

Mediated Discourse Dynamics: Semiotic Potential and Cognitive Space Generation within Cross-Cultural Cross-Linguistic Communication

BYKOVA Irina A. (1), NOTINA Elena A. (2), RADIĆ Nebojša (3)

RUDN University, Russian Federation (1)
RUDN University, Russian Federation (2)
Cambridge University, United Kingdom (3)

Abstract

Cognitive specificities that characterize dynamics of mediated discourse production and impact of the latter on semiotic space potential of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communication reveal dialectic interaction between peculiarities of perception, cognition, and language use and constrains in mediated communication. The phenomenon of interrelation between language and cognition is viewed in this article through the prism of adequacy and communicative equivalence as fundamental postulates underlying the process when certain notions and concepts of source language are transferred into target language, generating relevant inferences and implications within corresponding conceptual systems of participants of cross-cultural mediated communication. The aim of this study is to analyze linguistic and cultural features, as well as cognitive aspects of verbalization processes within mediated discourse generation that have direct impact on its semiotic potential and intertextuality phenomenon in a given mass media discourse and ensure efficacy of mediated cross-cultural cross-linguistic communication. The methodological base of the research is formed by the methods of semantic and comparative analysis, the method of translation, and the questionnaire method which involved Ph.D. students of RUDN-university (n-105) from different countries (Russia, the Netherlands, Ecuador, Philippines, Colombia, Cuba, Syria, Argelia, Jordan, etc.).

We conclude that in translation cognitive flexibility of frames for conceptual meaning and linguistic form compatibility and correspondence that facilitates appropriate sense interplay and successful sense actualization within the cognitive space of a given mediated discourse in target and source languages is to be considered as one of the key points that guarantees the dynamics of the latter when alluding to common facts and ideas, as well as predictable associations and stable representations of a given socio-cultural society in the context of respective presuppositions of communication. The scope of practical value of the study includes linguistic and translation researches, language teaching, discourse and lexicographic studies.

Keywords: *translation, language, semiotic potential, cognition, cross-cultural communication;*

Introduction.

In recent decades, linguistics has extended the frames of critical and exhaustive investigation of systemic phenomena of language having for this aim discovery of new facts concerning language functioning in speech acts, insight into speech generation and perception and covering in first place usage-based areas of linguistics such as discourse oriented studies, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, etc., what has swept linguo-semiotics, cognitive linguistics and some other branches of cognitive science into the orbit of research interests regarding cognition, communication and artificial intelligence as well.

Factors that, while being external to language, have their effect on the latter, and come endowed with increasingly important role by modern functional and sociolinguistic approaches to language in dynamics, predetermine gradual amplification of the scope of issues concerning effectiveness of cross-linguistic cross-cultural communication.

In the realm of translation modern scientific researches have as a starting point wide interpretation or wide concept of translation as activity phenomenon. The latter is universally regarded as a process that actually or potentially involves mental function what preconditions special relevance of cognitive mechanisms of sense actualization and sense interaction to be studied through the prism of synergetic potential of mediated communication.

It should be emphasized that adequate theoretical description of translation and a deeper insight into the essence thereof, as well as further development of new approaches to the issues that, *inter alia*, refer to equivalence, translatability, and translation strategy, inevitably require the process of

translation in its dynamics to be explored in a wide socio-cultural context and with due account taken of extralinguistic factors – its social, cultural, psychological and other determinants, as well as communication presuppositions.

Discussion.

In the realm of mediated discourse textual interaction (*i.e.* linguistic and cognitive processing of information within knowledge transfer) is realized at the level of mental processes what implies and preconditions the usage of common cognitive and communicative-discursive strategies applied to different text systems by the author or the sender thereof in the source language [SL] and the translator as the secondary sender in the target language [TL].

