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**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TRANSLATION STRATEGIES IN SCIENCE
FICTION LITERARY WORKS**

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Abstract: Science fiction literature is one of the most challenging genres for translation because it combines imagination, creativity, and complex ideas. Writers often use new words, unusual expressions, and futuristic concepts that may not exist in the target language. As a result, translators need to choose appropriate strategies to convey the original meaning while keeping the style and tone of the text. This paper focuses on a comparative study of translation strategies used in science fiction literary works. It examines how different methods help translators deal with lexical, stylistic, and cultural difficulties. Special attention is given to commonly used strategies such as borrowing, calque, and adaptation, which are often applied when direct translation is not possible. By analyzing selected examples from science fiction texts, including Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury, this article aims to show how translation strategies influence the quality and clarity of the translated text. The research also highlights the importance of maintaining both meaning and artistic expression in literary translation.

Keywords: translation strategies, science fiction, literary translation, comparative analysis, neologisms, adaptation, borrowing, calque.

Translation

Translation is a complex process in which the meaning of a source-language text is transferred to readers of the target language. In other words, translation can be defined as the process of conveying both meaning and form from the source language into the target

language. Various scholars have provided different definitions of translation, but all of them emphasize the importance of accuracy and equivalence between the two languages. The term strategy is used in many contexts, including translation studies. Translation strategies are systematic and problem-solving procedures that translators use to convey meaning while overcoming linguistic and cultural differences. Common strategies include literal translation, borrowing, substitution, and functional equivalence. Functional equivalence focuses on preserving the same communicative effect rather than translating word for word. The use of appropriate strategies helps ensure that the translated text remains accurate in meaning, style, and cultural context. One of the most common strategies is **literal translation**, where the translator follows the original structure closely. **Borrowing** is used when a word is taken directly from the source language, especially if there is no equivalent in the target language. Another method is **calque**, which translates expressions word by word while adapting them to the target language structure. In addition, **adaptation** is applied when cultural differences require changes to make the text more understandable for the target audience. **Modulation** changes the perspective or structure of the sentence to sound more natural. **Functional equivalence** focuses on delivering the same meaning and effect rather than translating each word directly. These strategies are especially important in translating complex literary genres such as science fiction, where new terms, imaginative ideas, and cultural elements are frequently used.

Science Fiction

Science fiction is a literary genre that explores imaginative and futuristic ideas based on science and technology. It often includes themes such as space travel, advanced technologies, artificial intelligence, time travel, and dystopian societies. Unlike other genres, science fiction combines scientific concepts with creative storytelling, which makes it both informative and imaginative. One of the main features of science fiction is the use of **neologisms**, or newly created words, to describe objects, technologies, or ideas that do not exist in real life. Writers also use symbolism, metaphors, and complex descriptions to express abstract concepts. These features make science fiction unique but also challenging for translators. A well-known example of science fiction literature is *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury, which presents a dystopian society where books are banned. Such works require careful translation because they contain cultural meanings, hidden messages, and stylistic elements. Therefore, understanding the characteristics of

science fiction is important for choosing appropriate translation strategies and producing an accurate and natural translation.

Literary translation

Literary translators translate literary texts. This is a **tricky type of translation** because, although it is not always technical, it must faithfully convey the source text's meaning, figures of speech, rhythm, and style. Literary translators translate literary texts such as novels, fiction, prose, poetry, books, plays, **and** scripts. Literary translators have the ambitious task of conveying the emotions, nuances, messages, and writing style of the author in the target language. **The process essentially involves** constant mediation between the translator and the author. Literary translation generally leaves ample room for interpretation compared to other types of translation (such as technical texts). Therefore, translators have more freedom to modify sentence structure to convey the idea at the heart of the source text as faithfully as possible. The main types of literary translation include:

- Poems
- Prose
- Plays and scripts

When translating poems, translators need to pay close attention to the value and meaning of the original text. Translations can deviate significantly from the source text to convey the original meaning. It is common to come across **translated prose** in the literary world as it is the most popular form of literature. When it comes to **translating plays**, however, translators need to be **aware of the historical and social context** of the original work and the era in which it was written. In addition, they also need to be familiar with other works written by the same playwright and their cultural references.

