



Translation Through The Lens Of Linguistic Norms: A Comprehensive Study

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the essence and role of linguistic norms in translation, emphasizing their importance in maintaining the stability and adaptability of literary languages. It explores the dual nature of norms as both descriptive and prescriptive, highlighting their conservative yet dynamic characteristics. The discussion includes the differentiation between various language norms, such as territorial, functional, and stylistic, and their impact on translation practices. The article underscores the necessity for translators to master both source and target text norms to achieve adequate translations, considering the structural and cultural nuances of each language. This comprehensive analysis underscores linguistic norms as pivotal in ensuring translational fidelity and coherence.

Keywords:

linguistic norms, translation, literary language, normativity, codification, translational fidelity

INTRODUCTION

When analyzing the nature and role of linguistic norms in the self-regulation mechanism, we rely on the classical definition provided in the "Linguistic Encyclopedic Dictionary." The most significant feature of any literary language is its normativity. A norm is the state and potential for the use of language units in the speech process that is accepted, approved, and understood by members of society. Language norms represent the most stable traditional set of a language system that is selected and firmly established in general communication.

It is important to note that norms are opposed to the system understood as the ability to express meanings specific to a particular language. Not all concepts that the language system can potentially express can pass through the "sieve" of language norms. Language norms do not allow any concept or meaning to be used indiscriminately.

METHODS

This study utilizes a qualitative analysis of linguistic norms, examining their dual role as both descriptive and prescriptive elements within the context of translation. By reviewing literature from key sources, such as the "Linguistic Encyclopedic Dictionary," and incorporating perspectives from renowned linguists like A. M. Peshkovskiy and B. Whorf, the research investigates how norms guide language usage and translation practices.

RESULTS

Norms are both a linguistic and a socio-historical category. The social aspect of norms manifests not only in the selection and identification of language phenomena but also in their evaluation system ("correct - incorrect," "appropriate - inappropriate"), and this

evaluation includes an aesthetic component ("beautiful - ugly").

In linguistics, the term "norm" is used in both a broad and narrow sense. Broadly, norms refer to the traditional and spontaneously formed methods of speech, considered idiomatic (stable expressions) or the generally accepted ways of using the language. In a narrow sense, norms are the result of the targeted codification of linguistic idioms. Understanding norms in this way is intrinsically linked to the concept of a literary language, otherwise known as "normalized" or "coded."

Literary norms are characterized by several features: they are unique and obligatory for speakers of a particular language; they are conservative, preserving values and usage rules accumulated by ancestors over centuries within a given society. Simultaneously, they are not static but evolve over time, ensuring dynamic interaction of various methods of language use depending on communication situations and conditions. Language norms reflect and manifest natural processes and phenomena occurring within the language.

The existence of norms in a language manifests in two ways:

1. As a set of lexemes, word forms, and language constructions used in the language.
2. As a set of selection tendencies and usage rules for language tools.

DISCUSSION

Norms serve as a filter, transferring the most expressive and communicatively necessary language tools to the literary language while blocking accidental and functionally redundant tools. This selective and protective function of norms demonstrates their conservative nature, which aids literary language by connecting different generations and societal cultural layers.

Norms rely on traditional usage methods and cautiously approach any innovations entering the language. According to A. M. Peshkovskiy (Peshkovskiy, 1959), norms are criteria that have been in practice up to the present, partially applied now, but their influence on future generations is uncertain. He explains that if literary norms changed frequently, each generation could only use the literature created

by themselves and their immediate predecessors. The conservative nature of literary norms allows us to create a strong, multi-century national literature uniting different generations.

However, the conservatism of norms does not imply immutability. They include a differential set of language tools characterized by stability and unity, as well as a range of variants and synonymous expressions. It is also worth noting that the pace of normative changes is slower than the development of the national literary language. The sources for updating literary norms are varied, primarily living (verbal) speech, which is dynamic and ever-changing. The frequent repetition and incorporation of new words into literary usage can compete with traditional facts and norms.

Establishing communication based on norms requires not only the ability to speak correctly and distinguish correct linguistic expressions from incorrect ones but also the appropriate use of language tools according to the communication situation. In translation, the translator must master both the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) norms well.

Differences between language norms are evident in the distinction between written and oral forms of literary language, various functional and stylistic norms of language use, and the conditional territorial normative differentiations of the literary language.

The degree of territorial variability in literary norms depends on the historical development period of the literary language and the contemporary linguistic situation. For example, English as an official language in various countries exemplifies territorial norm differentiation, such as American, British, Indian, and Australian English. Even in literary languages with less significant territorial variability, deviations from norms can occur.

Normative phenomena include a wide range of occurrences. The core of literary norms consists of stylistically neutral and widely used language phenomena, while the periphery includes archaic and new phenomena, as well as functionally and territorially marked occurrences still within the scope of literary norms. The normativity of language phenomena

can be identified through at least three indicators: conformity to the language structure, frequent and regular repetition in communication, and public approval and recognition as normative.

In a broad sense, there are two types of norms: descriptive (регистрающая) and prescriptive (предписывающая). Descriptive norms determine the existing situation and declare it as the norm, allowing for the identification of the normative or non-normative use of linguistic tools and phenomena. Prescriptive norms, on the other hand, are initially created by individuals and applied to society.

