



Methods of Modality Transmission in English and Russian Languages in Bilingual Translation

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Abstract

The relevance of the problem is in that modality is ambiguous conceptual category which analysis helps us not only to understand the nature of modality, but also the ways of its expression. The main idea is in research the specifics of expression of modality in English in comparison with Russian language.

The leading method to this problem study is the methodology of context and comparative analysis, translation methods.

The analysis of similarities and differences in the category of modality in English and Russian languages, translation techniques of modal meanings are investigated in the article. Using the methodology and methods of existing research contributes to the expansion and deepening linguistic concepts of the category of modality in general, as well as the use of materials in practice of English language teaching, especially on the practical classes in translation, and further development of the theoretical issues of language modality.

Materials of the article can be useful in practice of teaching English, especially on the practical classes in translation and in further development of theoretical issues of language modality.

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Introduction

Scientists' study of the mental processes, processes of acquiring information about the outside world, and socially significant actions of people reflected their attitude to this world. It is becoming increasingly important. The end of the twentieth century in linguistics was marked by the increasing of the interest in language not as symbolic, but as an anthropocentric system. The purpose of study is human's speech and mental activity. A lot of different areas appeared in science, such as: cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, ethnopsycholinguistics, psycholinguistics, intercultural communication. All listed linguistic directions set one task – to reveal those mental and psychological processes which are results in human speech. These mental processes are inseparably linked with a modality.

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At the beginning of the XIX century German scientist Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote that language, like all human activities is permeated with feelings and emotions that a person always expresses in language with the help of linguistic resources. [Vinogradov, 1960]. This phenomenon is called the speaker's relationship to reality or modal relations. In any language there is a category of modality which conveys these relationships with different linguistic means. The category of modality is complicated and contradictory interpretation in linguistics. According to Ya.I. Retsker, there is no other lexical and grammatical category in English which would present more difficulties in translation process, than category of a modality [Ya.I. Retsker, 2007]. Despite the existence of a long tradition in research the modality and a huge amount of literature devoted to it, it is still an important issue of study in modern linguistics, because it is not clearly defined its nature, its subtypes are not revealed, the relationship between logical modality and linguistic modality is not always clearly explained and the volume of this category is not firmly established. There is no standard definition of the modality that puts it in one line with other basic concepts of linguistics – words, sentences, text - and therefore can't be considered as its distinctive feature.

Interest in the category of modality especially increased in the last decades when functional approach was strongly approved in linguistics, the consecutive attention to a human factor as to an important extralinguistic component of the language phenomena was shown. From the point of view of functional approach, the modality is understood as a broad semantic category, structural and substantial volume, the functional hierarchy of values which are determined by the semantic double-point sentence, namely its nominative and communicative aspects. And the unequal nature of the relationship to reality is defined by individual, social and professional experience of the speaker [Nemets, 1989].

It should be noted that the globalization of the economy and integration processes in the culture, scientific and technical fields have led to an increase of multilingual contacts [Ghali, 2015]. Dynamically changing society also implies the readiness of a modern person to the processes of intercultural and international communication [Fakhrutdinova, 2015]. Communication becomes complicated with imperfection of language skills, differences in the perception of its units. The way we see, hear, perceive the world around us and interpret it is predetermined mainly with language habits of our society [Muller, Sapir, Whorf, Wittgenstein, 2003]. This problem is particularly acute when there is an expression of modality, because this category bears relation to the action and reality and is the expresser and supporter of people's mentality. Using modality verbs, we express our attitude towards the committed act, react to current situation or predetermine it. Besides, the grammar is not simply the tool for reproduction of thoughts, but it forms thoughts itself. It is the program and the management of mental activity of an individual and the means of impressions analysis and their synthesis [Muller, Sapir, Whorf, Wittgenstein, 2003]. Because of their subjective perception people speaking foreign language either distort the modality peculiar to a foreign language, or introduce a modality specific to the native language in the statement that may cause misunderstanding. Both types of distortion generally occur simultaneously. The basic modal duplication of values within a language or the numerical disparity of the ratio of the modal values in different languages can often be the reason of it. The task of studying the modality is seen in, firstly, to identify the entire set of senses of the subjective nature, the expression of which is necessary and possible in the sentence; secondly, to define their opposition to each other and the interaction; and thirdly, to outline the range of existence methods of each these subjective meanings in the sentence, taking into account their interaction [Shmeleva, 1984].