Comparative Analysis

Comparative analysis is an important method in academic research, especially in linguistics and translation studies. It involves examining two or more texts, cases, or elements in order to identify similarities and differences between them. This method helps researchers understand how certain features change across languages, contexts, or time periods. In translation studies, comparative analysis is used to evaluate how the source text is transformed into the target text. By comparing different translation versions, researchers can identify the strategies used by translators and assess their effectiveness. This is particularly important in literary translation, where meaning, style, and cultural elements

must all be preserved. A comparative approach is often applied in analyzing science fiction texts, where translators face challenges such as neologisms, futuristic concepts, and cultural references. For example, different translations of Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury can be compared to understand how translators deal with stylistic and lexical difficulties. Overall, comparative analysis helps to develop a deeper understanding of translation strategies and their role in producing accurate and meaningful literary translations.

Neologism

A **neologism** is a word that has recently become widespread in its use and is either new (e.g., “selfie”) or has a new meaning (e.g., “sick” for something that is excellent). Neologisms are sometimes deliberately coined (e.g., Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “soulmate”), while others appear to spring naturally from popular culture or niche interest groups (e.g., an “ollie,” which is a particular stunt on a skateboard). Sometimes, the new meanings become the accepted dominant meaning. According to Bill Bryson’s Mother Tongue, when King James II saw St. Paul’s Cathedral in London for the first time, he called it “amusing, awful, and artificial, and meant that it was pleasing to look at, deserving of awe, and full of skillful artifice.” Since that time, these words have taken on completely different meanings. New words are created and discarded all the time, and once they appear in one or more established dictionaries, they are, strictly speaking, no longer **neologisms**. Neologisms evolve, develop, or are created in a number of different ways:

- **Clipping:** Sometimes words are formed by shortening an existing word and leaving the meaning intact (e.g., shortening “trigonometry” to “trig” or “fabulous” to “fab”)
- **Backformation:** Words can undergo backformation when part of an existing word is removed, usually to change a noun to a verb. For example, **donate** from **donation**, **edit** from **editor**, and **diagnose** from **diagnosis**
- **Acronym:** Taking the first letter from an expression can provide you with a new word, for example, **scuba** (from self-contained underwater breathing apparatus) and **NATO** (from North Atlantic Treaty Organization)
- **Derivation:** By adding a suffix, prefix, or both to an existing word, new words can be formed. Perhaps the most extreme example is **incomprehensible** where the root word is **hen** (meaning “hold or grasp”) and everything else is a suffix or prefix! Other examples of more modern coinings are **blogger** (from “blog” + “er”) and **unfriend** (from “friend” + “un”)

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- **Compounding:** There is a common pattern that emerges with English words that can be traced over time. Two nouns become closely associated (e.g., “head teacher”), then they start to be hyphenated (“head-teacher”), before finally becoming a new word (“headteacher”). Other examples include **brainchild** and **bookworm**
- **Loanwords and borrowings:** English is the ultimate stealer of words, with its roots in French, Anglo-Saxon, Greek, Latin, etc. Some words retain a sense of foreignness when they become English **neologisms**, such as **schadenfreude** or **chutzpah**. Other loanwords have been absorbed and go largely unnoticed, like **robot** or **bungalow**

It is almost certainly true that **neologisms** find traction faster, and probably fade away faster too, in the rapid modern world of communication and social media. There is a wealth of choices for interesting **neologisms**, from literature, media, and further afield.

- **Brunch** - “Breakfast” and “lunch” combined to describe a meal that falls between the two traditional eating times. It is interesting that the equally plausible “linner” from “lunch” and “dinner” is somehow less satisfying to the ear and has never gained great traction
- **Teleworking** - Like its great-great-grandparents “telegraph,” “television,” and “telephone,” **teleworking** takes the Greek tele, meaning “far off,” and “working” to describe people who work remotely from the office
- **Meme** - A cultural artifact, often a short video or image, that spreads quickly over social media. Coined by Richard Dawkins from his own coining “mimeme”
- **Bitcoin** - an example of a blockchain currency (“blockchain” is another neologism), taking the idea of a computer “bit” and “coin” as a unit of currency
- **Gif** - Although it is often written in uppercase letters, **gif** is pronounced as a single word, from the phrase “graphics interchange format.” Strictly speaking, it is just a method of compressing a graphical file for transmission over the internet; in common usage, it refers to an amusing image or short video sent via messaging apps

