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Contrastive Analysis of Metaphorical Means of Representation of the Concept "Fear" in the Novel by G. Muller "Herztier" and its Translation into the Russian Language

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Abstract

This article studies metaphorical expressions, as well as comparative phrases that represent the emotional state of fear. The material of the study was the novel by German writer Gerta Müller "Herztier" and its translation into the Russian language. It is worth mentioning that this investigation is not only congruent with the system-structural approach but also with the system of cognitive approach to language.

In the novel by Gerta Müller "Herztier", which we analyze, and its translation into Russian, figurative devices, that is, metaphorical expressions and comparisons are used to nominate the emotional state of fear. The factual analysis has shown that the so-called anthropomorphic metaphors demonstrate a greater frequency of use. Fear is personified and acquires physical characteristics peculiar to man. We have disclosed verbal zoomorphic metaphors in which the characterization of the emotional state of fear is represented through comparing with the image of an animal. In addition to metaphors, of special interest are the comparisons which are formed by adding an insertion word. We have analyzed the syntactic structure of the formation of comparisons in German and Russian, namely: Субъект (Subject)+ глагол (Verb)+ объект сравнения (Comparing Object)/ Präposition + Subjekt + (Präposition) Objekt; Субъект (Subject) + глагол (Verb) + как (like) + объект сравнения (Comparing Object) / Subjekt + Verb; Субъект + прилагательное / Adjektiv + Subjekt. The result of complex analysis reveals that a more emotionally vivid description of the emotional state of fear is observed in the Russian translation, while in the original text the author's language is less metaphorical and the emotion is expressed less expressively.

Keywords: Linguistics, Linguistic culture, Metaphor, Concept, Fear, Comparison, Comparative Construction, Cognitive linguistics, Emotion.

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INTRODUCTION

A contemporary theory of metaphoric transfers began with the notion of its structure as a combination of two ideas into one image. A. Richards was one of the first who noticed the interaction of two disparate notions, as a result of which a single concept is formed at the semantic level. According to the scholar, metaphor is “two thoughts that relate to different subjects, but are comprehended in one word or phrase, the meaning of which is the result of their interaction” [1]. Linguist Cooper defines metaphor as a cognitive process. The scholar points out that the reason for origin of metaphor is the comparison of the semantic concepts by the human mind. On the one hand, metaphor supposes similarity between the two components, since it must be understandable to the person, and on the other hand, it indicates dissimilarity between them, since metaphor is meant to create a new meaning. In other words, cognitive semantics defines metaphor as a transfer from one conceptual domain which it originally belongs to, into another one, i.e. metaphorization results in the projection of one conceptual sphere onto another occur [2, 14]. Scholars Mingwu Xu and Linxin Liang who are engaged in the issues of cognitive and psycholinguistic investigations and their realization in the target texts adhere to the same point of view [3].

METHODS

The main research methods are method of comparative analysis, methods of interpretation, introspection and component-semantic analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Let us analyze the examples of metaphorical expressions in the original text and its Russian translation. The so-called anthropomorphic metaphors demonstrate a greater frequency of use. Fear is personified and acquires the physical characteristics peculiar to man, for example: *Полевые вьюнки сладко пахли под вечер – или то был запах моего страха* [4] (*Field bindweed scented of honey in the late afternoon – or it was the smell of my fear*). The same sentence in the original text with regard to the lexical aspect is devoid of any emotional evaluativity and the presence of metaphorical imagery: *Ackerwinden rochen süß in den Abend, oder war es meine Angst* [5]. In this example, the second part of the sentence concerns simple fear but not its smell.

The following example demonstrates the association of fear with a living being that has taken a place of refuge and “a roof over the head” in the minds of the protagonists and firmly settled in it: *Мы видели, где нашел себе прибежище страх кого-то из нас четверых, ведь мы уже давно знали друг друга* [4] (*We saw where the fear of one of the four of us found shelter, because we have already known each other for a long time*) / *Wir sahen, wessen Angst an welcher Stelle lag, weil wir uns schon lange kannten* [5].

