

Text Typology in Translation

A CASE STUDY OF MENU TRANSLATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Translations of restaurant menus are important for very practical reasons. A professionally translated menu can improve the service quality in restaurants and can help to avoid intercultural miscommunication. A menu serves as an informative text that provides details about the food served in a restaurant; more importantly, a menu not only *presents* information, but also *represents* the restaurant by shaping customers' impressions about the place. In this sense, menus are a means of advertising and are appellative in their nature. In addition, menus represent a country and its culture. Thus the importance of menus is predetermined by the purpose and the functions that such a text type performs. Therefore, this article discusses the techniques used in menu translations in relation to text typology and discourse analysis.

'Text type' is a highly contradictory and debatable term. Different linguists use other terms instead of 'text type', such as 'genre', 'register', 'discourse type' to refer to similar phenomena (for an exhaustive overview of these and other related terms, see Trosborg 1997a). In this article 'text types' are used as a broad term to refer to conventional kinds of texts used for specific communica-

tive situations (cf. Sager 1997). A text is said to belong to a specific text type if it has 'recognizable structural and rhetorical features which condition our modes of reading a message' (Sager 1997: 30). Text structures become recognizable and speakers have certain expectations for them since texts are regularly repeated in conventional communicative situations (Sager 1997: 30). Our shared knowledge about text types and prior familiarity with them help us to interpret individual texts with less effort. In this way awareness of text types is of crucial importance in communication in general. In addition, text types should also be taken into account in such specific and practical enterprises as translation (cf. Steiner 1998). As Schäffner cogently argues, 'the linguistic knowledge cannot be seen as an autonomous system, largely independent of socio-cultural knowledge' (1997: 137). Awareness of text types unavoidably involves socio-cultural knowledge, as will be demonstrated in the present analysis of menu translations.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TEXT TYPE IN TRANSLATION

Nowadays it is commonly agreed that equivalence in translation has to be sought not on the level of individual

words or even sentence level, but should be based on larger segments. Reiss (1977, as cited in Munday 2001) suggests that equivalence is to be sought at the level of a text (also cf. Sager 1997). She argues that the language of translation depends on the text type or the communicative situation, since different types of spoken or written discourse have different communicative **functions**. She identifies four text types, depending on the function of the text:

- (1) **Informative** texts are aimed primarily at transmitting information;
- (2) **Expressive** texts are form-focused and perform an aesthetic function;
- (3) **Operative** texts are aimed at making an appeal to text receiver;
- (4) **Audiomedial** texts supplement the above mentioned functions with visual and audio images. (Reiss 1977, as cited in Munday 2001)

These four functions closely resemble the ones distinguished by Jakobson (1960) (also see the discussion of these functions in Nord 1997: 50-51):

- (1) **referential** function (sub-functions: informative function, instructive function, teaching function, etc.);
- (2) **expressive** function (sub-functions: emotive function that involves the expression of feelings, evaluative function that involves the expression of evaluation, etc.);
- (3) **appellative** function (sub-functions: persuasive function, advertising function, etc., which aim to appeal to the receiver's feelings);
- (4) **phatic** function (sub-functions: salutation function, 'small-talk', etc.) (Jakobson 1960)

The text types classified on the basis of these functions oversimplify the existing variety of texts and make the divisions between text types too strict, since in practice most texts can be seen as hybrid types. As Trosborg rightly points out, a 'real text will display features of more than one type... (this) multifunctionality is the rule rather than the exception' (1997a: 14; also cf. Trosborg 1997b). Similarly, Bhatia observes that

texts often do not belong to pure genres, but rather appear in 'mixed or embedded forms' (2002: 10).

