. The purpose of the research is to determine the best translation strategies for the preservation of the original humor and the comic effects of the source text (which, in the given case, is M. Bulgakov’s “The Master and Margarita”). The given research shows that Cliché, Idiomatic expressions and Puns are the most challenging and complex elements of the text to translate. They rarely have direct equivalents in another language and require the knowledge of certain extra-linguistic facts about culture, therefore they cannot be completely understood from the meanings of their individual components. Examples have been selected to show different translation techniques and approaches to preserve the pragmatic/comic effects in terms of their suitability as translation solutions and to ensure the comprehensibility of the target text. The analysis of the corpus has revealed that 60 per cent of the comic elements is retained in the target text and about 40 per cent is omitted. The study has showed that it is possible to transmit the source text into the target language although not always in the form of wordplay or cliché.

Thus, reproduction of the humor of the source text is the most complex and problematic task for translators.