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ON NEW TENDENCIES IN RUSSIAN TRANSLATION PRACTICE TODAY

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the problem of language vitality. Languages are alive as long as they retain their place and functions, ensuring intercultural and international contacts. The authors consider socio-cultural multifunctionality as a major prerequisite for preserving languages and their further development in the multilingual and multicultural globalized society of today. The article looks at translation as an effective tool for preserving languages, which includes the various aspects languages function in (communicative, cognitive, social, epistemic). Modern translation is being considered in the context of language problems in the multicultural state. Appreciating Russia's language policy (the creation in 2018 of the Fund for Preserving and Studying the Indigenous Languages of the Peoples of Russia, in particular), the authors believe that development of multidimensional translation activities in those languages corresponds to the targets of the country's modern language policy. A commission has been established within the Union of Translators of Russia (UTR) to encourage translation studies and practice in new language pairs the indigenous and national languages function in. New areas of translation studies are expected to be formed shortly under the auspices of the UTR, a system of translation methods and didactics of the languages will be developed, aimed in particular at training simultaneous interpreters, court translators, communal translators, etc. Expanding translation practice to those languages will breathe new life into them both at home and internationally, and will accord them recognition and the status of languages of international communication.

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Keywords: Ethnolinguistic vitality, environmental linguistics, languages of the peoples of Russia, translation activity.



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1. Introduction

In Russian science, translation – or rather the theory and practice of translation – has been included in the field of applied linguistics since the middle of the 20th century (Baranov, 2001) and are considered by the State Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles among other philological sciences within the specialty 10.20.19 “Theory of Languages”. Although this obvious contradiction as well as the consideration of other fundamentally important problems related to the relation of translation to linguistics and philology are out of the scope of current work, it is in the introduction to the article that we would like to define our position in relation to translation (presented as theory, and practice), as well as to those concepts and terms that are further present in the text. We offer our point of view, presented in the following theses:

Thesis 1. There may be a unique integrative field of knowledge—translation—in which theory and practice coexist and cannot be separated from each other without obvious negative consequences for both theory and practice of translation. It is this circumstance that gives rise to the ongoing debate about whether translation theory is needed and whether it exists. To a certain extent, the authors of the article find confirmation of their point of view in the works of Shlepnev (2010).

Thesis 2. Linguistics and philology are related, but differ in their objects and subjects of scientific knowledge.

Thesis 3. With respect to linguistics and philology, translation is an independent field of scientific and practical knowledge, but at the same time has a genetic affinity with them, which is found in the commonality of interests in relation to specific studies of the language and text, their pragmatics and goal-setting, as well as in the commonality of some used methods and tools.

Thesis 4. Following the statements of many modern scholars of speech and communication, and, in particular, sharing the point of view of Goichman (2012), a well-known contemporary representative of communication science, so far unrecognized as an independent science, the authors of the article consider communication science to be an independent field of scientific knowledge, which is located in the same relations with translation (theory and practice) as with linguistics and philology. In communication and translation, we find obvious interdisciplinary intersections between the two areas.

Thesis 5. The authors of the article are not advocates of the theory of Noam Chomsky, one of the most prominent linguists of our time, on the innate property of a language for Homo sapiens (Chomsky, 2006), no matter how evolutionary are the changes Chomsky (2000, 2002) introduces into his theory.

Thesis 6. The authors of the article fully share the opinion of most modern linguists that a language appears (Everett, 2017), develops and changes (Deutscher, 2010) in the process of communication, realized in the form of speech activity. It is in the “mirror of the language” (Deutscher, 2010) that the path of mastering the surrounding world by the ethnos is reflected, including both the general (universal) and the particular (realities of the language).

Thesis 7. The authors of the article believe that in a modern state only the conditions of communication, regulated, in particular, by state legislation and reflected in language policy (Vedernikova, 2014), determine the ability of a language to survive, i.e. its ethnolinguistic vitality (Klyukanov, 2011; Vedernikova, 2014). The death of a language is also the result of the communicative situation.

