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Functional Aspects of Terms' Translation

The topicality of studying the methods and problems of translation of terms is caused by expansion of cooperation between foreign companies, and the increasing amount of communication in the professional fields. The necessary condition for cross-language communication is the equivalence of terms that constitute the business information in the special texts. The questions about the specific character of terms and the ways of translating them always took special place in comparative linguistics. It was studied by V. Komissarov, A.A. Reformatskiy, M. Glushko and other linguists. It is the object of intense attention of the modern scientists. Many scientific works are dedicated to this problem that emphasizes the importance of the considered question and complexity of its solution. If the task of translation is to provide equivalency as generality of the context of the original texts, all the more, translation of specific (technical, financial, economical) terms needs special attention, because they determine information context of the specific text, they are the peculiar clues that organize, structure and code the special information. Therefore, there is a question about the possibility of achieving equivalence with the existence of differences in code units.

Terminology is an applied branch of language studies which explores specific vocabulary in its modern state and historical development. Specialists who study the terms are interested in formation of terms, their function, standardization and translation from one language into another, their correct usage. And in this field of linguistics we can observe the clash of professionals-specialists' interests. A great contribution was made by A.A. Reformatski, G.O. Vinokur, F.P. Filin, O.N. Trubachev, M.M. Glushko and others.

Some linguists define terms as mono-semantic words without expressiveness. Others state that a term is a word or word-combination for expression of notions and definitions of subjects which possesses clear semantic limits due to the presence of strict and exact definitions and they are mono-semantic in the scope of the appropriate classified system.

The main requirement of the term is its unambiguity. This requirement is realized by two ways, as there are two categories of terms: general scientific terms and specific (nomenclatural) terms. General scientific terms express general notions of science and technology, and specific terms express specific notions. Terms exist not only in the language but they are in the definite terminology. Terminology as a system of scientific terms is a subsystem in general lexical system of the language. If in general language a word can be poly-semantic, but in the definite terminology it acquires unambiguity. The specificity of terms as a special lexical type of words is in that fact that they are created in the process of production and scientific activity and that is why they function only in the sphere of the specialists who own the appropriate scientific and production equivalents, i.e. macro-context. Therefore, as opposed to ordinary words, terms are regulated by extra linguistic macro-context or linguistic micro-context. A term doesn't need a context as an ordinary word, as it is a member of the definite terminology and can be used isolated, e.g. in the text of registers or orders in technique, that is why it must be mono-semantic in the scope of the definite terminology.

Terms manifest the same properties as other words in the limits of the lexical system of the language. One term can have one translation in machine building, and in radio engineering it can have another. For example, the term "valve" which can be translated into Russian for machine-building as «клапан», it is one meaning, but in radio engineering «электронная лампа», it is another meaning, in hydraulics «затвор», the third meaning.

One and the same term can belong to multiple terms of the language, which are terminological inter-scientific homonyms, such as “reduction” in economics, it is one term, in law – another. In the scope of lexical system of the language terms manifest the same properties that do other words. Fixed terminological word-combinations are easily translated than complex ones, as all their components are organized grammatically that makes it easy to reveal semantic relations between them. Practically all linguists agree with the fact that “absolute identity” of codes contradicts to the nature of the language. Ability of the absolutely overwhelming and exact translation of the original context in translation of financial and economic texts is limited, first of all because of the difference of the language systems, difference of traditions of notion nominations which exist in every language and also the difference of phenomena of the reality.

Translators should bear in mind that translating terms it is necessary to solve the following tasks, first of all, to get an idea about the peculiarities of terms, to define the place of terminology in the language system, to define the peculiar features of terminology. Secondly, to analyze the main methods of terms’ translation and reveal the difficulties which appear in the process of terms’ translation, classify the difficulties of the terms’ translation and to form the methods which can solve these problems effectively. Methods of comparison and opposition of notions and also selection method are used in defining of terminological equivalence, as the term definition does not always allow getting a full idea about the meaning of the term; in this case the analysis of narrow and wide context is needed.

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