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CONCEPT OF LOCALIZATION IN LITERARY TRANSLATION: STATUS AND COURSE**E. S. Sherstneva***North-Eastern State University, Magadan, Russian Federation*

Abstract. Introduction. The main problem in the localization of literary works is accurately translating the nuances, cultural references, and literary devices used in the original text into the target language. A skilled translator must be able to convey the emotional depth of the work to the intended reader while still maintaining the integrity of the author's intent. **Purpose:** to discuss the significance of localization in literary translation and the strategies employed by translation professionals to accomplish it. **Research results, discussion.** Poorly localized text can lead to misinterpretation, loss of meaning, inaccuracy, loss of cultural references, alienation of the target audience, and loss of literary value. These issues can result in confusion, misunderstandings, and a decreased appreciation of the translated work. All the approaches to translation have a common idea that preserving the essence and importance of the original text may require significant transformations, such as converting poetry into prose or vice versa; changing the font for academic purposes; reproducing the author's illustrations; replacing the tercets of the Italian original with a different form, including iambic pentameter; domesticating and modernizing the translation. However, there is a difference between conveying the same idea in a different way and creating new content to improve the original. The article also lists the main characteristics of a translator and states an approximate algorithm of actions required for the successful localization of a translated work. **Conclusion:** A translator must balance both aspects to ensure that the meaning and intent of the source text are conveyed accurately, while also making the text accessible and relatable to the target audience. In other words, he must be able to make informed decisions about how to adapt the text to ensure that it resonates with the target audience, while preserving the unique qualities that make the work a classic in the first place.

Keywords: localization, literary translation, convey, original intent, cultural reference, enhance, approach

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ЭВОЛЮЦИЯ ЯВЛЕНИЯ ЛОКАЛИЗАЦИИ И ЕГО РОЛЬ В ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОМ ПЕРЕВОДЕ**Е. С. Шерстнева***Северо-Восточный государственный университет, г. Магадан, Российская Федерация*

Аннотация. Введение. Главная проблема при локализации литературных произведений заключается в точном переводе оттенков значения, культурных отсылок и литературных приемов, используемых в оригинальном тексте. Опытный переводчик должен уметь передать эмоциональную глубину произведения определенной читательской аудитории, сохраняя при этом целостность замысла автора. **Цель:** обсуждение значения локализации в литературном переводе и стратегий, используемых переводчиками-профессионалами для ее достижения. **Результаты исследования, обсуждения:** неверно локализованный текст может привести к неправильному толкованию, потере значения, потере культурного контекста, отчуждению целевой аудитории и потере общей литературной ценности переводимого произведения. Эти проблемы вызовут недопонимание и недоразумение у целевой аудитории, приведут к снижению роли переведенного произведения в принимающей литературе. Рассмотренные нами подходы переводчиков к локализации произведений мировой классики различных эпох имеют общую идею о том, что сохранение сути и важности оригинального текста может потребовать значительных трансформаций, например, превращения поэзии в прозу и наоборот; изменение шрифта для академических целей; повторение авторских иллюстраций; замена терцинов итальянского оригинала на иную форму, в том числе ямбическим пентаметром; доместикация, модернизация перевода. Однако есть разница между передачей той же идеи другим способом и созданием нового содержания для улучшения оригинала. В статье также перечислены основные характеристики переводчика и предлагается приблизительный алгоритм действий, необходимые для успешной локализации переведенного произведения. **Заключение:** переводчик должен находить баланс

между обеими сторонами, чтобы гарантировать точность передачи значения и замысла исходного текста, сохраняя при этом доступность и относительную близость к целевой аудитории. Должен быть в состоянии принимать обоснованные решения о том, как адаптировать текст таким образом, чтобы он резонировал с целевой аудиторией, сохраняя при этом уникальные качества, делающие произведение классическим.

Ключевые слова: локализация, художественный перевод, воплотить, замысел автора, культурное соответствие, дополнять, подход

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When the violin repeats what the piano has just played, it cannot make the same sounds and it can only approximate the same chords. It can, however, make recognizably the same "music," the same air. But it can do so only when it is as faithful to the self-logic of the violin as it is to the self-logic of the piano.