Thesis 8. A communicative act (a component of a communicative situation) can be either direct (one-level speech activity) or indirect, organized with the help of translation activity and therefore contain two speech levels: initiative (speech of communicants) and interpreting (speech of an interpreter). An initiative, or motive, characterizes communicants in any form of communication, both verbal and written.

Thesis 9. The translator's toolkit within a specific communicative situation simultaneously includes at least two languages. In their relation to the source and translating languages, the translator is absolutely ambivalent. For the successful implementation of their work, translation activities, the translator must professionally (competently) own their tools, languages, and constantly improve them.

Thesis 10. In the translation activity, represented by the oral or written speech of the translator, all the functions of the language are realized (both as a phenomenon and as an instrument of a specific communicative act), which is why translation activity can be considered as the optimal form of representing all the capabilities of the language (languages) and the most effective means of their improvement, development, and thereby their conservation.

2. Problem Statement

The field of study in the context of which this article was written is linguistic vitality and ways of its provision, which, in turn, closely intersects with the whole range of issues that are a part of the problem field of today's popular scientific field, which is called environmental linguistics, or the ecology of language. Environmental linguistics, first of all, is aimed at the struggle for linguistic diversity as a factor ensuring the dialectic of the development of language as a phenomenon of civilization and civilization as a whole. In other words, environmental linguistics is designed to solve the problems of preserving linguistic diversity (Zheleznova, 2016). That is why its tasks include the search, systematization, selection, application and improvement of specific means and tools that ensure the life of specific languages, which in globalization, at different levels of its implementation (both internal, in a multilingual and multicultural state, and external, in the conditions of modern transnational globalization) are experiencing external intervention in the form of phonetic, lexical and grammatical interference, are forced to reduce their sphere of use lose their communicative position. These trends at various stages of human history affected and affect all languages of the world without exception, including modern national varieties of the English language, but they especially destructively affect the situation of languages that are not widespread, limited by the sphere of communication of small nations. Based on the fact that communication is the main incentive for the emergence of the human language as a phenomenon and that the conditions of communication determine the possibilities and prospects of life and death of each specific language, the authors of the article believe that in matters related to the study of tools of environmental linguistics, the main attention should be paid to the methods preserving the multifunctionality of the communicative space of a particular language. Based on the foregoing, the authors of the article propose to consider translation activities in the context of environmental linguistics tools.

3. Research Questions

For Russia as a multinational state, the problems of correlation, coexistence, existence, development and preservation of languages were relevant at all historical stages of its statehood. In other words, language policy (with all the contradictory, and even the polarity of views on the principles of its implementation) has always been an important component of state policy. The main goal of the modern language policy of Russia is unequivocally the preservation of linguistic diversity and the harmonization of inter-linguistic relations, as evidenced by the creation in 2019 of the Foundation for the Preservation and Study of the Native Languages of the Peoples of Russia, co-founded by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Nationalities. The creation of the fund involves, first of all, the search and determination of all possible modern approaches, methods and tools to optimize the process of preservation and study of native languages. Offering as a subject of research translation activities related to the use of languages of the peoples of Russia, as well as prospects for its improvement, the authors of the article, being primarily professional translators, consider translation as one of the most capacious and effective means of preserving and developing all languages that can be included in the zone of its influence, including the native languages of the peoples of Russia, as well as the Russian language itself, uniting all 160 peoples and nationalities of the Russian Federation.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the work is to draw the attention of state bodies, leaders of science and education bodies, the professional translation community and the general public to the need to develop a multidimensional professional translation using the native languages of the peoples of Russia. This applies not only to the translation of works of fiction, which, of course, plays an important role in the formation of intercultural dialogue. It is also about the development of such relevant for today trends in professional translation activities, such as audiovisual translation and audio description, social (communal) translation, including medical translation, documentation translation, judicial translation, etc. Translation should be developed both in written and in oral form including synchronous. The development of multidimensional translation using the languages of the peoples of Russia should also include the creation of a training system for this translation, the training of teachers, the development of educational and methodological support for the learning process, the formation of a system of additional professional education, including advanced training and retraining, the development of practical scientific, descriptive and descriptive directions study of translation issues using the languages of the peoples of Russia.

