

R.K. Ernazarova, A.S. Shvaikovskiy*

4th year student, M. Auezov SKU, Shymkent, Kazakhstan

candidate of pedagogical sciences, associate professor, M. Auezov SKU, Shymkent, Kazakhstan

*Corresponding author: shvaikovskiy_a@mail.ru

MODERN CHALLENGES IN TRANSLATING GENDER-SENSITIVE LANGUAGE

Abstract

The article focuses on analyzing challenges and peculiarities of translating gender-sensitive language, identifying the theoretical and practical obstacles translators face. Particular attention is paid to translation methods when moving from languages with gendered grammar, such as Russian, Spanish and French, to languages with a more neutral grammatical structure, such as English. Various techniques are evaluated, including the use of gender-neutral pronouns and titles, changes in sentence structure to eliminate gendered elements. The study utilized texts from different genres – literary works, media and official documents – to evaluate the effectiveness of techniques. The results show that while gender-neutral translations promote inclusivity and respect for gender diversity, they often require complex linguistic changes leading to clumsy or ambiguous language, especially when gender is important to the meaning. This emphasizes the need to adapt translation methods to the cultural and linguistic specificities of the target language to ensure accuracy and contextual relevance.

Keywords: culture, gender-sensitive language, language neutrality, linguistic adaptation, translation strategies.

Introduction

The article explores the current challenges involved in translating gender-sensitive language by examining key linguistic barriers, cultural considerations, and practical translation strategies. Through a detailed analysis of examples and comparative approaches, the study sheds light on emerging trends in inclusive translation. Ultimately, it underscores the importance of flexibility, cultural sensitivity, and linguistic adaptability in ensuring that translated texts are both inclusive and consistent with the target language's norms. The translation of gender-inclusive language has become a notable focus in modern translation studies and linguistics. As society places more importance on inclusivity, there is an increasing demand for language that appropriately and respectfully captures the variety of gender identities. As numerous languages are organized around grammar which assigns gender to nouns, pronouns, and adjectives, attaining gender inclusivity whereas maintaining the grammatical structure necessitates inventive and flexible strategies [1].

A significant difficulty in translating gender-sensitive language lies in the differing ways that grammatical gender is conveyed in various languages. Although English permits the straightforward use of gender-neutral forms via pronouns and inclusive language, languages like French, Spanish, and Russian are largely dependent on gender-specific grammatical frameworks. In these languages, grammatical gender is allocated to even objects and job titles, making it challenging to implement gender-neutral translation techniques. This brings up significant queries regarding how much a translator can alter a text to enhance inclusivity without misrepresenting its original message or distancing the intended audience [2].

Aside from linguistic difficulties, cultural influences also have significantly impact the translation of gender-sensitive language. The perception of gender-neutral language differs greatly among various cultures: some welcome these modifications as progress, while others oppose them because of conventional language standards or ideological convictions. Consequently, translators highly require to skillfully managing all these cultural subtleties to achieve a balance between inclusivity and honoring the cultural context of the target audience. In certain instances, this entails

creative approaches, including rewording, implementing new gender-neutral language, or rearranging sentences to eliminate gender-specific references [3].

Theoretical analysis

The interpretation of gender-sensitive language encompasses various theoretical perspectives that aid in comprehending the difficulties and techniques employed in this endeavor. The theoretical exploration of gender and its representation in language through translation draws from areas like sociolinguistics, gender studies, and translation theory, providing understanding of how language mirrors gender conventions and how these conventions influence translation. A crucial idea in gender-sensitive translation is the representation of gender. The methods of expressing gender in language can differ greatly among languages and cultures. For instance, in English, gender is conveyed through pronouns and titles, enabling gender-neutral options such as "they" instead of "he" or "she" [4].

Nonetheless, languages such as Spanish, French, and Russian possess grammatical frameworks that include gendered forms, complicating the translation of gender-neutral expressions. Consequently, the translator needs to take into account the linguistic characteristics of the target language alongside the social norms that influence gender perception within that culture. Feminist translation theory represents a significant theoretical perspective that highlights the dynamics of power in language and the necessity to enhance the representation of women and marginalized genders in the realm of translation. This theory contests conventional male-focused language frameworks which do emphasize on the translator's significant influence in forming language and social contexts, deconstructing the binary gender system, and fostering acceptance for gender identities [5].