John Ciardi (*The Inferno*, 1954 Translation)

Introduction

Translating a literary text from one language to another is a complex and delicate process and it necessitates a profound understanding of both the source and target languages and a detailed knowledge of the cultural and literary context of the work. One of the crucial aspects of this process is localization, which comprises adapting the text to the cultural and linguistic context of the target audience. Localization is essential if we want to ensure that the translated work accurately reflects the cultural and linguistic framework for the target audience and maintains the integrity of the original work while making it available to a new audience.

Localization in translation denotes the process of adapting a text to a specific language, culture, and geographic region, more practically localization is "process of modifying a product for a specific locale" [1, p. 17]. This process is aimed at translating the original taking into consideration social and linguistic context of the target readership. Thus, translator has to adjust idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and other elements that may not be translated directly, as well as make sure that the text is appropriate for the target readership market. Localization also involves formatting the text properly using any images or graphics are suitable for the target audience. The overall goal of localization is to generate a translated text that is not only accurate but also feels natural and suitable for the target readers. Without proper localization, a literary translation may occur as foreign,

distant and unfamiliar to the target audience, all these may bring down the overall reading experience. In this article, we will explore the reasons why localization is so important in the process of literary translation and the various techniques that are used by practitioners of translation to achieve it.

Research results

We can single out five major classes of problems that all the translators face while working on a translation that goes with the norms of the target audience.

1. Cultural differences: one of the main difficulties that translators encounter in the process of localization is understanding and accurately conveying cultural modifications between the source and target languages.

2. Language nuances: another difficulty is understanding the subtle nuances and subtleties of the target language, which can be difficult to reconstruct in translation. This includes things like idioms, colloquialisms, and regional variations in the language.

3. Technical terminology: translating technical terminology and specialized language can be challenging, especially if the translator is not familiar with the subject matter or industry.

4. Formatting and layout: localization also involves making sure that the text is properly configured and that any images or graphics are proper for the target audience. This can be challenging, especially when translating between languages with different scripts or character sets.

5. Maintaining the original intent and tone: translators also face the challenge of maintaining the original intent and tone of the text while adapting it to the cultural and linguistic context of the target audience. This can be difficult to achieve without losing the essence of the original text.

As P. Sandrini puts it “localization can be a great opportunity for translators if they have the ambition to go beyond translation” [2, p. 22].

In the world literature there are examples of good as well as poor localization. There are many examples of good localization of works of literature, here are few well-known examples: “The Little Prince” (1943) by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry has been translated into over 505 languages and dialects. According to critical analyses the translators made sure to preserve the original intent and tone of the text adjusting it to the culture and language of the target audience. The novel “To Kill a Mockingbird” (1960) by Harper Lee has been translated into many languages, and the translators have successfully reconstructed the original meaning and style taking into account peculiarities of their implementation in other cultural and linguistic contexts.

Moving on the poor examples of localization or absence of it we can set as an example the following works:

The epic poem “The Divine Comedy” (1321) by Dante Alighieri has been translated into various languages, but some some of the studied translations have been criticized for being overly literal, losing the poetic and literary value of the original. The novel “War and Peace” (1867) by Leo Tolstoy has got lots of translations? It has at least 12 English translators worked on it. Still some translations have been criticized for being excessively literal so that it lead to depletion of the historical and cultural context of the original work.

It should be noted that any examples of poor localization of works of literature might be subject to personal opinions and taste and not all translations are inadequate. Translating a literary work is complicated and it is not always easy to find the right balance between localization and preservation of the intent and tone of the original.

To be able to localize the literary work successfully any translator should have some special talents and experience in the following spheres:

1. Cultural understanding/cultural sensitivity: a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural component of the source text will be a good instrument for making appropriate cultural adaptations in the target text.

2. Educational background: a translator with a strong educational background in literature, history, and cultural studies will have a more profound understanding of the relevant context of the source text.

3. Language proficiency: translator’s strong proficiency in both the source and target languages will promote a better delivery of semantic and pragmatic components of the original.

4. Experience in localization: rich practice in localization provides a better understanding of the challenges and techniques involved in adapting a text to a different culture and language.

5. Feedback and revisions: a translator who is open to feedback and revisions will be better able to create a localized translation that is accurate and appropriate for the target audience.

We may assume that having the aforementioned factors in mind a translator can ensure that the text is localized properly, keeps the unique meaning and intent of the text, and makes it relatable and accessible to the target audience.