Nevertheless, these functions (on the basis of which texts can be classified) draw attention to the importance of text typology in translation. When translating, the function of the text has to be kept in mind to achieve the desired effect. As Trosborg suggests, 'the reader's (client or consumer, etc.) interest must be constantly matched against the communicative intent of the producer of the source text' (1997a: 14). Furthermore, Trosborg (1997a) argues that translation of a certain kind of text, for instance, an advertisement, has to be adjusted to the purpose it serves (in this case, a persuasive effect). In the act of translation it is important to keep in mind that 'translational action focuses very much on producing a TT that is functionally communicative to the receiver' (Munday 2001: 77). For this reason, the form and language of the translated (or target) text (henceforth TT) has to be stylistically and functionally adequate. If the source text (henceforth ST) is both informative and persuasive, the TT has to be sufficiently informative and persuasive as well. Failure to take into account the expected effect of the ST can result in the failure to convey 'the communicative intention of a message and may easily lead to misunderstandings' (Trosborg 1997a). Trosborg rightly sums up that 'failure to recognize the illocutionary force of single utterance as well as the superordinate communicative intent of the text act can be a major stumbling-block in establishing the aims of discourse and may result in faulty translations' (1997a: 18).

An especially influential model in translation studies is the Hallidayan model of language. Halliday (1973) proposes the model of functional grammar and

claims that linguistic functions are strongly interrelated with the sociocultural framework. He suggests that language performs three major functions, namely, ideational, interpersonal and textual. By being both informative and expressive, menus can be said to perform both ideational and interpersonal functions.

As a '(con)text-sensitive' approach, discourse analysis is highly influential in translation studies since it deals with texts on both the linguistic level (e.g. text organization, stylistic devices, sentence structure, etc.) and extralinguistic level (speech situation, pragmatic and semiotic dimensions, social and power relations, etc.) (see, for instance, Hatim and Mason 1990). In this way, discourse analysis provides a theoretical framework that takes the context into account. Context is of crucial importance in communication since it influences and predetermines certain linguistic choices and thus has to be taken into consideration in the practice of translation (Trosborg 1997a; for early studies of the interdependence of language and context, see Malinowsky 1935 and Firth 1951). Context is just as important in translation since it predetermines linguistic choices in the TT.

In relation to context, Sager (1997) makes the very useful observation that translators mainly work with texts as products artificially extracted from their pragmatic communicative situation. However, this communicative situation has to be reconstructed 'in order to fully understand the original message' (Sager 1997: 27). It is very important for translators to be able to specify the *intention* of the target text and the *expectations* of the possible readers (Sager 1997; also see Izquiedro 2000). Both the text intentions and reader expectation can be specified only if the context of the text is taken into consideration. Since the text

function, as Nord (1997) rightly observes, is not an inherent or stable feature of a text, the translator cannot expect that it will be automatically preserved through the translation process.

When deciding the text type, its purpose or aim is of crucial importance. Purpose as the decisive criterion of text, or discourse, type is presented in Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993); similarly, Hymes' (1974) SPEAKING model takes into consideration goals as an important speech component. Since different groups of speakers have different communicative purposes, different 'discourse communities' can be distinguished, which Swales defines as 'sociorhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals' (1990: 9). A discourse community (restaurant owners in this case) has its own particular patterns and traditions of discourse structuring, thinking, modelling reality and perceiving things. Therefore, a group of professionals can be treated as a distinct community with cognitive peculiarities and, simultaneously, distinctive language features, or 'communal lexicons' (Clark 1996; also cf. Johnson and Kaplan 1980, Drew and Heritage 1992, Fox 1993, Gunnarson et al. 1997, Cutting 2000, Mäkitalo and Säljö 2002).

Thus communicative purpose is often seen as a major factor that shapes a text and predetermines its structure and stylistic features. If the communicative goal changes, inevitably changes occur in the linguistic strategies used by the speaker. To produce an adequate translation, the purpose of the TT has to be taken into account (see skopos theory as overviewed by Nord 1997). For instance, the purpose of menu translations is to appeal to the expected addressee, namely, foreigners, to represent and advertise a restaurant and to play an important role in the tourist business.

To cover the important aspects of text type in translation, Nord (1997) suggests using 'a translation brief' when training translators. Nord (1997) recommends filling in such a brief before each translation assignment in order to make trainees aware of the target situation. Such a translation brief includes the following points:

- (1) the sender's intention,
- (2) the addressee(s),
- (3) the (prospective) time and place of text reception,
- (4) the medium over which the text will be transmitted,
- (5) the motive for text production or reception. (Nord 1997: 56)

If such aspects are taken into consideration, they will help a translator to deal with the four main categories of translation problems distinguished by Nord (1997: 59-61). These problems are (a) pragmatic, (b) intercultural, (c) interlingual, and (d) text-specific translation problems.

