

THE PROBLEM OF TRANSLATING REALIA

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ABSTRACT

This article demonstrates brief description of the concept of ‘Realia’ and discusses several problems that can be come across during translating them. Realia indicates specific cultural elements and expressions. Translating realia has been studied for so many years. However, there is some confusion in giving correct translation because of different cultural features. Here are given several solutions and tips that prevent wrong translation.

Keywords: exotic touch, transliteration, acceptability, inexactness, scientific sphere.

INTRODUCTION

Academically, realia are things or concepts from real life used in teaching by educators to enhance students’ understanding of other cultures and real-life situations. A teacher who teaches a foreign language often employs realia to strengthen students ‘associations between words for common objects and the objects themselves. According to many reasons, these objects are part of an important kit that consist of manual and also are thought as being part of a documentary whole by librarians. Realia are also used to connect learners with the key focal point of lesson by allowing tactile and multidimensional correlation between learned material and the aim of the lesson. They are presented well by simple objects lending themselves to classroom settings and ease of control with minimum risk of accident throughout the student object interaction. Technology has begun to influence on the use of realia by adding online realia options.

Main body

In translation, Realia are particular words and expressions that represent specific cultural material elements. The word “realia” that originally meant “the real things

«comes from medieval Latin. The Bulgarian translators Vlahov and Florin carried out an in-depth study of realia. They proved the modern sense of this word. They showed because of a very local overtone, it is challenging task to translate them. Realia must not be confused with terminology: the latter is primarily used in scientific literature to appoint thing that are appropriate to the scientific sphere. It only appears in other kinds of texts to serve a very specific stylistic purpose. Realia, on the other hand, are born in popular culture, are increasingly found in very variety of texts. Fiction, in particular, is fond of realia for exotic touch they bring. Vlahov and Florin¹ classify them different categories:

Geography:

- physical geography: fjord, mistral, steppe, tornado, tsunami...
- geographic objects tied to man's activity: polder, piazza ,bazaar...
- endemic species :kiwi, koala, sequoia, yeti...

Ethnography :

- everyday life :paprika, empanada ,cider, kimono, igloo, bungalow...
- work: concierge, machete ,bolas...
- art and culture: gong, commedia dell'arte, harlequin, Santa Claus
- ethnic characterizations: cockney, gringo ,Yankee ...
- measures and money: mile, kilometer, hectare, gallon...

Politics and society:

- administrative divisions: province, department, state, county...
- organs and functions: agora, forum, senate, chancellor, shah...
- political and social life: peronist, tupamaros, Slavophil, lord...
- military realia :cohort, phalanx, katyusha, cuirassier...

There are variety of strategies and tips for translating realia. They exist from phonetic Transcription to translation of the overall meaning. One of the Israeli scholars Gideon Toury² suggests one solution for solving such problems. In accordance with his characterization, each of these can be placed between two extremes: adequacy (closeness to the original) and acceptability (making the word entirely consistent with the target culture).Here are different useful options for translating realia: One of them is transcribing the word character by character. This is named "transliteration" pronunciation rules of the target language. As an example , the Hindi word Casmir becomes "cache mire" in French.

Creating new word or a calque, such as the English "flea market" encouraged by the French marché aux puces.

¹ Vlahov,S. and Florin, S."Neperovodimoe v perevode.Realii"

² Gideon Toury "Descriptive Translation Studies-and Beyond(2012)

Creating a new word, analogous to the original one, but which has a more local ring to it. For instance, “muezzin” from the Arabic “mu’adh-din”

Using a various but connected word from the source language, accepting it as the original word. For instance, the Italian word “cappuccino” is often translated into English as “latte”, which an Italian means “milk”.

Representing the meaning explicit, such as Jewish temple for synagogue

Replacing the word with an original one, such as the French art nouveau (literally «new art») for Jugendstil

Shifting the word with one that is more generic and international, such as “red wine” for Beaujolais

Adding an adjective to aid the reader define the origin of the element of realia, like in the Argentina pampa

Translating the overall meaning. For instance, the English sentence, Does the National Health Service covers this drug? could become, in the American context, Is this drug expensive?

How appropriate each of these solutions is relying on different factors? One of them is the type of text that is being translated. Adequate translations of realia add some exoticism, a quality that is often demandable in fiction. For non-fiction, these days adequacy is usually preferred to acceptability, so as to prevent inexactness that can arise from the use of more culturally neutral translations –although the opposite preference has prevailed in the past. One must also consider how the element of realia relates to the source culture in terms of importance and familiarity.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, translating realia is a bit challenging task that a lot of translators come across during translation of fiction and non-fiction texts or articles. In spite of some translating problems related to realia, there are many clear solutions which some scientists found. For instance, the Bulgarian translators Vlahov and Florin made a research for brief explanation of realia. In addition, they mentioned the confusion of realia with terminology, also, they emphasized the necessity of appropriation of this term. Furthermore, one of the Israeli scholars Gideon Toury offers different useful choices for translating realia

REFERENCES:

1. Vlahov, S. and Florin, S. “Neperovodimoe v perevode. Realii”
2. Gideon Toury “Descriptive Translation Studies-and Beyond(2012)