Further analysis enabled us to expose verbal zoomorphic metaphors in which the characterization of the emotional state of fear is represented through comparing with the image of animal: *Если не дашь страху власти над своим лицом, он будет трепыхаться в голосе* [4] (*If you do not put fear into power over your face, your voice will tremble with it*). In this example, the verb «трепыхаться», as a rule, is characteristic of the behavior of animals. The explanatory dictionary edited by D. Ushakov gives the following definition: *трепыхаться, трепыхаюсь, трепыхаешься, несов. (простореч.). Судорожно дергаться, биться, трепетать. Раненая птица трепыхается. Дрожать, трепетать в воздухе или на колеблющейся поверхности. Лодочка трепыхается на волнах. Занавески трепыхались от ветра* [6]. The author of the source text used the verb that is semantically different from the verb «трепыхаться» (tremble), let us compare: *Wenn man sein Gesicht beherrscht, schlüpft sie in die Stimme* [5]. In this

example, the verb «schlüpfen» is translated as «schlüpfen vi (s) шмыгнуть, скользнуть (куда-л., через что-л.) [7], which is also characteristic of living beings. However, it should be emphasized that from the point of view of semantics the verbs «трепыхаться» and «schlüpfen» nevertheless differ from each other. In the first case, the verb has a static feature (трепыхать, дрожать, но оставаться на месте) / (to tremble, but to stay put), in the second case the verb expresses dynamics (прошмыгнуть, ускользнуть, выскользнуть куда-либо) / (to slip, slip away, slip out somewhere).

The demonstration of the highest degree of fear can be observed in the following example: *По спине пробежал озноб, потому что покой старческого лица не был покоем отдохновения под осенью шелковиц – то был покой одиночества, а струилось оно из глаз старика* [4] (*A shiver ran down my back, as tranquility of the old face was not a peace in rest under autumn mulberry-tree*) / *Mich fröstelte am Rücken, weil diese Ruhe nicht aus den Maulbeerästen kam, sondern aus der Einsamkeit der Augen im Gesicht* [5]. Semantic meaning in the Russian and German variants coincides. It is worth emphasizing only a slight intensification in emotional evaluativity in the Russian translation due to the use of the verbal metaphorical expression «пробежал озноб» (“a shiver ran down”). In German, only the verb «frösteln» is used to describe the physiological reaction to the state of fear, which has the following meaning: frösteln II vi зябнуть, мёрзнуть, frösteln II vimp. mich fröstelt меня знобит; я зябну [8].

In the following examples, metaphorical means that objectify the state of fear can be regarded as anthropomorphic and zoomorphic. Fear appears to us as a kind of dangerous being that represents a threat to health and human life: *Однако страх застыл на их лицах, страх изуродовал их* [4] (*But their faces became frozen with fear, it paralyzed them*) / *Die Angst blieb in ihren Gesichtern stehen. Sie verwirrte die Gesichter* [5]. Comparing the realization of the state of fear in Russian and German, we again cannot but note the semantic difference regarding the influence of the emotion of fear on person. The verb «verwirren» is used in the original text, which means «verwirren vt спутывать, запутывать (пряжу, волосы), verwirren vt перен. путать, запутывать; die Suche verwirren запутать дело, verwirren vt перен. смущать, сбивать с толку, приводить в замешательство, конфузить; den Geist verwirren смутить дух» [9]. Thus, if fear in the German language confuses the person, muddles his brain, then in the target text fear does not merely cause discomfort, but it causes injury, etiolates and causes severe moral damage. Thus, we again observe the hyperbolized and more expressive verbalization of the emotion in Russian in comparison with the original text.

Comparisons and comparative expressions are also used as figurative language means to express fear. In contrast to the above zoomorphic and anthropomorphic metaphors, which are hidden comparisons, in which the subject of action is living beings, comparison is formed by adding an expletive word. As Aristotle notes, “comparison is the same metaphor, but different by the addition of an expletive word; therefore it is not so pleasant, for it is longer” [10]. In this connection, it is necessary to briefly explain the difference between comparison and metaphor.

D. Davidson compares metaphor and comparison to draw attention to the phenomena of the surrounding reality, and identifies the existing differences between them: “The comparison indicates that there is similarity between the objects, and reserves our right of revealing a feature or features defining it; metaphor does not explicitly prove the presence of similarity, but if we accept it, we again have to look for generalities between the objects (not necessarily the same ones that arise when we compare)” [11]. The differences between metaphor and comparison cannot be absolutely identical, since they are defined by the form of our thinking and attitude: “The most obvious semantic difference between comparison and metaphor is that all comparisons are true, and all metaphors are false” [11].

Aristotle gives the best-known interpretation and distinction of metaphor from comparison: “Er bestimmt die Metapher nicht als verkürzten Vergleich, sondern umgekehrt den Vergleich als eine Unterform der

Metapher, denn der Unterschied zwischen beiden ist nun gering” (Rhetorik). In other words, the philosopher sees comparison as a subtype of metaphor that possesses structural and semantic features of the expression of metaphorical meaning. Not metaphor is comparison, but comparison is a part of the metaphorical interpretation.