MENUS AS A UNIQUE DISCOURSE TYPE: LINGUISTIC AND EXTRALINGUISTIC (CULTURAL) ASPECTS

Menus can be treated as a hybrid text type which is both informative and operative, in Sager's (1997) terms. Menus provide information about the dishes served at a particular place and simultaneously aim at persuading the customer to choose these dishes. As informative, consumer-oriented texts, menus can be regulated by legislative means. For instance, Hampshire County Council (2002) defines with precision what a menu should and should not contain. For instance, the county document specifies after how many minutes of cooking

meat can be called 'roasted', which meals are to be called vegetarian, smoked or home made.

As persuasive texts, menus often contain appealing and elaborate dish names (sometimes with detailed descriptions); such names make the menus eye-catching and intriguing to the customer. For example, Dickerman refers to the following name of a dish as an appealing one: "Roasted Garlic-Marjoram Risotto With English Pea Crème Brûlée, Crosnes, Turnip-Collard Green 'Lasagna' and Black Truffle Vinaigrette" (2003: 1). However, some customers may prefer a plainer menu style so that the balance between the two styles has to be delicately maintained. As Dickerman (2003) notices, elaborate names should keep a balance of unconventional items and easily comprehended ones.

It is important to observe that when menus are translated, the reader of the TT is still a restaurant customer, but now this reader is a foreign customer situated in the context of the source language and source culture. Therefore, in order to make the translated menu both functional and meaningful, the translator has to consider the reader's needs in multiple ways. The translated menu has to inform customers about the meals served in a restaurant, to advertise the restaurant and its meals and to cover the most relevant aspects of the culture-based culinary traditions of a country. The receivers may include representatives of very different cultures; thus the group of the target readers in the case of menus is very heterogeneous, as is the target culture. Thus no culture norms are to be decisive in menu translation; the translation has to be oriented to any possible culture and made almost universally applicable. In this way, the translated menu, in order to be informative, has to become an international

text since it has to bridge the possible gaps between very different languages and cultures.

Menus are a special discourse type that involves intercultural transfer; therefore, menu translation should necessarily consider culture-specific aspects. Menus present a great variety of culture-specific concepts that often have no equivalents in the target language (cf. Baker 1992). Equivalents for names of dishes, e.g. *barbecue* and *shashlyk* in Russian (Breiter 1997), can easily mislead a translator if his/her awareness of cultural aspects is insufficient. Since the two names in Breiter's example correspond to each other only at the surface level (both mean 'pieces of meat roasted over an open fire' but, in fact, the two dishes do differ), Breiter calls such easily misleading equivalents 'pseudo-equivalents' (1997: 97). Food and cooking terminology differs not only in different languages but also varieties of languages. For instance, some differences between American and British English food vocabulary important for translators are provided by the Department of Translation Studies, University of Tampere (<http://www.uta.fi/FAST/US1/REF/>).

Thriveni (2002) notes that food habits are especially culture-sensitive so that many aspects related to them are even untranslatable. To deal with such 'untranslatable' items, as Sager suggests, translation studies should adopt a dynamic approach, 'which means considering translation as one possible step in a communication process between two cultures' (1997: 26).

In relation to culture, it is also important to note that, according to Sager, '[d]ifferent cultures may have different sets of text types because they have evolved different patterns of communication' (1997: 39; cf. Nord 1997: 45). According to Trosborg (1997a: 18), it is

especially useful for a translator to be aware of cross-cultural differences and similarities related to different text types and their conventions. As Nord notes, we cannot expect any striking differences within relatively similar culture groups such as 'average Western culture' (Nord 1997: 45); nonetheless, they may have different norms and conventions for the same text type (cf. Kussmaul 1997, who observes different text-type conventions in 'Saxonic' and 'Teutonic' discourse, and Kristense (2002), who points to different text-type conventions in German, Danish, English, Finnish, French and Spanish brochures).

Problems related to the translation of culture-bound terms, according to Nord (1997), fall into the category of pragmatic translation problems. Since the target readers cannot be expected to know the source culture, the translation has to be especially receiver-oriented.