When addressing the problems just referred to above the theory of translation calls for interdisciplinary efforts in terms of interaction with other linguistic disciplines and non-linguistic disciplines or fields of study while focusing on elaboration of comprehensive and integrated approach to the strategy of decision-making that implies multidimensional analysis of translation/interpretation, for it has significant impact on speech act efficiency criteria when modelling sense interaction within verbalization processes in target language in accordance with the translation norm of adequacy and equivalence, the intertextuality phenomenon in mediated discourse dynamics along with contextual effects and implications to be preserved in the target text (TT).

We should note that not all the determinants of translation are explicitly manifested in the target language text, especially within mediated communication in what regards providing or centering attention on necessary and helpful information that may be inferred and may be derived only as an implication in the source language.

The latter acquires special relevance within the frames or boundaries of a given act of mediated cross-linguistic communication due to pragmatic peculiarities which characterize structuring and presenting of human experience in the SL and the TL that are crucial for semiotic and functional potential of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communication in what concerns communicative efficacy thereof and adequacy of comprehension *per se*.

Materials and methods.

Analyzing relevant linguistic and cultural specificities of verbalization processes in SL and TL through the prism of communicative equivalence in the way they contribute to frame semiotic potential and cognitive space of a given mediated mass media discourse we apply methods of semantic and comparative analysis along with method of translation. The questionnaire method involved Ph.D. students of RUDN-university (n-105) from different countries (Russia, the Netherlands, Ecuador, Philippines, Colombia, Cuba, Syria, Argelia, Jordan, etc.).

Results.

Defining cultural Spanish concept **tertulia** lexicographic sources M. Moliner, LAROUSSE, etc. state its essential constituents as follows: “2. reunión de personas que se juntan habitualmente, con frecuencia en un café, para conversar y también, a veces, para jugar a juegos de sobremesa (círculo, club, velada, reunión; contertuliano, contertulio, miembro)” [2,4].

As part of cultural, social and linguistic heritage Spanish concept “*tertulia*” represents/constitutes both key sense and presupposition marker that encodes particular relevant cultural and spatio-temporal information within the frames of conceptual world picture. Cognitive perception of this multidimensional phenomenon in the SL comes related to the object and the situation *per se* and is marked by positive connotations along with pragmatically relevant associations used to identify Spanish national and cultural space. Example:

“*Creo que podríamos haber aprendido muchísimo de las tertulias de la Generación del 98, de la labor de esta generación, por lo menos de sus componentes más eminentes. Son escritores extraordinarios. Valle-Inclán, Azorín, Baroja, Unamuno...Es gente de gran talla. Después, siendo ya autor más conocido, hablé bastantes veces en las tertulias con Benavente, allí ví con otros escritores que pervivían...*” (Cambio 16, 9 de diciembre de 1995, 63).

Moreover, modelling of adequate cognitive perception and successful discourse usage thereof is rooted in background knowledge and stereotype associations of the carriers of South American variants of the Spanish language, pragmatic context and respective presuppositions of cross-cultural cross-linguistic communication when transferred into the English language, particularly its American territorial variant used mainly with regard to invoke and define Latin cultural contexts and new or similar referential situations. It is mainly the phenomenon of interdiscursivity in combination with other

relevant factors of a given communicative situation in the SL that activates sense-generating mechanisms that reinforce pragmatic markedness and cognitive transparency thereof and facilitate appropriate sense interplay, along with adequate processing of conceptual information and communication efficacy. Examples:

"Owners husband + wife duo Tim and María Sanchez are Oakland/Bay Area natives. Having roots from Puerto Rico and El Salvador lead them to fulfill one of their passions of mixing their love for coffee with art. ...Today the coffee shop and commercial art gallery serves as a place for the community to come together every day. We offer a space where artists can exhibit their art in a professional gallery setting. A space to share their talent and creativity with the community. Art is legacy, it's what remains after we leave this earth. Art tells stories ... we see ourselves reflected in it. In it you find our beliefs, history, familia, convictions and our everyday lives". (www.tertuliacoffee.com/)

TERTULIA Chamber Music

Tertulia is a chamber music series that presents concerts in restaurants, in an atmosphere that combines lively conversation and dining with the opportunity to hear the greatest performers of our time. *Tertulias* are dinner-concerts, with three performances separated by extended intermissions.