Adaptation

Adaptation is a translation strategy used when direct translation is not suitable due to cultural differences between the source and target languages. In this case, the translator changes certain elements of the text so that it becomes more natural and understandable for the target audience. This strategy is often applied when cultural references, idioms, or social realities in the source text do not exist in the target culture. Instead of translating word for word, the translator replaces or modifies these elements while keeping the original

meaning and message. In literary translation, adaptation is especially important because it helps maintain readability and emotional impact. For example, in science fiction works such as Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury, certain cultural or stylistic elements may be adapted to make the text clearer for readers in another language. Overall, adaptation ensures that the translated text is not only accurate in meaning but also appropriate for the cultural context of the target language.

Examples:

1. Idioms

- English: “It’s raining cats and dogs.”
- Uzbek (adapted): “Yomg‘ir chelaklab yog‘yapti.”
Here, the meaning is kept, but the expression is adapted because animals are not involved in real meaning.

2. Cultural reference

- English: “Thanksgiving dinner”
- Adapted translation: “Oilaviy katta bayramona kechki ovqat”
Because Thanksgiving is not a common holiday in many cultures, it is adapted to a general cultural concept.

3. Literature / fiction example

In science fiction works such as Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury, some cultural or stylistic expressions may be adapted so that readers from another culture can better understand the dystopian society and its ideas.

Adaptation helps translators keep the meaning and emotional effect of the original text while making it understandable and natural for readers in another language and culture.

Borrowing

Borrowing is a translation strategy in which a word or expression is taken directly from the source language and used in the target language without significant changes. This method is usually applied when there is no exact equivalent in the target language or when the original term is internationally recognized.

Borrowing helps to preserve the original meaning and cultural identity of a word. It is very common in technical, scientific, and literary texts, especially when new concepts, objects, or ideas are introduced. In many cases, borrowed words become part of the target language vocabulary over time.

Examples from different languages:

1. From English to Uzbek
 - ❖ Computer → kompyuter
 - ❖ Internet → internet
 - ❖ Marketing → marketing
2. From French to English / Uzbek
 - ❖ Restaurant → restaurant
 - ❖ Menu → menyu
 - ❖ Café → kafe
3. From Italian → other languages
 - ❖ Pizza → pizza
 - ❖ Pasta → pasta
 - ❖ Opera → opera
4. From Arabic to Uzbek / English
 - ❖ Algebra → algebra
 - ❖ Alcohol → alkohol
 - ❖ Coffee → kofe

Borrowing is an important translation strategy that helps maintain originality, especially when dealing with new or culture-specific terms. It is widely used in modern translation, particularly in science fiction and technical texts, where new concepts often appear.

Calque

In linguistics, a calque (or loan translation) can be defined as a word-for-word translation from one language into another. For example, when you take a phrase in French and then literally translate root-for-root or word-for-word into English, that's a calque. In English we see many examples of common phrases that are calques translated from other languages. For example; Beer Garden is a calque of the German Biergarten, and Adam's Apple is a calque of the French pomme d'Adam. In both these examples, English phrases are derived from a direct literal [translation](#) of the original. Calque is a loanword from a French noun – it's derived from the verb calquer, meaning to copy, to trace.

Loan translation

Loan translation is just another term for calque. When used as a verb, to calque means to borrow a phrase or word from another language whilst translating its components in order to create a new lexeme in the target language. It's a class of loan in which words or phrases are borrowed from another language, with each of the elements of the phrase

being translated. Basically, it's respecting the syntactical structures of the target language. Calque contributes to the richness of a target language by avoiding the direct use of foreign words. Calque is a construction, unlike a loan which is a phonetic and morphologic adaptation

Conclusion

In conclusion, translation strategies play an essential role in transferring meaning from one language to another, especially in literary texts such as science fiction. Because science fiction works often include new terms, cultural references, and imaginative concepts, translators must carefully choose appropriate methods to preserve both meaning and style. This study has shown that strategies such as borrowing, adaptation, calque, literal translation, and functional equivalence are widely used in translation practice. Each strategy has its own function and is applied depending on the linguistic and cultural challenges of the text. For example, borrowing helps to keep original terms, while adaptation makes the text more understandable for the target audience.

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