Menu translations are of special importance, since, as Pouget (2000) observes, their quality may have effects on the standards of service and socio-cultural exchanges. Professionally translated menus can be expected to satisfy tourists' demands for better service and restaurant owners' needs to advertise their services. The importance of menu translations is reflected in the fact that the Catalan government published two multilingual glossaries of restaurant vocabulary in 1991 to help restaurant owners to translate their menus (Pouget 2000). Another example of a huge project aiming at menu translations is the international Applied Language Solutions (ALS) project that aimed at the translation of technical and non-technical food vocabulary and attempted to make these translations consistent throughout all texts (menus and product labels) (for more detail, see <http://www.alsintl.com/expertise/food.htm>).

AN ANALYSIS OF LITHUANIAN MENU TRANSLATIONS

DATA AND METHODS

The present analysis is based on 7 menus which include a total of 618 menu items. The menus have been taken from restaurants situated in the centre of Kaunas, which is the area that is most commonly visited by foreign tourists. All the menus contain English translations for each menu item in Lithuanian. Two restaurants specialize in traditional Lithuanian food, whereas the others serve varied dishes that do not belong to the traditional cuisine. Since pizza places serve foreign cuisine, menus from such places have not been taken into account, as they form a special category (the equivalents for the dishes served at such places are usually Italian terms).

Very typical dimensions in discourse analysis are cohesion and coherence as well as sentence structure. However, these aspects will not be considered in the present paper. The form and structure of a menu resemble a list more than a coherent text. The main ties within a menu are headings for different meals (e.g. salads, appetizers, soups, etc.); the sentence structure is that of a list as well. Therefore, the analysis of the results focuses mainly on such aspects as the degree of specificity of the ST and TT, the choice of lexis, the construction of the noun phrase, and spelling. Syntactic patterning is important only in relation to the construction of noun phrases, which typically overburden the translated menus because they contain too many premodifiers.

RESULTS

The present analysis of menu translations has revealed several interesting tendencies in how Lithuanian menus are

translated into English. One such tendency is that menu translations differ in the amount and specificity of the information presented in the ST and the TT. In relation to the degree of specificity, two major tendencies can be distinguished: (1) underspecification of the TT and (2) overspecification of the TT. Three more tendencies are related to the choice of equivalents: (1) lack of consistency in the choice of equivalents, (2) choice of overly specific lexis, and (3) improper choice of equivalents. Some issues in menu translations are related to the structural features of the translated menu items: these include improper construction of the noun phrase (henceforth NP). Another category that will be discussed in the present paper is the translation of exotic dish names, which are sometimes translated into English, sometimes are left in Lithuanian and, in some rare cases, are omitted. Finally, cases of misspelling will be touched upon to show how comic translations may occur because of too little consideration of the correct spelling.

UNDERSPECIFICATION IN THE TARGET TEXT

The collected data show that, very frequently, the TT is less specific or presents less information than the ST. This finding is rather unexpected, since for several reasons the translated menu should normally contain more information. First, a major function of a menu is to inform customers; in the case of translated menus, this function is even more important, since they should explicate culture-specific items. Besides, a menu has to be reassuring for a foreigner, since something that looks too exotic and unfamiliar may discourage the customer from ordering the dish. In addition, if

the menu is not informative enough, a native speaker can easily ask the waiter for more information, whereas foreigners may have difficulty in doing this. However, a number of examples obtained from the translated Lithuanian menus show that the importance of the informative function of menus is often not taken into account by translators. For instance, in examples (1) and (2), the Lithuanian variant is more specific than the translated one (here and in other examples below, the information that is omitted in the translated menu is presented in bold).

- (1) a. *pagardintos **majonezo-jogurto** padažu*
b. *with sauce*
- (2) a. ***kons.** pomidorų padažas*
b. *tomato sauce*

In example (1) the type of sauce ('made of mayonnaise and yogurt') and in example (2) the type of tomatoes ('canned') are not specified in the TT. If we consider menus as informative texts, such omissions make translated menus user-unfriendly and can be misleading. For instance, in example (2) *tomato sauce* may imply that the tomatoes used for the sauce are fresh; the possibility of such an interpretation is dishonest and can be treated as a violation of consumer rights.