(<https://www.tertulianyc.org/#home>)

TERTULIA

"Tertulia is a Spanish word meaning "a social gathering of friends." We chose this name because we believe there is no better way to enjoy a fine bottle of wine than amongst friends. At *Tertulia Cellars*, our focus is to make wines of quality and distinction from the finest vineyards in both the Columbia and Walla Walla Valleys". (www.tertuliacellars.com/#circle-up)

In contrast, translation of this highly nationally marked as lexical unit Spanish concept into the Russian language faces and reveals certain impediments and constrains within decision-making strategy related to the sense verbalization process (82%), i.e., adequate representation of implicit background knowledge, in first place, when engaging conceptual representations of the Russian language user and forming pragmatically intended cognitive context of a given discourse, especially when advertising forthcoming events or emphasizing desirable qualities so as to arouse interest to buy or to call public attention, in particular.

The Spanish-Russian bilingual lexicographic sources [5, 6] contain the following meanings for reference in the Russian language: «компания; кружок; вечеринка; галерка (в театре); часть кафе для игры в карты, бильярд и т.д.» that eventually fail to guarantee cognitive transparency and generate relevant inferences and implications within respective conceptual systems of participants of mediated communication [85%].

Highly nationally marked as lexical unit (LU), Spanish "*tertulia*" refers to the set of relevant semantic components enumerated below:

- "reunión (de personas)";
- "con frecuencia (juntarse habitualmente);
- "en un café (juntarse, reunirse);
- "a veces (a veces jugar a juegos de sobremesa" [2, 4]

and reflects broader differences in original understanding thereof when translated into the Russian language [1].

By contrast to the English language, transliteration of this Spanish LU is cognitively invalid and cannot be applied mechanically for it depends on the level of generality for the comparison at which the referential situation and relevant pragmatic presuppositions of the SL are restored in the TL.

And even then, we should note, cognitive space generation through contextualization of the Spanish concept just referred to is needed within the limits of translation for the latter does not constitute social and cultural thesaurus of the Russian-speaking addressee (93%). Our analysis based on the questionnaire method has revealed that in 95% neither such a referential situation (partially or *in toto*//as a whole) nor respective stereotype associations and perceptions become manifest in translation into the Russian language as markers of Spanish social and cultural reality. Only in 5% linguistic and pragmatic potential of this LU provide for such communicative effect.

Conclusion.

We conclude that in mediated discourse there is a strong need for all the constituents thereof in the SL to be translated resorting to different types of transformations, *inter alia*, introducing radical



change or transformation into another linguistic form without altering real sense and semiotic potential thereof in the TL, since implicit sense within the ST is to be adequately conveyed throughout conceptual system, conceptual picture, and particular communicative situation in the TL. The above given considerations track the central problems of adequacy and communicative equivalence at the core of translator's strategy of decision-making flexibility while identifying the possible universe of decisions in what concerns intertextuality phenomenon generating appropriate inferences and implications along with a broader cognitive context *in toto* when addressing corresponding conceptual systems of the participants of cross-cultural mediated communication.

References

- [1] Ozhegov S.I. Slovar russkogo yazyka / Pod red. N.Yu. Shvedovoj. — M.: Rus. yaz., 1989.
- [2] Larouss Diccionario manual de la lengua española. - LAROUSSE PLANETA, SA., 1994.
- [3] WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD THESAURUS, POCKET BOOKS Paperback Edition. Printed in the U.S.A.,1981. - 2662 p.
- [4] Moliner, María. Diccionario de uso del Español. - Gregos, Madrid, 1986. T.2. - 1585 p.
- [5] Kalvo L.M. Diccionario Español-Ruso; Ruso-Español. Editorial Ramon Sopena, S.A.,PROVENZA 95, Barcelona, 1982. – 1913 p.
- [6] Diccionario Español-Ruso. Bajo red. de Kelyin F.V. M., 1962. -944 p.