5. Research Methods

Since the proposed article is preliminary, installation-oriented, focused more on the formulation of the problem and the identification of issues that should subsequently be considered and investigated, its methodology is based on general logical and empirical research methods. The general logical system of methods indicated as the first one is an obligatory component of any research and in our case involves the integration of the methodology of analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction, generalization, analogy and

modeling. The empirical methodology used in the preparation of the article included: study of sources, observation and survey. So, in particular, during the preparation of the article, the basic sources were studied, which include laws reflecting the state language policy of the Russian Federation: Federal Law “On the State Language of the Russian Federation” as of 01.06.2005 N 53-FZ and the Law of the Russian Federation “On Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation” as of 10.25.1991, as well as materials published in the press on the creation of the Fund for Preserving and Studying the Indigenous Languages of the Peoples of Russia, co-founded by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs. Long-term communication (observation) with representatives of translation bureaus and university teachers involved in the training of translators made it possible to draw a clear picture of the current state of the issue of using the languages of the peoples of Russia in translation activities. Additional consultations (surveys) with translators and university teachers from national republics and districts supplemented the authors' understanding of the problem.

6. Findings

The preliminary data of our study were presented in the proceedings of the VI International Conference of the Eurasian Applied Linguistics Society (EALS), which was held in St. Petersburg in July 2019 (Kalevich, 2019). The report noted that in Russia there are more than 100 written languages. A significant part of them have the status of state or official, but at the same time they are no longer actually used in the official business sphere. At the same time, the activity of literary translation from the written languages of the peoples of Russia traditionally continues. Back in the days of the Soviet Union, a developed system of translating works of fiction from national languages into Russian and from Russian into the languages of the peoples of the Soviet Union (now the languages of the peoples of Russia) was formed. Educational publications and anthologies published in recent years demonstrate a significant assortment and high level of competence of translators of fiction from national languages.

The published list also contains translations of works of art from foreign languages (English, German, French, Spanish, etc.) into the languages of the peoples of Russia and from the languages of the peoples of Russia (Tatar, Yakut, etc.) into foreign languages. The authors of the article are aware of Etim Emin, the founder of Lezgin literature who translates Arabic works into Lezgi. The works of classics of fiction and national folklore are also translated from one national language of Russia to another but to a smaller extent.

Within the framework of the Russian Academy of Education, a Strategic Center for the Development of Translation Education in Russia was created (headed by I.S. Alekseeva). Its activities, in particular, include improving the quality of translations from the languages of the peoples of Russia. I.S. Alekseeva came up with an initiative, supported by the Union of Translators of Russia, to hold a youth competition for translations from the languages of the peoples of Russia into Russian, proposing its provisional title “Russia Translates Russia”. Literary translation activity is continuing from languages that today, having official or state status, have practically become obsolete in the official business sphere. For example, there are interesting translations of literary works from Moksha, Karelian and other languages. Often, authors themselves translate their works into Russian.

In the earlier submissions, the authors of the article noted important initiatives in the field of literary translation implemented by translators of Bashkortostan, Tatarstan, republics and national districts of the North and North-West of Russia, as well as events held by the Department of Style of the Yakut Language and Russian-Yakut Translation of North-Eastern Federal University in Yakutsk.

For a number of languages of the peoples of Russia, currently, in the framework of a rich lexicographical tradition, multilingual electronic dictionaries, national Wikipedia (for example, Tatar, Yakut, Kalmyk Wikipedia) are being created, small amount of translation is being carried out in the official business sphere. For other languages, modern lexicographic work is practically absent, translation is not carried out in the official business sphere, and the sphere of translation at best is limited to translating works of art into Russian.

