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DIFFICULTIES OF ABBREVIATIONS TRANSLATION IN COMPUTER-RELATED TEXTS

Abstract: *The article studies possible difficulties in translating English abbreviations into Russian, and also suggests methods of their deciphering.*

Keywords: *computer-related text, abbreviation, acronym, decipher, abbreviation translation, acronym translation.*

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ТРУДНЫЕ СЛУЧАИ ПРИ ПЕРЕДАЧЕ СОКРАЩЕНИЙ В ТЕКСТАХ КОМПЬЮТЕРНОЙ ТЕМАТИКИ

Аннотация: *В статье рассматриваются возможные сложности при передаче английских сокращений на русский язык, а также приводятся методы их расшифровки.*

Ключевые слова: *текст компьютерной тематики, аббревиатура, акроним, расшифровка, передача аббревиатуры, передача акронима.*

The language of computer science has become a new phenomenon, which is studied by many linguists. Some scientists charge this language to colloquial and written form of speech, others consider it a new language, certain researchers ascribe the main role to social and pragmatic factors [4]. A computer-related text reflects an organized communication process in the virtual space, which implies using electronic signals and specific computer vocabulary. In electronic communication, the written and oral speech get fused, which leads to the appearance of colloquial written speech.

Abbreviations and acronyms are quite common to computer science texts. An acronym is the kind of abbreviation, which is read and perceived as a common lexical unit [2]. They can be formed from the letter combination and are especially popular in written speech due to easy assimilation with terminology [6, c. 106]:

This is a detector that we trained on 80 different classes in ***Microsoft's COCO dataset****.* [11]

The acronym *COCO,* introduced by major corporation in producing software – Microsoft, can be deciphered as *«Common Object in Context».* This abbreviation has been introduced relatively recently, thus it is not widespread in the dictionaries. As shown, there is no explanation in the example, that is why there is a high probability of misunderstanding which can lead to incorrect translation. In this case, the consultation with the Microsoft's newest specialized sources and literature might be of need.

While analysing this acronym, we discovered various deciphers, but there was no one with computer science terminology mark. The correct decipher was found on the official website of COCO dataset, but the accurate Russian translation of this acronym has not appeared yet.

The context given, as well as all the examples below, were taken from such Internet portals as TED.com and GeeksforGeeks.org . These sources were chosen, because they have specific computer-related articles with the vocabulary needed for analysis.

In the process of analysis, one more interesting example was found: *With our system, instead of looking at an image thousands of times to produce detection,* ***you only look once****, and that's why we call it the* ***YOLO method*** *of object detection*. [11] YOLO method («*you only look once*») is an acronym that refers to the YOLO recognition method and is used by the speaker in his working environment. It is similar to the abbreviated form of the famous expression «*You Only Live Once*». Most likely, this similarity was chosen in favour of pun and used as a joke. If the correct meaning of the context is not taken into account, there is a high probability of a mistake in translation.

Visual Studio is an ***Integrated Development Environment (IDE)*** *developed by Microsoft to develop GUI (Graphical User Interface)…* [10]

The acronym *IDE* without being deciphered can become an obstacle for a translator, since in the terminology of information technology, at least 4 deciphers were identified, apart from that one given in the context. In addition, the abbreviated form is consonant with the name of the fish species – *ide*. Thus we should refer to a special dictionary of abbreviations, but since we have a decipher in the context, the full term *Integrated Development Environment* will not cause difficulties in translation, because only one exact equivalent is given in Russian.

Unlike an acronym, an abbreviation is usually unambiguous, which makes it easier to translate. However, many of these abbreviations have a similar letter (syllabic) composition, the same graphic form: if these units are almost completely unmotivated (e.g. initial abbreviations), even in a broader context, this homonymy creates significant difficulties and causes translation inaccuracies [6].

Usually, an abbreviation has the only meaning contained in the original unit, although there may be abbreviations that for various reasons have potential shades of meaning. Then we can talk about homonymy – the coincidence of the form of an abbreviation with the full form of another, completely random word.

The most common type of ***RAM*** *is dynamic RAM, or DRAM* [12].

In the process of analysis, the abbreviation of *RAM* was found in both marine and automotive vocabulary, scientific terminology, and electronics. There are many of

deciphering this abbreviation, which clearly complicates the translation process. In addition, *ram* exists as a separate verb with the meaning «to hit, or to crash into something», as well as a noun in multiple meanings in various fields of science and technology. To avoid inaccuracies, one needs to decipher, analyze the context, and use a dictionary of English abbreviations. In the deciphered form, the term «*Random access memory*», however, has a well-established designation in Russian, so there are no special problems when translating.

It is also important to mention that the smaller is the number of letters, the higher is the homonymy, as in the following example: *There are two choices as we can also find the ASP.NET Web Application (.NET Framework) using* ***VB*** *(Visual Basic)* [9]. The abbreviation of *VB*, existing out of the context, can be deciphered as *vertical bomb*; *volunteer battalion*; *Victoria Bitter* (a name of a lager produced in Melbourn, Victoria); *Virus Builder*; *Verbal Behavior*; *vertical burning* etc. [1; 3; 5]

When working with the abbreviation, the translator often distinguishes its notion and the definition via the context, i.e. uses numerous methods:

– context analysis (in most cases, abbreviations when first used in a particular context are usually accompanied by a decipher. If the decipher is not given, it is important to read the entire text);

– using abbreviation dictionaries and reference sources (it is most recommended to rely on electronic constantly updated dictionary databases);

– structural/componential analysis of abbreviations (abbreviations may as well include additional characters: full stops, slashes, etc., for the correct deciphering) [7];

– using analogies (is inextricably linked to the analysis of the abbreviation structure. A support method can also be used to provide a more approximate understanding of the abbreviation) [8, c. 80–84].

To sum up, the use of abbreviations is often difficult, since they include a number of extralinguistic components. Their adequate perception is achieved only via careful studying the context and the possible definitions from the dictionary. Ignoring these, the translator is no longer able to translate any type of abbreviation with the utmost efficiency.

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