Equivalence is kind of notion in translation which ordinary takes gender into account. Although equivalence is a fundamental concept in translation theory, implementing it becomes more intricate when addressing gendered and complicated terminology or culturally unique phrases for better comprehension. In these instances, dynamic equivalence is frequently necessary, as the translation communicates not just the form but also the meaning, facilitating more encompassing translations [6].

Moreover, there is an existence of skopos theory, which focuses on the translation's intention, holds an important position. This theory based on this theory, translations must be modified to align with the text's intended purpose of the text and the cultural expectations of the target audience. This allows for accurate translations that are socially appropriate and inclusive. Translation strategies for gender-sensitive language include the use of gender-neutral terms, paraphrasing, adding gender-neutral pronouns, and modifying sentence structures to avoid gendered language. For instance, in Russian, where gender is expressed through grammatical forms, translators may use neutral job titles or rephrase sentences to avoid gendered terms [7].

Experimental part

For the experiment, various texts were chosen from multiple genres, such as literature, media, and formal documents, all featuring gender-sensitive language. These texts were selected for their varied style, content, and language, which guarantees that a broad spectrum of gender-related expressions and ideas could be analyzed. The initial texts, composed in languages such as Russian, Spanish, and French that feature gendered grammar, were translated into English, where gender-neutral language is prevalent, to examine the difficulties of adapting the material.

The first phase of the research focused on pinpointing gender-specific terms in the original documents, including pronouns, professions, and references that could indicate gender biases. In languages such as Russian, where gendered forms are fundamentally embedded in grammar, achieving neutrality in translation can be particularly difficult. For example, titles such as "менеджер" or "доктор" in Russian frequently have gendered meanings, while their English equivalents do not. A group of translators with varying degrees of proficiency in gender-sensitive translation was subsequently chosen to translate each text in two approaches: one version adhered closely to the original structure, while the other employed gender-neutral techniques. These approaches involved employing gender-neutral job titles, incorporating gender-neutral pronouns, and altering sentence structures to eliminate gendered language.

After the translations were finished, they were evaluated according to multiple criteria. The initial criterion, accuracy in gender representation, assessed how well the translations preserved the gender neutrality or inclusiveness of the original material. The second criterion, cultural suitability, assessed if the translations corresponded with the cultural standards and expectations of the target audience, especially concerning gender. The third criterion, linguistic quality, assessed how effectively the translations upheld grammatical accuracy and stylistic suitability following modifications for gender neutrality. The final criterion, reader perception, involved a group of native speakers of the target language evaluating the translations based on their gender inclusivity and clarity.

Results

The experiment's outcomes offered various important insights. Initially, although gender-neutral translations tended to be more linguistically intricate, they were also more inclusive and considerate of gender diversity. Nonetheless, in certain instances, aiming for neutrality resulted in vagueness or clumsy wording, especially in writings with pronounced gender aspects. Employing neutral job titles and pronouns effectively enhanced inclusivity while preserving the original text's meaning.

Conclusion

The study of gender-sensitive language translation has revealed various theoretical and practical challenges that translators face when dealing with gender-specific terms. During the experiment, it was clear that attaining gender neutrality in translation is a challenging undertaking, especially when dealing with languages that possess gendered grammatical frameworks and translating them into less gender-specific languages like English. The use of theoretical frameworks such as feminist translation theory and equivalence theory significantly influenced the translation strategies employed. These theories highlighted the importance of making deliberate decisions that respect gender diversity while maintaining the original meaning and integrity of the text. However, the research also indicated that these strategies possess limitations, particularly when gender aspects are closely tied to cultural norms and language habits. The results showed that although gender-neutral translations tend to be more inclusive and respectful of different gender identities, they may also create linguistic challenges, sometimes leading to awkward or ambiguous phrasing. In certain cases, striving for gender neutrality resulted in vagueness, especially in situations where gender was essential for expressing the text's meaning or cultural importance.