Methodological framework

The methodology of research approaches allows to broaden and deepen linguistic ideas about categories of the modality in general.

The leading method to this problem study is the methodology of context and comparative analysis, translation methods that allow to consider especially the translation of modal constructions in Russian and English languages.

The category of modality reveals the features and structure of English and Russian languages, covers a wide range of categories. And also the modal relationships are an important part of the information contained in the

message.

Results

Developed analysis of the category of modality reveals the characteristics and structure of English and Russian languages, which have certain grammatical and lexical units. The modality covers a wide range of categories. Between the extreme poles - affirmation and negation there are located possibility and impossibility, probability and improbability, assumption and doubt. Modal relations are an important part of the information containing in the message. Translation cannot be correct if the modality presented in the original message, is not reflected in it.

The category of modality is one of the most complicated and low-studied in linguistics. It remains an important issue of study in modern linguistics as its nature is not unambiguously defined, its subtypes aren't revealed.

The sphere of communication in any language is limited not only by the exchange of information using simple sentences and asking questions. In spoken and written statements we are faced with the necessity of expressing requests, offers, orders, desires, assumptions and intentions. The desire to be polite and considerate in one situation, the need to emphasize the special relationship in another, the ability to perceive a speaker's speech, raise one of the main problems of intercultural communication - the problem of perception adequacy and interpretation of the modalities of foreign-language statements.

The modality in the process of translation is one of the most important aspects of achieving adequate translation and communication becomes difficult or impossible without its correct interpretation. The category of modality is one of the reasons of frequent mistakes in the translation into English. The translation cannot be considered correctly if the modality presented in the original text is not reflected in it. From the translator's point of view, the modality can be divided into two types [Belyaeva, 1992]:

- simple (temporary) – whether the action (fact) takes place now or will be;
- complicated, which is expressed with modal verbs: can, may, must (should, ought to), need to be, etc., and also moods (subjunctive and conditional).

In translating English modal verbs, Russian equivalent does not always have the modality:

He can speak and write English – Он говорит и пишет по-английски.

Why should you say it? – Почему ты так говоришь?

There are no exact conformity of modal verbs in Russian language. For example, the verb 'should' can be translated in accordance of the context:

Those who think that the government **should (1)** take up the slack in private spending point out that there is an abundance of growth-enhancing projects – a point that **should (2)** be obvious to anyone familiar with America's fraying infrastructure... Lastly, extending unemployment insurance in the wake of a once-in-a-half-century crisis **should be (3)** a no-brainer [«Why America Isn't Working» 2010, www].

In this extract the modal verb *should* is used in the following meanings:

- 1) obligation;
- 2) confidence; assurance;
- 3) probability; supposition.

In the process of bilingual translation they are differentiated in the following way:

Те, кто думает, что правительству **следует (1)** устранить слабинку в отношении затрат на частный сектор, указывают на то, что существует изобилие увеличивающих экономический рост проектов – довод, который **должен (2)** быть очевиден для любого, знакомого с изношенной инфраструктурой Америки... И последнее, увеличение страховки по безработице после кризиса, который случается только раз за полстолетия, **было бы (3)** глупостью [«Почему Америка не работает» 2010, www].

The English modal verb can/could is used in statements which are absent in Russian. For example,

- 1) I can speak English. – Я говорю по-английски.

- 2) No one was interested in options other than Putin's plan, as people could see on the TV and feel in their pockets what a good job he was doing [«Russia under pressure» 2008, www]. – Никто не интересовался какими-то иными вариантами, кроме плана Путина, поскольку люди видели по телевизору и ощущали своим карманом, насколько хорошо он работает [«Россия под давлением» 2008, www].