Some omissions in the TT are even more extreme than the examples above. For instance, in (3) the whole description of the dish is omitted in the TT.

- (3) a. *Mėsos užkandžių rinkinys
virtas-rūkytas jaučio liežuvis, Aukštaičių
kepsnys, rūkyta vištienos krūtinėlė ir Salia-
mis, tiekama su vyšniniais pomidorais,
sūdytais kaparėliais, alyvuogėmis ir 'Rančos'
užpilu*
b. *Assorted meat platter
served with Ranch dressing*

As can be seen in example (3), the only specification of the dish in the TT is the type of dressing. The description pre-

sented only in Lithuanian, meanwhile, includes some very important information such as the type of meat and vegetables served in the dish. Undoubtedly, such information would be important for a non-native speaker as well.

In many instances it is difficult to say what the reason for the underspecification in the TT is. For example, in the menu items presented in (4)–(8) the omissions of information presented in Lithuanian seem to be accidental.

- (4) a. *Salotos su karšta vištiena (**Pekino kopūstai, pomidorai, agurkai, paprika, vištiena, rausvas padažas**)*
b. *Salad with hot chicken (cucumber, tomato, cabbage, red pepper, carrots, chicken)*
- (5) a. *Bulviniai blynai **su grietine***
b. *Potato pancakes*
- (6) a. *Bulviniai blynai, **įdaryti mėsa, su grietine***
b. *Potato pancakes with meat*
- (7) a. ***marinuoti** agurkai*
b. *cucumber*
- (8) a. ***Imbierinė** vištiena*
b. *Chicken fillet*

Though some cases of omissions might be explained by the lack of clear equivalents (e.g. *rausvas padažas* in (4)), in most cases they can be treated just as the translator's inaccuracies. In example (4), *Pekino kopūstas* (*Chinese cabbage*) is translated as *cabbage*, which is the equivalent of *kopūstas*, but cannot be used as an equivalent of the whole phrase. In examples (5)–(8), some easily translatable information is missing, e.g. *su grietine* – *with sour cream*, *įdaryti mėsa* – *with meat filling*, *marinuoti* – *marinated*, *imbierinė* – *ginger*. This suggests that menu translations are often done with too little consideration and without the awareness that, as menus normally perform the functions of informing and advertising, badly translated menus can have some counter-effects.

Some cases of underspecification in the TT can be especially troublesome for

foreigners since the TT lacks culture-specific information, as in example (9).

(9) a. *Senoviškas karkos valgis (rūkyta karka su padažu, virtos apkeptos bulvės)*

b. *Special hamhock dish*

In the example above the translated menu item is very abstract and lacks any description of the ingredients of the dish. Besides, the modifier *senoviškas* (old, traditional) is translated as *special*, which is a very abstract adjective. Hence the translated menu does not explain and even omits some important information about a dish that belongs to traditional Lithuanian cuisine. The dish therefore may sound completely unfamiliar to a foreigner; in addition, the term *hock* is too specific for a foreigner who is a non-native speaker of English.

Though such cases are rare, sometimes a translated menu item not only is underspecified but also presents different information than the ST, as in example (10).

(10) a. *sterkas su daržovėmis, keptas folijoje*

b. *zander with mushrooms, vegetables*

In the example above, the omitted information in the TT is that the zander is baked in aluminum foil; in addition, the TT says that it is served specifically with mushrooms, although the ST says that it is served with vegetables that are not specified and may not include mushrooms.