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Р. К. Ерназарова, А. С. Швайковский*

4 курс студенті, М. Әуезов атындағы ОҚУ, Шымкент қ., Қазақстан
педагогика ғылымдарының кандидаты, доцент, М. Әуезов атындағы ОҚУ, Шымкент қ., Қазақстан

*Корреспондент авторы: shvaikovskiy_a@mail.ru

ГЕНДЕРЛІК СЕЗІМТАЛ ТІЛДІ АУДАРУДАҒЫ ЗАМАНАУИ ҚИЫНДЫҚТАР

Түйін

Бұл зерттеу гендерлік сезімтал тілдің аударылуының мәселелері мен ерекшеліктерін зерттеуге, сондай-ақ аудармашылардың гендерлік сөз тіркестерімен жұмыс істеген кезде кездесетін теориялық және практикалық қиындықтарды анықтауға бағытталған. Арнайы назар аударылатын мәселе – гендерлік грамматикасы бар тілдерден, мысалы, орыс, испан және француз тілдерінен, грамматикалық тұрғыдан нейтралды құрылымы бар тілдерге, мысалы, ағылшын тіліне ауыстыруда қолданылатын аударма әдістері. Гендерлік бейтараптықты сақтауға арналған әдістерді, соның ішінде нейтралды есімдіктер мен атауларды қолдануды, сондай-ақ гендерлік элементтерді алып тастау үшін сөйлем құрылымдарын өзгерту әдістерін бағалайды. Зерттеуде әртүрлі жанрдағы мәтіндер – әдеби шығармалар, БАҚ және ресми құжаттар – осы әдістердің тиімділігін бағалау үшін қолданылды. Зерттеу нәтижелері көрсеткендей, гендерлік бейтарап аудармалар инклюзивтілікке ықпал етіп, гендерлік әртүрлілікке құрмет көрсеткенімен, олар әдетте күрделі лингвистикалық өзгерістерді талап етеді, бұл әсіресе гендер мәтіннің мағынасына маңызды болған жағдайда қиналғыш немесе екіұшты сөз тіркестеріне әкелуі мүмкін. Бұл аударма әдістерін мақсатты тілдің мәдени және тілдік ерекшеліктеріне бейімдеу қажеттілігін көрсетеді, бұл өз кезегінде дәлдікпен контекстуалдық мағынаны қамтамасыз етуге мүмкіндік береді.

Кілттік сөздер: мәдениет, гендерлік сезімтал тіл, тілдік бейтараптық, тілдік бейімделу, аударма стратегиялары.

Р. К. Ерназарова, А. С. Швайковский*

студент 4 курса, ЮКУ им. М. Ауэзова, Шымкент, Казахстан

кандидат педагогических наук, доцент, ЮКУ им. М. Ауэзова, Шымкент, Казахстан

*Автор для корреспонденции: shvaikovskiy_a@mail.ru

СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ С ПЕРЕВОДОМ ГЕНДЕРНО-ЧУВСТВИТЕЛЬНОГО ЯЗЫКА

Аннотация

Это исследование сосредоточено на анализе проблем и особенностей перевода гендерно-чувствительного языка, а также на выявлении теоретических и практических препятствий, с которыми сталкиваются переводчики при работе с гендерными выражениями. Особое внимание уделяется методам перевода при переходе от языков с гендерной грамматикой, таких как русский, испанский и французский, к языкам с более нейтральной грамматической структурой, таким как английский. Оцениваются различные методы, включая использование гендерно-нейтральных местоимений и титулов, а также изменения в структуре предложений для устранения гендерных элементов. В исследовании использовались тексты различных жанров – литературные произведения, СМИ и официальные документы – для оценки эффективности этих методов. Результаты исследования показывают, что хотя гендерно-нейтральные переводы способствуют инклюзивности и уважению к гендерному разнообразию, они часто требуют сложных лингвистических изменений, что может привести к неуклюжим или двусмысленным формулировкам, особенно когда гендер имеет важное значение для смысла текста. Это подчеркивает необходимость адаптации методов перевода с учетом культурных и языковых особенностей целевого языка для обеспечения точности и контекстной значимости.

Ключевые слова: культура, гендерно-чувствительный язык, языковой нейтралитет, языковая адаптация, стратегии перевода.

Information about the author responsible for contacts:

Alexey Sergeevich Shvaikovskiy, +77017419540, shvaikovskiy_a@mail.ru

Қатынасхаттар үшін жауапты автор туралы ақпарат:

Швайковский Алексей Сергеевич, +77017419540, shvaikovskiy_a@mail.ru

Информация об авторе, ответственном за сообщения:

Швайковский Алексей Сергеевич, +77017419540, shvaikovskiy_a@mail.ru