

Borrowings for Translating Cultural Terms From the Tomsk Region in Russia to American English

Viktoriia Tuzova | supervised by: Jacqueline Schneider; Constance Walters | Syracuse University ELI 2020

Abstract: The poster examines three main methods to convey and translate cultural terms from Russian to English. These methods were analyzed and considered in the presentation in order to study how they are used during the translation process. It is expected to see that these methods are connected with each other.

Introduction: In accordance with Merriam Webster dictionary, cultural bound term is a noun that designates a particular being or thing that is valid only within a particular culture. Variety of cultural terms can be conveyed to another language by means of calque, transliteration, and transcribing.

Historical background: Vlahov and Florin are the first ones to coin 'culture bound term' to cite cultural elements, objects, habits, customs, etc. Whereas Komissarov was one of the first who introduced calque, transliteration, and transcribing as methods to translate and convey culture bound terms from the source language to the target language. According to him and his colleagues, the terms are defined as follows.

calque is translation approach that implies word-for-word translation of lexical unit from source language into target language

transliteration is translation approach that implies conveying lexical unit letter by letter from source language into target language (graphic form)

transcribing is translation approach that implies conveying lexical unit sound by sound from source language into target language (sound form)

Skomorokh Theater



transcribing/transliteration + calque:
Skomorokh theater
(minstrel clown, fool, entertainer who sings songs and plays musical instruments)

Dyzvyozdnyy Klyuch vs Dyzvyozdnyy spring



transcribing/transliteration:
Dyzvyozdnyy Klyuch (as a place a Natural Monument)
transcribing/transliteration + calque:
Dyzvyozdnyy spring (as a geographical sight)

Voskrenenskaya Gora vs Voskrenenskaya Hill



transcribing/transliteration:
Voskresenskaya Gora (as a tourist sight)
transcribing/transliteration + calque:
Voskresenskaya Hill (as a geographical sight)

Reference:

1. Komissarov V.N. Translation Theory (linguistic aspects): Lecture books for faculties of foreign languages-M: Vysshaya Shkola, 1990 – 253p.
2. Vlahov S.I., Florin S.P. untranslatable in Translation M.: Valent, 2009. 360p.
3. <https://tomsk-gorod.ru/kuda-shodit-v-tomske-dostoprimechatelnosti/>
4. <http://znaiigorod.ru/afisha/dyzvezdnyy-klyuch-i-bobrovaya-fazenda-06-1>
5. <https://travel-tomsk.ru/ob-ekty-kul-tury/teatry/tomskiy-oblastnoy-teatr-kukly-i-akter-skomoroh>

Conclusion:

The findings show, all three types of borrowing are used in combination. This means that transcribing type of borrowing will probably contain evidence of transliteration type of borrowing. At the same time transliteration type of borrowing can also contain features of transcribing type of borrowing. Such combination is not obvious at the first glance until one scrutinizes and analyzes lexical units. And calque is another type that is obviously more noticeable because of nonstandard typing/ sound that seems foreign to another culture.