Herebelow we would like to present some examples that deserve to be highlighted as a crucial approach to localization by practitioners of translation described by them in the paratextual context (table):

Table / Таблица

**Translation Practitioners’ Approach to Localization of a Literary Translation /
Подход переводчиков к процессу локализации художественного произведения**

Translator / Переводчик	Approach to Localization / Подход к локализации
1	2
Samuel Butler, translated the Greek epic poem “The Odyssey” by Homer into English prose	“In the preface to my translation of the Iliad I have given my views as to the main principles by which a translator should be guided, and need not repeat them here, beyond pointing out that “the initial liberty of translating poetry into prose involves the continual taking of more or less liberty throughout the translation; for much that is right in poetry is wrong in prose, and the exigencies of readable prose are the first things to be considered in a prose translation” [3, p. VII].

Continuation of table

1	2
	<p>As most people know, “The Odyssey” contains many passages that were taken from “the Iliad”. S. Butler originally planned to print these sections in a different font and provide references to the corresponding sections in “the Iliad” in the margins of his manuscript. However, he realized that this approach would make the translation too scholarly and difficult to read, so he decided not to go ahead with it. Nonetheless, his opinion is if those in charge of University presses publish a Greek text of the Odyssey with the Iliadic passages printed in another font and with references they would do a great service to students.</p> <p>As S. Butler himself comments – there are some points which are crucial for the reader and should be kept before him. Thus, the translator repeated several of the illustrations used in The Authoress of “The Odyssey” to show the outer court of Ulysses' house more vividly for the reading audience. In an appendix S. Butler did the reprinting of have the paragraphs which illustrate the plan of Ulysses' house [3, pp. V–XIII].</p>
<p>John Ciardi, successfully reproduced an Italian narrative poem “The Inferno” by Dante Alighieri in English prose</p>	<p>J. Ciardi’s opinion on localization was introduced as an epigraph to our article. In philological terms, when the violin replicates a melody played by the piano, it cannot produce identical notes or exact chords, but it can still produce a recognizable version of the same “music” or melody. However, in order to do so, the violin must adhere to its own unique principles of musical expression, just as the piano adheres to its own principles. In other words, the violin must maintain its own self-logic while mimicking the melody of the piano. For example, just like how a philologist studies the language and structure of different texts, the violinist must respect the distinct characteristics and constraints of the violin while recreating a melody originally played on the piano.</p> <p>For J. Ciardi the process of rendering from language to language should be named as a “transposition” than as a “translation,” because “translation” implies a series of word-for-word equivalents which is unachievable when we think about cross language boundaries [4, p. IX].</p> <p>Continue comparing translation with music J. Ciardi insists that for him, the idea of finding exact word-for-word equivalents in translation seems inaccurate for poetry. Poetry is not solely composed of individual words, but rather intricate arrangements of words that encompass denotations, connotations, rhythms, puns, juxtapositions, and references to the literary tradition of the poet. It is challenging to preserve the entirety of such complexity when crossing the barrier of language, even in prose, and even more so in poetry. What needs to be preserved, even if it means using only four strings to represent eighty-eight keys, is the overall emotional and aesthetic essence of the poetic structure, its gestalt.</p> <p>“The only way I could see of trying to preserve that gestalt was to try for a language as close as possible to Dante’s, which is in essence a sparse, direct, and idiomatic language, distinguishable from prose only in that it transcends every known notion of prose” [4, p. IX].</p> <p>In his version J. Ciardi tried to reconstruct idiomatic English in the present rendering not using Dante's triple rhyme as it requires approximately 1,500 triple rhymes to render the Inferno. He was sure that English has no such resources of rhyme. Compared to English Italian is a paradise for rhyming, English – is a disaster. Ciardi is sure that in order to mimic Dante's style, some level of rhyme is necessary, and the use of three-line stanzas is crucial. He chooses such form as he opts for a deficient rhyme in order to keep the language more natural [4, p. X].</p> <p>Besides “The Divine Comedy” is very problematic for localization as it is so full of specific Italian politic figures. So, it is essential to explain who the characters are. Dante is writing for a particular audience from a particular time, and no translation can deal with the necessity to provide a lot of specific pre-knowledge about subjects Dante isn’t going to explain in any way. The result can be either pages half full of footnotes explaining what Dante is talking about, or if they are skipped one will end up with an incomprehensible mess of references to people and events the reader has never heard of [4, pp. X–XI].</p>
<p>Robin Buss, translated adventure novel “The Count of Monte Cristo” written by French author Alexandre Dumas</p>	<p>As it is explained by R. Buss, to address the broader question of translation, his main goal has been to create a version that is both accurate and easy to read. In his opinion there are many misconceptions about translation, often perpetuated by scholars who view it as a theoretical or moral issue. R. Buss argues with Leonard Tancock, for example, who insisted that translators must always be faithful to their original text and should not make any changes, omissions, or alterations to it. “The Count of Monte Cristo” translator questions this rigid approach and wonders who is demanding this kind of perfectionism and strict adherence to the source text. R. Buss adds that such academic theorists believe that translations should be written in a way that reveals that they are translations, and it is considered wrong to hide the fact that a text is a translation. However, ordinary readers often prefer translations that read like original texts, and some reviewers do not understand the complexities of translation [5, p. XVI].</p>

