



Gaps in the Lexical System of different-type Languages

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ABSTRACT

The article considers one of the ways to fill lexical gaps - hyper-hyponymic and hypo-hyperonimic relations in the lexical system of English and Russian – comparing different translations of works by D.K. Jerome.

When comparing different languages, it is always possible to single out something common, universal and peculiar, specific. The relevance of this work is determined by the importance of interlingual and intercultural research to identify similarities and differences. Largely, the differences between lexical systems are observed when we compare the ways of referring to the same phenomena, objects and characteristics. Different degrees of mismatch in the methods of nomination or lack thereof in one of the compared languages is called lacunarity.

As a result of the comparison of translations with the original, cases of translation transformation have been revealed, which clearly demonstrate differences in the methods of nomination in the languages being compared. The paper demonstrates that lexical gaps translation models reflect the narrowing or expansion of the semantic field of the prototype in the source.

Keywords: lexical gap, hyponym, hypernom, vector gap, language.



1. INTRODUCTION

In the last decade there has been an increased interest in the study of languages in a comparative aspect, especially in terms of revealing their allomorphy and isomorphism (Ageyeva et al, 2007). Each language is unique, and each nation sees and describes the world around them in their own way, which is the cause of the gaps. Lexical gap is the absence of a word or concept in one language, if it exists in another language. There are also the following synonyms of this term: background information (V.S. Vinogradov, E.M. Vereshchagin, V.G. Kostomarov), weak equivalents (M.K. Golovanivskaya, N.V. Gabdreeva), barbarianisms and exotisms (A.V. Kalinin, D.N. Shmelev, F.K. Guzhva), equivalent vocabulary, words realia (N.K. Garbovsky, A.V. Fedorov, I.S. Alekseeva). In foreign studies, there are such terms as "random holes in patterns" (Jerome Jerome, 2010, p. 114-115), "gaps" (Jerome Jerome, 1889). Lexical gaps, as is known, do not exist in a pure form, most often they are revealed in a comparative study of languages.

2. METHODS

The material for the study are different translations in their comparison with the original text (Garbovskiy, 2004). The importance of translated literature in this work cannot be overestimated. "Establishing the perception of a foreign word, the evolution of this perception is perhaps the most important, which the translations help to determine" (Hale, 1975, p. 29). We chose to compare different time translations of the novel of the English writer Jerome K. Jerome "Three men in a boat (to say nothing of the dog)." The story was published in 1889 and was translated into many languages, including Russian. According to various sources, the novel was translated into Russian by N. Zharintsova, M. Engelhardt, E. Tikhomandritskaya, E. Kudasheva, D'andre, M. Salie, and M. Donskoy (I-X chapters) and E. Linetskaya (XI-XIX chapters) and others.

3. RESULTS

As a result of the comparative analysis of the original and the translation we identified lexical gaps, and also the methods of their transfer to Russian (Murav'yev, 1980). In this



article, we consider hyper-hyponymic relations in the lexical system of English and Russian languages based on the comparison of different translations and consider how these relationships are revealed when comparing translations performed by different translators and at different times.

When comparing lexical meanings in two languages, it turns out that they do not always coincide in volume or in structure. Concepts that have a lexical expression in one language turn out to be wider than the corresponding concepts of another language: they are generic with respect to the specific concepts of another language. For example, the Russian word "*chasy*" is for the English language a generic gap, since in English there is no single word denoting "*watch*" and "*clock*." In English there are two lexemes corresponding to the word "*chasy*": *clock* instrument (not carried or worn like a watch) for measuring and showing the time (16, p. 105), *watch* instrument for telling the time that can be carried in the pocket or worn on the wrist (Marsheva,2016, 731).

V.L. Muravyov compares such gaps with vector quantities, since they are revealed only when comparing two languages and are different in orientation, that is they are gaps for one of the compared languages. B. Kharitonova and A. Sternin call them hyperonemic-hyponymic gaps (LingvoUniversal (En-Ru) (k versii ABBYY Lingvo x5) Anglo-russkiy slovar' obshchey leksiki, © ABBYY, 2011, Jerome Jerome , 1889). L.S. Barkhudarov also qualifies this type of gaps as generic-specific (Dzherom,1957).

According to V.L. Muravyov, a direct linguistic proof that there are linguistic vector gaps is the absence of a word with broad generic semantics in one of the languages, and the presence of several special terms corresponding to the conceptually broader generic word of another language. (Popova,1984, p. 21).