Most of English modal verbs have many meanings, for example, ‘must’ expresses the obligation, probability, ‘may’ – opportunity, permission, can emphasizes physical and mental capacities:

You must go there right now – Вы должны пойти туда сейчас же.

You must be tired – Вы, должно быть, устали.

I cannot leave him alone – Мне нельзя оставить его одного.

When the modal verb is in the Perfect Indefinitive form, its polysemantic character is lost: ‘must have been’ – supposes certainty, confidence, ‘may have been’ – opportunity. The Perfect Infinitive indicates the previous action (after must, may, can't) or action which didn't happen (after should, ought to, could, to be to):

They must have discussed it yesterday – Должно быть, они обсудили это вчера.

In the process of modality transmission from English into Russian, in the latter the following words can be used: *ведь, хоть, мол, де, дескать, разве* etc., but they are differently expressed in English:

«**But you must have seen** her every morning when you did the housekeeping» [Maugham, 2000]. – **А разве вы не видели** ее каждое утро, когда отдавали распоряжения по хозяйству? [Maugham, 1985]

Special attention should be paid on the translation of ‘might have been’. It can have three meanings: the previous action, action which didn't happen, alleged (fictional) action:

To hear him tell his stories he might have won the war alone – Если послушать его рассказы, можно подумать, что он один выиграл войну.

Introductory modal words: certainly – конечно, apparently – очевидно, presumably – возможно, allegedly – будто бы, якобы, of course, surely, in fact – на самом деле, более того, словом; indeed – более того, поистине, фактически; reportedly – якобы, по сообщениям, and also structures: it is reported, it is presumed, surely – несомненно, верно and similar can express various shades of the modal relations that it is also necessary to consider in translation. For example,

Lastly, the number of significant scientific discoveries made each year can be estimated, and through such an estimate must, of course, be somewhat arbitrary. – И, наконец, количество ежегодных значительных научных открытий может быть подсчитано, однако такой подсчет, само собой разумеется, будет несколько произвольным [Belyaeva, 1987].

Forms of moods are not difficult as in the translation there is also used the mood of Russian language. Forms of Subjunctive in English have not modal values:

It is important that everyone should do his work – Важно, чтобы каждый делал свою работу.

I suggest that we all should go for a walk – Я предлагаю всем пойти на прогулку!

The native language is the first source of difficulties in the foreign speech. To speak English properly, you need to know the culture of the British, and to know it, you must be fluent in their language. In the modern interdependent world it is necessary to increase contacts between the Russians and the British in order to understand each other.

In etiquette of the British there are more conventions than in Russian. At the end of business and friendly talks the British often offer: We must get together. The modal verb ‘must’ shouldn't mislead the Russian-speakers. It is the phrase which has many meanings, for example, I'd love to see you soon, I hope we meet again soon. ‘Must’ has the same effect here, as in the expression ‘You must come visit us soon’. These courtesies don't oblige.

In Russian language, there are many ways to make a polite request. It is a subjunctive mood with a particle ‘would’, modal verbs, diminutive suffixes, and also the word ‘please’; wish or request are also often expressed by means of negative constructions. In English such keywords are ‘please’ or ‘thank you’ which occur in English

speech much more often than in Russian where there is a subjunctive mood with negation. In English language these grammatical forms are rare or never used. In English, when we express a question-request the word 'please' is used:

Please, give me that pen.

Could you pass me some bread, please?

Saying the word 'please' in the polite phrase, it is better to use constructions with 'could' than with 'will'. The phrase: Will you (please) pass me some bread? sounds harsh. Modal form could soften the harshness, especially if there is no word 'please'. Polite forms such as 'I'd like', for example, in the sentence: I'd like to have green tea, spoken with proper intonation, may not require the word 'please', but the constructions with 'will' definitely require it.