End of table

1	2
	<p>R. Buss recognizes that translation is an impossible task, but one still has to engage in it and believes that everything can be translated to some degree. He thinks it is not obligatory to avoid making the reading experience smoother for the reader, or stay out of the way entirely. He describes his primary goal as provision of non-native speakers with the pleasure of reading Dumas and revelation of aspects of his work that have not been conveyed in previous translations. In translator's opinion his version is a new interpretation of a classic and highly popular novel which most people would agree is long overdue [5, p. XVI].</p>
<p>Emily Wilson, the first woman translated the Greek epic poem "The Odyssey" by Homer into English</p>	<p>Many critics accentuate that E. Wilson managed to get rid of pseudo-archaisms or epic pomposity and reconstructed a brilliant clear translation of the original. E. Wilson's translation is written in iambic pentameter verse in modern English language because it is the conventional meter for regular English narrative prose, in the translation there is the same number of lines as in the original Greek text. It is done to match Homer's lively rhythm and musical style [6, p. 82]. S. Shira puts it the following way: "A revelation. Never have I been so aware at once of the beauty of the poetry, the physicality of Homer's world, and the moral ambiguity of those who inhabit it. [Wilson's] decisions to discard flowery conventions, and to limit herself to the number of lines in the original poem, produce a version both fleet and vivid"¹. A. Quinn in her turn states that: "Wilson's project is basically a progressive one: to scrape away all the centuries of verbal and ideological buildup – the Christianizing (Homer predates Christianity), the nostalgia, the added sexism (the epics are sexist enough as they are), and the Victorian euphemisms – to reveal something fresh and clean. Why call them "handmaidens" when they were slaves? Why insist, as so many translators do, on 19th-century diction when that time had no more in common with Homer's than ours?"².</p> <p>E. Wilson asserts that rethinking of the terms in which we discuss translation is necessary. For her in translation interpretation is a must, "there is no such thing as a translation that provides anything like a transparent window through which a reader can see the original" [6, p. 86]. She has completed the task of creating a new and coherent English text as best as she could, trying to save something of that understanding but operating within an entirely different cultural context. Her motto is: "There is often a notion, especially in the Anglo-American world, that a translation is good insofar as it disguises its own existence as a translation; translations are praised for being "natural." I hope that my translation is readable and fluent, but that its literary artifice is clearly apparent." [6, p. 82].</p> <p>The translator's aim is not to depict Homer as "primitive," but rather to emphasize that his style is not characterized by pompousness. Additionally, E. Wilson intended to encourage readers to actively engage with the text. While impressive displays of rhetoric and linguistic prowess may garner admiration and convey importance, they can also stifle dissent and hinder deeper understanding. In her opinion, a consistently elevated style can make it challenging for readers to grasp the significance of the story. In Wilson's translation, she strived to maintain the epic poem form while avoiding ostentatious linguistic flourishes, so as to prompt a more reflective examination of the narrative's meaning and significance [6, p. 83].</p>

Discussion

Thus, one parallel idea in all of the approaches is that translators more often understand that maintaining the essence and significance of the original can sometimes require significant rephrasing, changing the poetry into prose and the other way round. But there is a distinction between expressing the same idea in a different manner and simply fabricating content to "fix" the original. It is to say the least disrespectful to the original writer.