So, for example, the English word *brother-in-law* is a generic gap for the Russian language. In Russian there is no one common word, including the words which would mean *wife's brother*, *sister's husband* and so on that is *shurin*, *zyat'*, *svoyak*, *dever'*. At the same time, these words can be translated into English in a descriptive way.

Brother-in-law – *shurin*, *zyat'*, *svoyak*, *dever'*.



Let's consider some examples:

"I remember my *brother-in-law* going for a short sea trip once, for the benefit of his health" (Kharitonova,1987, p. 10) – «Ya vspominayu, kak moy *shurin* predprinyal odnazhdy nebol'shoye morskoye puteshestviye dlya ukrepleniya zdorov'ya» (5, p. 28), «Pomnyu, moy *zyat'* odnazhdy predprinyal korotkoye puteshestviye po moryu dlya popravleniya zdorov'ya» (Dzherom,1959, p. 35).

In the examples above there are two variants of the translation of this English word. After all, the text does not indicate whether it is a *wife's brother* or *sister's husband*. In the dictionary, in addition to the two meanings mentioned, there are two more: *svoyak* and *dever'* (Murav'yev,1975). Family ties in Russia have always played a big role, and this has affected the vocabulary of the Russian language. What in one language can be expressed by a generic undifferentiated concept, in the other can only be expressed in a differentiated way.

Strawberry – klubnika, zemlyanika. "He did not feel so hungry, he thought he should, and so contented himself with a bit of boiled beef, and some *strawberries* and cream" (Hornby,1983; Hocket,1954) – "Moy priyatel' progolodalsya men'she, chem ozhidal, i ogranichilsya kuskom varenogo myasa i zemlyanikoy so slivkami" (Fedorov,2002,p 29).

And one more example from the original – "You can not tell whether you are eating apple-pie or German sausage, or *strawberries* and *cream*" (Hornby,1983, p26) – "Vy ne mozhetе skazat' v tochnosti, yedite vy yablochnyy pirog, ili sosiski s kapustoy, ili klubniku so slivkami" (Dzherom Dzherom,1911,p 51). As can be seen from the examples, in one case the translator used the word *zemlyanika*, in the other – *klubnika*.

In these examples, English words have broader (undifferentiated) meanings than Russian words. Let us consider the cases of inverse relations.

Palets – finger, thumb, toe.

To the Russian hyperonym "*palets*" correspond several words "*finger*", "*thumb*" and "*toe*". There is also the word "*digit*" in the English language, but this word is used only in the language of scientific literature. Let us consider the following examples:



“And, when half an hour had been spent in tying up his *finger*, and a new glass had been got, and the tools ...” (13, c. 32) – “No vot cherez kakikh-nibud' polchasa perevyazan *palets*, dobyto novoye steklo, prineseny instrumenty ...” (Dzherom Dzherom,1911, c. 42).

Let us consider one more example: "And, with the first blow, he would smash his *thumb*, and drop the hammer, with a yell, on somebody's *toes*" (13, p. 34). – " I pervym udarom on rasshibayet sebe *bol'shoy palets* i s voplem ronyayet molotok komu-to na *nogu*" (Dzherom Dzherom,1911, p. 44). "Pervym zhe udarom on popadayet sebe po *bol'shomu pal'tsu* i s voplem ronyayet molotok pryamo komu-to na *nogu*" (Dzherom Dzherom,1959, p. 54).

So, in the examples above there are the words *finger*, *thumb* and *toe*. The first two are translated as *palets* and *bol'shoy palets*, respectively, although the last clarification is not necessary for the Russian reader. The word *toes* is translated into Russian as *noga*, that is, it was necessary to resort to hyperonymic transformation (the volume of one concept is completely absorbed by the volume of the other) (Garbovskiy,2004), since the phrase "the hammer fell on *toes*" sounds unusual for the Russian reader. Translators were to generalize the specific concept of "*toe*" because of the asymmetry of lexico-semantic systems, because the use in this particular case of such a narrow in meaning word in the Russian language is hardly possible.

Leg, foot – noga.

Let us turn to the information presented in the dictionaries: leg – *noga* (from the hip to the foot), foot – *stupnya* (Collins Cobuild,2008). "Your feet are the parts of your body that are at the ends of your legs, and that you stand on" (Collins Cobuild,2008).