Certainly, the work on the development of literary translation into Russian is extremely important and useful; it actively helps strengthen the dialogue of cultures in our country and harmonize relations between the peoples living in it. However, the areas related to the study and analysis of this activity are practically not being implemented, “and literary translations from the languages of the peoples of Russia in recent years have been appearing less and less on bookshelves” (Katorova, 2019, p. 74), as the overall number of publications is reduced in the languages of the peoples of Russia. The author of this article rightly points out the need for strategic steps on the part of the state to intensify work aimed at expanding creative, publishing and translation activities in the languages of the peoples of Russia, and training for translation personnel.

I.S. Alekseeva, who actively advocates the development of literary translation from the languages of the peoples of Russia, suggests terming this area of translation activity “domestic translation.” We cannot agree with this term, because we are well aware that in a number of regions of Russia translation activities are actively implemented in the framework of non-artistic (official-business, social, judicial translation) in pairs “national language – foreign language”. There are also examples of audiovisual translation, i.e. audio descriptions. It should be noted that for a number of state and official languages of Russia in connection with direct international contacts, it is precisely the development of these areas that is quite relevant. For example, Komi-Finnish, Komi-Hungarian, Buryat-Mongolian, Yakut-English, etc.

Today, from the terminological perspective, the term proposed by the professor of the Northern (Arctic) Federal University A.M. Polikarpov: translation using the native languages of the peoples of Russia. This term allows expanding the functions of such a translation, providing for the provision of both internal and external contacts in the framework of various communicative situations.

The most disappointing fact in this issue is that in Russia, despite the intensification of discussion of the prospects for the development of translation using the languages of the peoples of Russia, today there is no state system for the training, advanced training and retraining of such translation personnel, and the infrastructure for organizing this type of professional activity. The events are irregular, episodic in nature and cover only a small part of the languages.

7. Conclusion

The authors of the article hope that the above trends in modern linguistic policy in Russia will soon create a developed system of multidimensional translation using the languages of the peoples of

Russia and thereby find a new and effective tool for preserving Russian linguistic and cultural diversity, serving as a good example for other countries of the world. In turn, the development of the practical component of this direction will allow forming its theoretical base, to give an occasion to open up a whole sphere of scientific and practical research in the field of translation using the languages of the peoples of Russia, to create new directions in the methodology and didactics of professional activity.

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This activity was, in particular, reflected in the implementation of several projects that were supported, organized and carried out (and are also being prepared for implementation) with the joint participation of a number of ministries, departments, as well as the Union of Translators of Russia, leading Russian universities, various public Russian and foreign organizations and funds:

1) "Creation of a scientific and information resource, organization and conduct of professional retraining of specialists in the field of literary translation of works of fiction from the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation into Russian, including the issues of translation of works of art, taking into account the peculiarities of artistic presentation adopted in a particular language in 2017 "(Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, protocol dated 01.09.2017 No. 2/2017-7.0-08-P28-Ya-21).

2) In October 2019, he received official approval at the meeting of the Arkhangelsk Regional Assembly at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Association of the North-West of Russia for the Affairs of the North and Small Peoples, a project to implement within the framework of the Scientific and Educational Center "Integrative Translation Studies of the Arctic space" (NArFU n.a. M.V. Lomonosov) on systemic teaching of the Nenets language and translation.

3) In the Komi Republic, preparations are underway for implementation with the support of M.A. Kastrena (Finland) of the project "Translator's School", within the framework of which Komi language translators and teachers of Syktyvkar State University will organize systemic and multidisciplinary (various types of interpretation and translation) training of Komi language translators.

4) In the Russian New University, with the support of the Union of Translators of Russia and various public organizations representing the peoples of Russia and the CIS countries, a project is being developed to organize and conduct the annual olympiad for schoolchildren "Native languages in the

context of translation”, which first qualifying round will be held remotely. The first round of the Olympiad is planned to be held in 2020.

5) With the participation of the Association of Lawyers of Russia and a number of leading law schools, a project is being developed to create a retraining system for judicial (sworn translators), one of the nominations of which will be retraining translators who speak the languages of the peoples of Russia.

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