OVERSPECIFICATION IN THE TARGET TEXT

In contrast to cases of underspecification in the TT, a parallel tendency of overspecification has been observed. However, it is important to note that cases of overspecification are considerably less frequent. Their occurrence was a surprising, since, as has already been mentioned, initially it was expected that,

because the TT has to present much more detailed information about culture-specific dishes or dishes specific to a particular restaurant, it would contain more information than the ST. Though overspecifications are not frequent in the menus under investigation, here are some examples illustrating such cases:

(11) a. *spagečiai*

b. *angel hair pasta*

(12) a. *silke kaimiškai*

b. *herring country style (with potatoes)*

(13) a. *Graikiškos salotos su feta sūriu*

b. *Greece salad with "feta" cheese, extra vergine olive oil and basil dressing*

(14) a. *Salotos "JAZZ TERRE" – žaliuos salotos su daržovėmis, kepta vištiena ir šonine*

b. *"JAZZ TERRE" salad – salad leaves and vegetables with meat, bacon and croutons, dressed in vinaigrette*

In examples (11)–(14), the extra information refers mainly to the ingredients that are added to the main dish, e.g. potatoes, olive oil, vegetables or salad dressing. In any case, such additional specifications can be very useful for the foreign customer. However, such equivalents as *angel hair pasta* are not only too specific, but are also erroneous.

In the menus under analysis, there are some instances where the exotic name of a dish is followed by an explanation. Such an exotic name is either in Lithuanian, e.g. *Tinginys*, as in (17), or in some foreign language, e.g. *Ying-Yang* in (15). The problem in example (17) is that the equivalent *sloth* is not suitable. In Lithuanian *tinginys* is a homonym that refers to a lazy person and a kind of animal. *Sloth* is the equivalent to *tinginys* that refers to the animal, but it is not suitable as an equivalent to the word referring to a lazy person.

(15) a. *Jautienos file "YING-YANG"*

b. *"Ying-Yang"-beef fillet on a bed of glazed carrots in two different sauces, a creamy horseradish sauce and a red fruit sauce*

(16) a. *Silke "A la Čarlstonas"*

b. *"Carlston" herring with savoury may-*

onnaise sauce and red caviar(17) a. *Tinginys*b. *Cake "Sloth" (crumbled cooks with chocolate)*

In general, explanations following an exotic name are an effective technique. To be sure, however, such uninformative names as *A la Čarlstonas* in (16) do not provide any information about the dish; they serve mainly as a strategy to advertise the dish. The translation with an explanation follows such a name either in brackets or immediately after the name, as examples (15)–(17) demonstrate. The expected effect of such a translation is that it will be eye-catching (because of the exotic name) and will be both informative and reassuring for a foreign visitor (because of the explanation). However, this is not the case when the explanation is a misleading one, as in example (17), where the noun *cooks* is used instead of *cookies*.

LACK OF CONSISTENCY IN THE CHOICE OF EQUIVALENTS

On the lexical level, menu translations are highly inconsistent in the choice of equivalents. Very frequently different equivalents are chosen for the same Lithuanian item not only in different menus, but sometimes also in the same menu. Lack of consistency in translating some very frequent food terms is illustrated in the examples below:

(18) a. *Pekino kopūstas*b. *butterhead lettuce / Peking salad / cabbage*(19) a. *garstyčių padažas*b. **pincles sauce / mustard sauce*(20) a. *fermentinis sūris*b. *cheese / Swiss cheese*

As examples (18)–(20) show, sometimes the English equivalents are even non-existent words (marked with an asterisk), as in (19). In (20) the two English

equivalents differ in their specificity (the more general *cheese* and the more specific *Swiss cheese*). However, it is questionable whether the more specific term is necessary.

Inconsistency in the choice of equivalents is observed when synonymous or nearly synonymous equivalents for the same Lithuanian food term exist, as in examples (21)–(23).

(21) a. *blyneliai*b. *pancakes / crepes / crêpes*(22) a. *varškė*b. *curd / cottage cheese*(23) a. *makaronai*b. *pasta / macaroni*

For instance, in example (21) the variation arises because of the co-existence of the Anglo-Saxon equivalent and the French one (spelt either as in the original or in a modified way). Example (23) shows that sometimes a more general term (*pasta*) and a more specific term (*macaroni*) are erroneously used interchangeably.

There is a lot of variation in the translation of different kinds of meat, as in examples (24)–(26):

(24) a. *jautienos nugarinė*b. *beef entrecote / beef sirloin / beef / beef *striploin*(25) a. *vištienos krūtinėlė*b. *chicken breast / brisket / fillet*(26) a. *kepsnys*b. *roast / steak*

As example (24) shows, the largest variety of equivalents is used for referring to the type of beef *jautienos nugarinė*. Sometimes the particular type of beef is left unspecified.