In all cases, when the words *leg* and *foot* were used, the translators used the word "*noga*", not finding it necessary to specify what part of the body was mentioned in the original.

Let us consider the examples: "At the end of the five-and-thirty minutes," Harris said, "Ah!" And took his left *leg* out from under him and put his right one there instead" (14,



78). "Po istecheniyu etogo vremeni Garris skazal: «Aga!», I vynul levuyu *nogu* i podognul pod sebya pravuyu" (Dzherom Dzherom ,1959,p. 101).

«And Harris, instead of merely observing, in his most unpleasant tones, that a fellow could hardly help treading on some bit of George's *foot*, if he had to move about at all within ten yards of where George was sitting, suggesting that George never ought to come into an ordinary sized boat with *feet* that length, and advising him to hang them over the side, as he would have done before supper, now said ...» (Jerome Jerome,2010, c. 79). – «A Garris, vmesto togo chtoby krayne nelyubeznym tonom sdelat' zamechaniye, chto trudno ne nastupit' Dzhordzhu na *nogi*, nakhodyas' vsego v desyati yardakh ot nego; Vmesto togo chtoby posovetovat' cheloveku s *nogami* takoi dliny nikogda ne vlezat' v lodku obychnykh razmerov; Vmesto togo chtoby predlozhit' Dzhordzhu razvesit' svoi *nogi* po oboim bortam, - vmesto etogo on prosto skazal ...» (Dzherom Dzherom,1911 c. 132).

In the English text there are two words *leg* and *foot* in Russian translations, they correspond to one word *noga*. When translating the same text into English, two different words would have to be used. Lynn Visson writes: "The English *leg* is the part of the body from the hip to the ankle, and *foot* includes the *ankle*, the *ball of the foot* and the *sole*" (Visson,2007, p. 161).

In Russian there are words denoting any organ or part of the body as a whole, in the English language there are special names for parts of this whole, but there is no general word which means the organ as a whole. In this case, what can be expressed in the Russian language as a generic undifferentiated concept can be expressed in English only in a differentiated way.

4. DISCUSSION

Each language is unique, and each nation sees and describes the world around them in their own way, which is the cause of the gaps. Lexical gap is the absence of a word or concept in one language, if it exists in another language. There are also the following synonyms of this term: background information (V.S. Vinogradov, E.M. Vereshchagin, V.G. Kostomarov), weak equivalents (M.K. Golovanivskaya, N.V. Gabdreeva,2001),



barbarianisms and exotisms (A.V. Kalinin, D.N. Shmelev, F.K. Guzhva), equivalent vocabulary, words realia (N.K. Garbovsky, A.V. Fedorov, I.S. Alekseeva). In foreign studies, there are such terms as "random holes in patterns" (Hockett, 1954, p. 114-115), "gaps" (Hale, 1975). V.L. Muravyov compares such gaps with vector quantities, since they are revealed only when comparing two languages and are different in orientation, that is they are gaps for one of the compared languages. L.S. Barkhudarov (1975) also qualifies this type of gaps as generic-specific (2). B. Kharitonova and A. Sternin call them hyperonymic-hyponymic gaps (Hornby, 1983, Kharitonova, 1987, Hale, 1975).

5. SUMMARY

As Fedorov observes: "Unlike scientific and socio-political terms, the possibility of translation of which can be expanded over time, words that denote the most common objects and have only an incomplete dictionary correspondence in another language no longer find, as a rule, new means of transmission" (Gabdreeva et al, 2017, p. 109). When comparing translations made at different times and by different translators, we found that to translate the meaning of the English hyperonym, which is a gap for the Russian language, translators choose one of the Russian hyponyms (*brother-in-law – shurin, zyat', svoyak, dever'*). In the case of the Russian translation of English hyponyms, the translators used the Russian hyperonym (*leg, foot – noga*), which is a gap for the English language. Muravyov writes about the different significance of objects, concepts, things or phenomena in two civilizations, and in this connection a generic, undifferentiated notion (of less importance) is created in one of the civilizations, in another language "shades, details of a given general concept, the possibility of the formation of several special concepts are important" (Murav'yev, 1975, p. 21). Moreover, it should be noted that in the examples of translating hyponyms or hyperonyms into Russian, the methods of transferring them have not changed.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it may be noted that, due to the commonness of the processes of thinking and differences in life experience, different similar language cultures have similarities



and differences that manifest themselves in languages in specific way for each specific language environment.

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