Consider the examples of comparisons and comparative constructions from the work “Herztier”, and also compare the syntactic structure of the formation of comparisons in German and Russian.

1. Субъект (Subject) + глагол(Verb) + объект сравнения (Comparing Object)/ Präposition + Subjekt + (Präposition) Objekt

И даже когда язык уже еле ворочается, голос все равно верен своей привычке к страху, так что – не выдаст. Со страхом они сроднились, страх был их дом родной [4] (And even when the tongue is barely moving, the voice is unbending in its habit of fear, so it will hide it. They got used to fear, fear was their home) / Wenn auch die Zunge nur noch lallen kann, verlässt die Gewöhnung der Angst die Stimme nicht. Sie waren in der Angst zu Hause [5].

2. Субъект (Subject)+ глагол (Verb) + как (like) + объект сравнения (Comparing Object) / Subjekt + Verb

И каждый приносил этот страх на наши встречи. Мы часто смеялись, и каждый, смеясь, старался скрыть от других свой страх. Но страх не отрежешь, как прядь волос [4] (And everyone brought this fear to our meetings. We often laughed, and everyone, by laughing, tried to hide their fear from others. But fear cannot be cut off like a lock of hair) / Wir saßen zusammen am Tisch, aber die Angst blieb so einzeln in jedem Kopf, wie wir sie mitbrachten, wenn wir uns trafen. Wir lachten viel, um sie voreinander zu verstecken. Doch Angst schert aus [5].

In the Russian variant of translation fear is compared with a lock of hair, which you cannot simply cut off, respectively, and it will not be easy to get rid of fear. But of special interest is the expression from the original text “doch Angst schert aus”. First, fear is the subject of the action; secondly, from the point of view of the syntactic constituent, there is no clear structure for the formation of comparative expression, as in the Russian translation. According to the data of electronic German-Russian dictionary, the word “ausschere” has the following meaning: ausschere I vt выстригáть (вóлосы); den Nacken ausschere подстричь вóлосы на шéе; ausschere vt мор. вынимáть из блóка, менáть (снасть); ausschere II vi (s) мор. выходíть в стóрону (из кильвáтерной лíнии); ав. отклоня́ться в стóрону (от кúрса); ausschere выходíть из состáва (напр., коалиции) [12].

In the context of our example, this verb can be interpreted as «выходить из строя, не подчиняться» (“to fall out, not to obey”). In other words, the protagonists of the work felt fear, which they brought with them to the meetings. But they tried to laugh, joke, in order to hide their emotion. However, fear “did not obey them”, it could not be hidden or “cut off like a lock of hair”.

3. Adjective construction: Субъект(Subject) + прилагательное (Adjective)/ Adjektiv + Subjekt. This model should be referred to comparative metaphor.

Мне пришлось петь то, что пел капитан Пжеле. Я пела, сама не слышала своего голоса. Мой обычный страх превратился в страх железный. А железный страх звенит – поет, как поет вода [4] (I had to sing what Captain Pzhele was singing. I was singing, I did not hear my own voice. My usual fear turned into an iron fear. And iron fear is ringing – singing like water sings) / Ich musste singen, was Hauptmann Pjele gedichtet hatte. Ich sang, ohne meine Stimme zu hören. Ich fiel aus der Angst in die sichere Angst [5]. If fear in Russian is associated with iron, that is, something metallic and solid, in German it is described by the adjective «sicher», which means in Russian translation «уверенный, искусный,

опытный» (confident, skilled, experienced). From the point of view of the semantic description, the representation of emotion of fear in Russian translation is characterized by greater expressiveness and emotionally charged content.

CONCLUSION

Thus, analyzing the use of metaphorical means and comparative constructions to express the state of fear in the studied work and its translation into Russian, we judge from two main functions: cognitive and evaluative. Cognitive function serves to reduce and process information. In other words, it can be called interpretive, that is, “deciphering, explaining, interpreting, analyzing, leading to an understanding of a text message, defining its meaning ...” [13]. The evaluation function serves to convey not a rational but affective evaluation of what is happening.

As follows from the system-structural and cognitive analyses of the emotion of fear in the novel by G. Müller’s «Herztier» and its translation into Russian, it is necessary to note the noncoincidence in its expression and the nature of the representation in Russian and German. A more colorful and emotionally rich description of the emotional state of fear is used in the Russian translation. In the source text the author’s language is less metaphorical, and the emotion is expressed less expressively.

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FOOTNOTES

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