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Lexical Transformation in Translations of Medical Text

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Abstract. The article focuses on the lexical transformations (transcription, transliteration, lexical substitution, blueprints and contextual translation) in translation of medical texts. It analyzes the use of lexical translation and gives explanations of the use of the most appropriate type of lexical transformations for the given discourse.

Key words: translation, lexical transformations, transcription, transliteration, lexical substitution, blueprints, contextual translation.

Лексические трансформации в переводе медицинских текстов

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Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются лексические трансформации (транскрипция, транслитерация, лексическая замена, калькирование и контекстуальный перевод) при переводе медицинских текстов. Анализируется использование лексического перевода и объясняется использование наиболее подходящего типа лексических преобразований для данного дискурса.

Ключевые слова: перевод, лексические трансформации, транскрипция, транслитерация, лексическая замена, калькирование, контекстуальный перевод.

Nowadays, due to the increasing international cooperation in the field of medicine, medical translation is becoming more and more relevant. Medical translation is a special type of translation that requires not only extensive knowledge in the field of medicine, but also the ability to correctly present information in accordance with the standards of the translation language. For a high-quality translation, it is necessary not only to understand the meaning of scientific terms, but also to have the ability to correctly translate the terms into Russian.

Diana Shuingalieva, a student of the Mendeleev Russian Medical University, and Igor Kuznetsov and Tatiana Tabakova, teachers of the Department of Foreign Languages of the Mendeleev Russian Medical University, in their article "Peculiarities of Translation of Medical Texts" claim that scientific terms can be translated in different ways depending on the target audience of the text: purely scientific texts require the use of borrowings from Latin, while similar Russian terms can be used in texts for a wider audience [1]. At the same time, Vilen Komissarov in his work "Modern translation studies" claims that there is a number of lexical transformations: transcription, transliteration, blueprints, lexical and semantic substitutions (specification, generalization, modulation, holistic transformation) and contextual substitution [2]. The paper aims at describing the match of these claims and attempts to identify the most widespread strategies of medical translation (as exemplified in the article "ROCCA observational study: Early results on safety of Sputnik V vaccine (Gam-COVID-Vac) in the Republic of San Marino using active surveillance" published in "The Lancet" [3] and its translation to Russian made by Victoria Sokolikova and edited by Rita Savitskaya and Elena Popova [4]).

In the translation of the abovementioned paper we can find such lexical transformations as transcription (for example, "дизайн исследования" in Russian text in comparison with "study design" in the English variant), transliteration (for example, "ROCCA", "Sputnik"), blueprints (for example, "ПППИ" in Russian in comparison to "AEFIs" in English), lexical substitution ("с помощью" in comparison to "using" is an example of modulation), and contextual substitution ("стала доступна" in

comparison to "has been distributed"). The most widespread types of lexical transformations in the translation are transcription, transliteration and lexical substitution. Contextual translation is not so widespread; there is only one case of it in the whole text of translation.

The use of transcription technique is related to the translation of scientific terms borrowed from Latin (for example, "астения" and "asthenia", "интерпретация" and "interpretation", "реципиенты" and "recipients", "популяция" and "population"). Latin or Greek borrowings denoting scientific terms are internationalisms so their translation requires transcription according to the translator's tradition. Transcription is also used to render foreign names (for example, "Вальд" and "Wald", "Уилсон" and "Wilson", "Мак-Немар" and "McNemar"). This way to render names is the most adequate: it isn't possible to use a blueprint because the meaning will be distorted; transliteration is not the best variant of translation either because some people may not be able to read in a foreign language.

The use of transliteration technique is related to the established tradition of transferring concepts that were formed in English-speaking countries (for example, "QR-codes", "Google Forms"). In this articles the abbreviations written in Roman letters are liberally used (for example, "Q1", "Q2", "Q3", "n" in the meaning of "quality, number", "rA26", "rAd5", "ROCCA"). They are exotisms and do not require blueprints or lexical substitutions. Sometimes terms written in Roman letters turn into internationalisms (for example, "Sputnik", "COVID-19") and they also do not require blueprints or lexical substitutions. However, some translations apply the strategy of domestication and use Cyrillic letters.

Lexical and semantic substitutions are the most widespread strategies of translation in this text. The predominant type of lexical and semantic substitutions is modulation; specification and generalization are much less widespread. Lexical and semantic substitutions are used to avoid unnecessary blueprints and to select vocabulary and syntax typical of target language (in this case - those typical of Russian). The examples of lexical and semantic transformations are "с помощью" for

"using", "опросник" for "e-questionnaire", "количество смертей" for "deaths", "пропорционально уровню населения" for "if compared with its population".

Blueprints are not so widespread in comparison with the other types of translation. Blueprints are used to transfer meaningful abbreviations and concepts for target audience (for example, "ПППИ" for "AEFIs" - the full forms are "побочные проявления после иммунизации" for "adverse events following immunization", "Институт социального обеспечения" for "Social Security Institute"). Some of cases of blueprints are related to the tradition of written translation (for example, "дизайн исследования" for "study design", "мы намерены" for "we intended", "роль источников финансирования" for "role of funding sources").

Contextual translation is the least widespread lexical strategy of translation. In this article there was only one case of contextual translation: "стала доступна" for ""has been distributed". Contextual translation implies a significant transformation of meaning of the concepts and it is unsolicited in the translation of a scientific text where the whole information should be preserved.

To sum up, the most widespread type of lexical transformations of this article is lexical substitution. It is related to the need to adapt the text to the Russian literary language. That is why we can observe little cases of blueprints (only to transfer meaningful abbreviations and concepts for target audience or because of tradition of translating some concepts through blueprints). The predominant use of blueprints corresponds with the opinion of Sergey Gilyarevsky, the editor-in-chief of the journal "Evidentiary Cardiology", professor of the department of clinical pharmacology and therapy and medical translator [5]. Transcription and translation are used predominantly to transfer the concepts that have already become internationalisms. Contextual translation is used rarely because of the necessity of preserving the whole information given in the source language and avoiding semantic distortions. It is supposed that these conclusions could be applied for the translation of medical articles on the whole because there are certain rules of writing text in the scientific discourse in the source language and translating them to target language that makes them similar.

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5. Нужно ли быть врачом, чтобы переводить медицинские тексты [Электронный ресурс.] - URL: http://apschool.ru/2017/04/04/medperevod/

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