Questions-addresses present the greatest difficulty in communication in English. In Russian language, they are used in the negative form, and the answers in English are expressed with positive structures.

Russian polite requests and questions: «не могли бы вы?», «вам не трудно?», «вас не затруднит?», «не трудно ли вам?», «не затруднит ли вас?», «нельзя ли?» are transferred into English: Could you please / kindly, Could / May I bother / trouble you to (do smth.). Requests: «Не могли бы вы сказать?», «Не скажете ли вы?», «Вы не скажете?», «Вы не можете сказать?», «Не будете ли вы так любезны?», – are translated as Could you please / kindly / Could you be so kind as to / May / Could I please ask you to...

To get a piece of advice the British use the usual expression: 'I'd like to ask for your advice on this...', or more often, 'I'd like to know your opinion'. In the meaning they differ from advice structures in Russia, where people look for advice not only because they are interested in another's opinion, but also to find a partner in reaching a decision; in Britain, after listening to the advice of many people, the person is able to do as he considers it necessary. Advice is usually given by the English in the subjunctive mood, expressed in the form of opportunities:

If I were you, Perhaps you might, Why don't you try to...

Advice, which in Russian is expressed through negation, in English often has a positive form: Не сделать ли вам...

Correctly: What if you were to / What about your doing... Perhaps you might / do / think of / about / consider doing...

Thus, as Russian language on typological system belongs to synthetic languages and English language is analytical, contextually appropriate forms of their realization are not always adequately can be translated into the opposite language. Nevertheless, in each case of the contextual use of modal constructions in Russian it is possible to find an equivalent in English.

Discussion

The previous researches conducted by I.R. Galperin, E. Sapir, D. Lyons, M. Swan are devoted to the consideration and analysis of aspects of the modality in general. I.R. Galperin noted that modern English grammar "in general avoid giving the definition to this category, obviously, considering it as a reality, and are limited only with indication of forms in which is the modality" [Galperin, 1980]. E. Sapir wrote that: "Modality, roughly speaking, the grammatical category (or related concepts), which are traditionally known as mood, under "modalities" I do not mean a factual statement, let us say, the negation or uncertainty, but rather their formal expression" [Swan, 1995]. In this definition the modality is identified with a verb mood. Features of a modality transmission in translation are considered in Ya.I. Retsker's [Retsker, 2007], Zh. P. Viney's and Zh. Darbelne's works [Viney, 1995]. On the nature of modality D. Lyons singled out two classes of sentences: imperative (expresses a command or an order) and interrogative (expressing additional modal signs on certain expectations of the speaker). D. Lyons also finds various ways of grammatical expression of the speaker relation to the contents in various languages. M. Swan specifies that in English grammar such meaning as volition, opportunity or necessity are considered as modal words. So verbs that express these values are called modal auxiliaries" [Swan, 1995].

However, the analysis of the scientific works devoted to a problem of the translation of the modality has theoretical character, and novelty of this research is expressed in the comparative analysis of the category of

modality on the example of two languages – English and Russian.

Conclusion

Thus, it was concluded that the text translation can't be considered correctly if the modality which is present in the original text, isn't reflected in it. In each case of the contextual use of modal structures in Russian it is possible to find an equivalent in English. The comparative analysis of transfer ways of the modal relations in English and Russian languages was carried out. The modality is ambiguous concept that requires deep study. It is necessary not only to understand the nature of modality, but also to understand the ways of its expression. The modality in translation process is one of the most important aspects of achievement of adequacy of the translation and without its correct interpretation communication can be complicated. The desire to be polite, requirement to emphasize the special relation lift one of the main problems of intercultural communication – a problem of adequacy of perception and interpretation of the modality of the foreign-language statement. In many cases the choice of transfer way of the modality is mediated by standards of the translating language. English modal verbs do not have a direct correspondence in Russian, so the translator can choose an appropriate word or words that match the context.

Recommendations

The article is of interest for English language teachers, in particular for students, on the practical classes in translation during university education, in further development of theoretical issues of language modality.

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