Creating a perfectly localized translation of a literary work is a multi-step process that requires a deep understanding of both the source and target languages, as well as a thorough knowledge of the cultural and literary context of the work. Here are some steps that can be taken to create a perfectly localized translation:

- Research the target culture and audience: before beginning the translation process, it is important to do some research on the target culture and audience in order to understand their demands and expectations.
- Have a native speaker translator: a translator who is a native speaker of the target language inherently has a deeper understanding of the subtle nuances and intricacies of the language.
- Use cultural consultants: cultural experts or consultants can be very helpful in the process of

¹ Chira S. New & Noteworthy. The Sunday Book Review, 2017, December 12, p. 4.

² Quinn A. Emily Wilson's "Odyssey" scrapes the barnacles off Homer's hull. *NPR Books Home*, 2017, December 2. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2017/12/02/567773373/emily-wilsons-odyssey-scrapes-the-barnacles-off-homers-hull> (accessed 15.04.2023). (In Eng.).

comprehension of the original as they possess a “connoisseurship” of the literary and cultural context of the source text.

– Apply to revisions and proofreading: have the translation revised by your colleague and proofread by a native speaker to ensure accuracy and idiomatic fluency.

– Consider the formatting and layout: make sure that the text is correctly organized, that any pictures or illustrations are tailored to the culture of the people reading the translation

– Maintain the original significance, denotation and connotation: while making the text culture-specific, one should be careful not to alter the intended message and style of the original.

By following these above described steps, it is expected that translator will be able to generate a perfectly localized translation, accurate and harmonious with the original.

Of course, localization is not panacea in the field of literary translation. Opinions of researchers on the notion of localization and its effectiveness and correctness diverge. Some stand the point that localization is vital if we want to be sure that the translated work exactly reflects the cultural and linguistic peculiarities of the target readership market at the same time preserving the integrity of the original work. Researchers believe that localization is necessary if the aim is to make the translated work accessible and relatable to the intended audience.

On the other hand, there are some theorists of translation who argue that localization can be detrimental to the translation process, emphasizing the idea of its possible facilitating a loss of denotative and connotative semantics and intent, and that it can also lead to a homogenization of cultural references and expressions. F. J. Haddley insists that “though I do think that localization is a very important part of translation, I at the same time believe that localization in literary translation should not be as obvious as localization in video games, for example”¹.

There are also researchers who argue that localization is a necessary but not sufficient process for translation. They believe that localization is necessary to make a text accessible to the target audience but that it is not enough to ensure an accurate translation. They argue that a translator should also consider other factors, such as the intended audience,

the purpose of the text, and the style and tone of the original work. For example, “the localization process appears to be more about the preparation of the actual localization, rather than the adaptation to the target locale itself” [7, p. 35].

But, notwithstanding the opinion against the localization process, we think it essential to emphasize that if a text is poorly localized, it can lead to a number of issues, including: 1) Misinterpretation. Poor localization can result in a misinterpretation of the original text, which can lead to confusion and misunderstandings among the target audience. 2) Loss of meaning. Poor localization can also result in a loss of the original meaning and intent of the text, which can make it less effective in communicating the intended message. 3) Inaccuracy. Poor localization can also lead to inaccuracies in the translation, which can make it less reliable and trustworthy. 4) Loss of cultural references. Poor localization can lead to a loss of cultural references and idiomatic expressions, which can make the text less significant and open to the target audience. 5) Alienation of the target audience. Poor localization can also lead to alienation of the target audience, as they may feel that the text is not relevant or appropriate for them. 6) Loss of literary value. Poor localization can also result in the loss of literary value of the original text, which can diminish the appreciation and enjoyment of the translated work.

Conclusion

In conclusion we would like to underline the relevance and sustainability of an interdisciplinary concept of localization and finish the article quoting the patron of saint translation, St. Jerome, whose translation philosophy is in sync with localization phenomenon – “I not only admit, but freely proclaim that in translation from the Greek – except in the case of Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery – I render not word for word, but sense for sense” [8, p. 23]. Both localization and sense rendering are important aspects of literary translation and are closely related. Together, they help to create a translation that is not only accurate but also relatable and accessible to the reader. Without localization, a text may not make sense to the target audience, and without sense rendering, the denotation and intent of the text may be lost in translation. Therefore, a translator needs to strike a balance between localization and sense rendering to ensure that the text is localized and the meaning and intent of the source text is conveyed accurately.

¹ Haddley F. J. Localization in literary translation. Yes or No? December, 2020. Available at: <https://fjhaddley.com/blog/localization-in-literary-translation-yes-or-no> (accessed 01.02.2023). (In Eng.).

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