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ӘДІСТЕМЕСІНІҢ ӨЗЕКТІ МӘСЕЛЕЛЕРІ:  
ТЕОРИЯ ЖӘНЕ ПРАКТИКА»**

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INCORRECTLY USED ENGLISH WORDS IN RUSSIAN-ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF  
SCIENTIFIC TEXTS

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The paper considers incorrectly used words and expressions in the Russian-English translations of scientific texts. The translation errors are analyzed based on the examples of Russian-English translations of KazNU authors and the results are compared with the edited texts.

Key words: incorrectly used words, scientific texts, Russian-English translation.

В статье рассматривается неправильное использование слов и словосочетаний при переводе научных текстов с русского языка на английский. Проводится анализ переводческих ошибок на примере русско-английских переводов авторов КазНУ и сравнение с отредактированными текстами.

Ключевые слова: неправильное использование слов, научные тексты, русско-английский перевод.

Бұл мақалада ғылыми мәтіндерді орыс тілінен ағылшын тіліне аударуда дұрыс қолданылмайтын сөздер мен сөз тіркестері жайлы қарастырылады. ҚазҰУ авторларының орыс тілінен ағылшын тіліне аударған аударма жұмыстарында кездесетін қателерге және түзетуден өткен мәтіндерге салыстырмалы талдау жасалынады.

Кілт сөздер: сөздердің дұрыс қолданылмауы, ғылыми мәтіндер, орысша-ағылшынша аудармалар.

The paper considers incorrectly used words and expressions in the Russian-English translations of scientific texts. Scientific translation becomes a prerequisite not only for the acquisition of technology, but also to its introduction, installation, and operation as well.

Knowledge of the language and the subject of translation is a prerequisite for successful professional activity in the field of technical translation. This condition is a cognitive essence of translation. Analysis of translation errors involves identifying not only the typology of errors and their causes. There are four key reasons for errors: insufficient language skills, lack of cognitive experience, lack of understanding of what the author says about the subject and the inability to distinguish the features of individual style [1]. The main sources of error that can be attributed to the sphere of the cognitive domain of consciousness are the ignorance and lack of understanding of the subject of the original.

The scientific context has a content which is concerned with the horizontal structure of the world while the literary context has a content which is concerned with the vertical structure of the world.

An important feature of English scientific and technical style is brevity and compactness of the presentation, which is reflected in the wide use of elliptical constructions, incorrect understanding of which often leads to ridiculous mistakes in the translation [2]. Very often compactness of English sentences leads to rough mistakes in the translation, for example, "a non-destructive testing college" is a college for training specialists in nondestructive testing of materials, though for a non-specialist it is very difficult to understand this collocation.

Explicitness of the text can be defined as its semantic unambiguity. There are 3 main categories of stylistic defects that destroy unambiguity of the text:

1.) Amorphous sentences (such sentence structure when grammar relations between words become clear only with the consideration of meaning); such potential ambiguity must be eliminated in translation;

2.) Shift of logical stress in the sentence (a common mistake in translation, the logical predicate should be on the strong place (usually the end of the sentence));

3.) Formation of "parasitic" relationships between words (because of incorrect construction of the phrase there seems to be a relation between words, when there is no relation);

4.) Extra and bureaucratic words (these unattractive features of the presentation style, which makes it dull and difficult to understand).

English scientific texts sometimes have emotional epithets, rhetorical questions, and similar stylistic devices more typical for conversational style. Such violations of stylistic unity of the text are less characteristic of the scientific and technical materials in the Russian language. and translators regularly carry out a stylistic adaptation of the translated text, omitting the emotional and stylistic elements of the original



that seem out of place in "serious" scientific presentation (for example, such adjectives as "dramatic", "remarkable", "excellent" are often omitted in Russian translation).

According to London Institute of Linguistics, to be a scientific translator one should have:

1. Broad knowledge of the subject-matter of the text to be translated;
2. A well-developed imagination that enables the translator to visualize the equipment or process being described;
3. Intelligence, to be able to fill in the missing links in the original text;
4. A sense of discrimination, to be able to choose the most suitable equivalent term from the literature of the field or from dictionaries;
5. The ability to use one's own language with clarity, conciseness and precision;
6. Practical experience in translating from related fields. In short, to be a technical translator one must be a scientist, or engineer, a linguist and a writer [3].

In contrast to their literary counterparts, scientific texts underline the information content without bothering about features that are characteristic of poetic texts, such as rhyme, and connotative or symbolic meaning [4].

We also notice that most of the elements in scientific texts are not unexpected. One might even define the meaning of these texts according to the actual use of items to refer to things in the real world or to the "extension" as contrasted to the potential meaning of things as they are perceived, conceived, or represented in terms other than their actual appearance and/or function by the perceiving man, or to the 'intention' of their producers. Scientific Translation is a bridge that has huge effect between nations on everyday life and draws on a wide range of languages, including Persian, German, Russian, Arabic, French, Spanish and English [5].

A number of errors mentioned in this paper can be ascribed less to a question of meaning than to an aspect of English grammar that seems to have gone relatively unnoticed in the English teaching – the distinction between countable and un-countable (or mass) nouns. Unfortunately, nouns that are uncountable in one language may be countable in another and vice versa (like, for example, 'information' and 'damage', which are uncountable in English but countable in French), or countable in one meaning and uncountable in another. This concept is fundamental for an understanding of the errors found with words like 'action', 'aid', 'competence', 'conditionality', 'training', 'screening', 'precision' and many others.