The concept of language norms is closely tied to the term "literary language," a dialectical form of the national language. Normativity, codification, multifunctionality, stylistic diversity, and high social prestige among speakers are its primary characteristics. Normativity is one of the most critical features of a literary language, characterized by its mandatory and universal nature for all speakers.

Considering literary language from linguistic, communicative, and social perspectives allows us to highlight its heterogeneous nature, which leads to various methods of expressing the same meaning, stylistic and communicative gradation means, and the use of some language tools as social symbols.

Thus, normativity is emphasized as a crucial feature of literary language, ensuring its stability and conservatism. Moreover, language norms define the consistent functional differentiation of language tools, their multifunctionality, and communicative orientation.

The concept of constructing a hierarchical model of language using the terms standard, substandard, and nonstandard is closely related to the phenomenon of language norms. Literary language (written and oral) represents the standard norm, opposing substandard and nonstandard norms. For example, in English-American linguistic dictionaries, the latter two terms are synonymous and denote norm violations. In Russian studies, this concept is more often explained with the term

nonstandard, as discussed in V.M. Zhirmunskiy's research (Zhirmunskiy, 1936).

The widespread use of the term standard and its derivatives in modern Russian facilitated its rapid assimilation as a linguistic term. In Anglo-American linguistics, standard English unequivocally refers to British and American English, considered equivalent. Conversely, Scottish English, Irish English, Canadian English, South African English, and Australian English are not classified as standard languages.

Using a multi-level model to identify types of ethnic languages allows for distinguishing and classifying language types with systematic features at all linguistic levels (e.g., dialectal language, folklore language). Nonstandard language includes widely spread linguistic tools at the lexical-phraseological level, such as jargon and slang. According to Z. Köster-Toma (Z. Köster-Toma, 1992), colloquial speech occupies a position between substandard and nonstandard, partly relating to each. Key features of spoken speech include the direct involvement of communicants, the instantaneous nature of unprepared speech, and the convenience of communication, which are necessary conditions for performing nonstandard speech acts.

Factors such as the communicants' territorial affiliation, education, social status, situational context, spoken/written form, formal/informal nature, speaker/listener relationship, message topic, communication purpose, and the degree of influence from other languages assist in evaluating and identifying a speech act as nonstandard. This last factor has gained attention in recent years, particularly in cases where a language is a second or third mother tongue, spoken in a foreign environment, or fluently acquired. It holds significant importance in translation, as translators often rely on it to overcome the pressure of source text norms and avoid literal translation.

The Prague linguistic school introduced the term "grammatical norm codification" in linguistics, often synonymous with norms and normalization. The existence of norms in language should not be equated with codification. Codification occurs only when norms are deliberately chosen by grammarians,

textbooks, mass media, and others, or when the principles for distinguishing them are developed.

Thus, the hierarchical model proposed by Z. Köster-Toma (Z. Köster-Toma, 1993) enables distinguishing types of ethnic languages and linking them based on the completeness of phonetic, morphological, lexical, syntactic, and phraseological indicators. It is necessary to consider the presence of systemic features of ethnic languages.

Thorough knowledge of both the source and target text norms is essential for achieving adequate translation. It is also crucial for translators to understand the fundamental differences between the language systems of the source and target texts. The structural characteristics and principles of a language largely determine how its speakers perceive the world and, ultimately, the essence of the entire culture.

In our view, when analyzing the phenomenon of language norms in relation to translation, it is logical to consider it as a component of the self-regulation mechanism. We believe it is advisable to constantly compare the lexical-grammatical and stylistic content of the formed or edited version of the translation with the modern norms of the target text, both during the translation process and the subsequent editing stage. We emphasize once again that the translator must remember that each language is a unique phenomenon and should not expect coincidences frequently during the comparison process to achieve an adequate translation.

American linguist and theorist B. Whorf noted that "speakers of different languages perceive facts and phenomena differently because these phenomena are expressed and shaped differently in their languages." The grammatical structures of a language (unlike lexical elements) predetermine which aspects of a thing or phenomenon need to be expressed in that language. Translators must understand that speakers of a particular language focus on elements obligatory for oral encoding in their native language [Jacobson, 1996:236].

L. Visson pointed out that this creates significant problems when translating from one language to another, especially if the source language

lacks categories existing in the target language or vice versa. For instance, when translating into English, focusing on target text norms implies selecting an alternative transformation for the translation, often associated with the unique worldview of English speakers and their related language choices [Visson 1999:44].

The desire to adapt the translation to language norms as closely as possible encourages translators to apply translation transformations, influenced by language factors such as conformity and communicative structure. If translators do not adequately grasp the target text norms (knowing the source text norms is equally important), they will not "see" translation problems and may fall into the temptation of substituting source text words with target text words. This approach inevitably leads to literalism, a translation-distorting phenomenon that always involves the violation of language and translation norms.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the article highlights the crucial role that linguistic norms play in the process of translation. By ensuring consistency, stability, and adaptability within a language, these norms act as a guiding framework for translators. The dual nature of norms, encompassing both descriptive and prescriptive elements, underscores their importance in preserving cultural and linguistic integrity while allowing for the dynamic evolution of language. Effective translation requires a deep understanding of both source and target language norms, recognizing their structural and cultural nuances. Ultimately, linguistic norms are indispensable for achieving fidelity and coherence in translation, bridging diverse linguistic landscapes and fostering effective communication.

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