Let us consider incorrect use of some words in translations:

#### FRAME – IN THE FRAME OF

'In the frame of' meaning 'in connection with', 'in the context of' or 'within the scope of' corresponds literally to an expression found in a number of other languages (Italian, German, French). Unfortunately, this expression does not exist in English. Examples:

"In case the analysis is performed **in the frame of** a contamination incident, confirmation by duplicate analysis might be omitted in case the samples selected for analysis are through traceability linked to the contamination incident." Here we see that instead of "**in the framework of**", which very often seems redundant to the Russian-English translators and therefore they use "**in the frame of**". This error is extremely often met in the translations from the Russian language.

The word '**Reasonability**' may occur in some dictionaries, but like a number of other words in -ability and -ableness (unavailability is another common example much loved by IT), it is very marginal and stylistically awkward. Words of this sort should be avoided. For example:

Even if, as FNK maintains, it should be left to the crane-hire companies to interpret the concept "reasonable", which incidentally is nowhere apparent, it is still established that the **reasonability** of rates was discussed.

As an alternative we can suggest: 'reasonable', 'available' etc.

#### CASE/IN CASE OF

English, 'in case of' is most commonly used in sentences that follow the pattern: 'in case of fire, break glass' i.e. 'in the event of an (adverse) occurrence, act as follows'. In texts, it is often erroneously used to replace the preposition 'for' (e.g. 'farmers are subject to possible reductions **in case of** non-compliance' (= for non-compliance). '**In case**' (without 'of') is often used instead of 'if', 'when' or 'where' ('the fund can be mobilized **in case** the damage caused by a national disaster exceeds the threshold'). This use is not only incorrect English, but it may also be misunderstood (in the case, in point, the sentence does not mean 'we can mobilize the fund if and when the damage exceeds the threshold', as intended by the author, but 'we can mobilize the fund in order to prevent the damage exceeding the threshold', which is a different thing entirely.

The other widely spread error used in scientific texts is incorrect grammatical use of

#### ALLOW (to) PERMIT (to) ENABLE (to)



When used to mean 'make it possible to', 'allow to' cannot be used without a grammatical object, so we cannot say: 'At present, the statistics available do not **allow to take** account of all these situations': 'allow' needs to be followed by a noun or pronoun such as 'us' (the statistics do not **allow us to take** account of all these situations). There are many cases where this construction is used wrongly. The same applies to 'permit to' and 'enable to'. Here are some examples of Russian-English translation with the wrong use of this construction.

"Electronics of the device **enables to count** the number of periods of oscillations from 0 to 100, and the digital electronic stopwatch measures the oscillation time from 0 to 100s."

"The least square method **allows to find** the errors of parameters in the linear dependence, which are determined by formulas (20) and (21):"

"However, the probability theory **allows to calculate** the shape of the smooth curve, which is the limit for the histogram in case of an unlimited increase in the number of experiments."

These errors can be explained by the fact that the Russian language has a similar construction but without a pronoun.

The most common translation errors in the texts of technical reports and articles are inaccurate use of terminology, violation of logic of presentation and word-for-word translation. Here are some examples of direct transfer and modification. Corrections in the translation from Russian were made by the English editor (incorrectly used words are highlighted).

Such elements of the innovation infrastructure as business incubators, technology parks, and innovation and technology centers are (**designated**) designed to promote commercialization of university developments.

It should be noted that according to R. Lowe's investigations, the transfer of developments in the developed countries, (**like**) such as the United States, is a bilateral process, i.e., the ideas (**born**) initiated in companies are further developed in universities.

Through taking part in practical research the students (**get**) gain implicit knowledge that gives them advantages in finding a job in specialized companies.

After (**getting**) obtaining a patent for the development, the university transfers the ownership rights for it.

Thus, according to the (**study**) 1997 (**of the**) Bank of Boston (**in 1997**) study, four thousand high-tech companies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology employed 1.1 million people

The Chinese National Innovation System was (**founded**) set upon the (**basis**) foundation formed by the Chinese Academy of Sciences

Due to its transformation, the university was provided with preferential state funding, and, hence, (**could**) was able to enroll the best students in the country.

Science has not only its own syntax, but also its own terminology. Knowledge of this terminology is based on a solid foundation of previously acquired knowledge on behalf of the translator. Therefore, it is not the language itself which is special, but certain words or their symbols.

Some more examples of mistakes and corrections:

1. **Calculations** of energy losses of ions in the plasma for different values of temperature and plasma density were **carried out**.

2. Energy losses of ions in the plasma for different values of temperature and plasma density were **calculated** (editor's correction).

3. A comparison of the calculated data of ion stopping power and energy deposition with experimental and theoretical results of other authors was made (**done**).

4. If we re-write this equation as a function of density and temperature, (**then**) we get a nonlinear equation with two unknowns:

5. Pressure of partially ionized hydrogen plasma is shown (**on**) Figures 1 and 2.

6. The copper cylinder (1) with a diameter  $d = 45$  mm, and the thickness  $l = 4.5$  mm (**used**) is used as planar electrodes.

7. After applying a high-voltage sinusoidal signal, the barrier discharge in the filamentary mode was formed (**formed**) between the electrodes on the flat dielectric surface and the metal.

8. Typically, in the case when one of the metal electrodes is covered with a dielectric the width of the microdischarge on the dielectric barrier surface is greater than on the surface on the metal electrode

9. From the current waveform it can be seen that in the case of "plane-to-plane" electrode geometry the set of peaks is observed at the start of each half-cycle of applied voltage.

Translation of scientific and technical texts must convey the meaning of the original in the form, as close as possible to the original. Translation as a whole should not be either word-for-word translation or a free retelling of the original, though elements of both are obligatory.

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