In example (27), a variation of equivalents arises because of the use of word-for-word translation:

(27) a. *salotos*b. *salad leaf / lettuce*

Example (27) can be treated as an example of native language interference since in Lithuanian *salotų lapai* (*salad*

leaves) is commonly said.

As has already been mentioned, such inconsistency in the choice of equivalents can be observed in different menus as well as within the same menu. Moreover, inconsistency is observable even in the same menu item, as in example (28):

(28) a. **Kepsnys** "Sodžius" (kiaulės išpjovos **kepsnys** su riešutų-krienų užpilu)

b. **Roast** "Village" (pork **steak** with walnut-ground horse-radish sauce)

The Lithuanian term *kepsnys* is translated as *roast* in the name of the dish, but in the bracketed explanation it is translated as *steak*.

In some instances a variation of equivalents appears because two different words exist in British and American English, as in example (29).

(29) a. cukinija

b. zucchini (AE) / courgette (BE)

This type of inconsistency can also be observable both within a menu and in different menus.

CHOICE OF OVERLY SPECIFIC LEXIS

Another tendency that has been observed in relation to the choice of lexis in TTs is that sometimes English equivalents are too specific, though menus should be aimed at both native and non-native speakers. Such overly specific equivalents are presented in bold in examples (30)–(34). Some of them are French terms that would not be familiar to all tourists from different languages and cultures (e.g. *farci*, *bisque*, *jardinière*).

(30) a. įdaryti kepti pomidorai

b. **farci** baked tomatoes

(31) a. trinta daržovių sriuba

b. vegetable **bisque**

(32) a. marinuoti šonkauliukai

b. **soused** pork ribs

(33) a. troškintos daržovės

b. **jardinière** vegetables

(34) a. baltasis padažas su rūkytais lašinukais

b. white sauce with **flitch** pieces

The frequency of the terms in bold is extremely low in English as the British National Corpus (BNC), which consists of 100 million words, shows. For example, *bisque* occurs only 13 times in the whole corpus (0.13 instances per million words). Besides, *bisque* is not suitable to refer to soup made of vegetables since typically it is used to refer to soup made of seafood. The frequency of *soused* is identical to that of *bisque*: 13 occurrences (freq: 0.13 instances per million words). *Farci* is even rarer; it occurs only once in the corpus (0.01 instances per million words). *Jardinière* occurs only twice and *flitch* occurs four times, but they are used here not in relation to food. Besides, when *flitch* refers to meat, it does not refer to small pieces of bacon, but to a big piece of meat. Thus instead of the highly specific terms *farci*, *bisque*, *soused*, *jardinière* and *flitch* more common terms (such as *stuffed*, *cream vegetable soup*, *marinated*, *stewed* and *smoked bacon*) would be more useful and informative for a non-native (and perhaps native) speaker of English.

IMPROPER CHOICE OF EQUIVALENTS

Some equivalents in translated menus are not only inconsistent but they are also inadequate. In some cases, though not frequently, the equivalent does not exist in English (as mentioned already above in relation to the inconsistency of equivalents. Sometimes the equivalent is misleading, e.g. *užpilas* (*salad dressing*) is translated as *filler*.

An improper choice of equivalents can cause comic effects, as in examples (35)–(36).

(35) a. Jūros gėrybių salotos ('sea food salad')

b. Sea blessing salad

(36) a. *Aštrioji mišrainė* ('salad with a hot sauce')

b. "Sharp" salad

Such comic instances commonly occur when dish names are translated literally, as in the examples above, and also when an erroneous equivalent is chosen as in the example with *cook* in (17), which was discussed above.

IMPROPER CONSTRUCTION OF THE NOUN PHRASE

Syntactic problems in menu translations are mainly related to the construction of NPs. Two tendencies that have been observed in the collected menus include (1) overly complex NPs, and (2) Lithuanian structure in English compounds.

Overly complex NPs occur because of the interference of the Lithuanian language, as in example (37), where the complex NP is in bold.

(37) a. *kiaulės išpjovos kepsnys su riešutų-krienų užpilu*

b. *pork steak with **walnut-ground horse-radish** sauce*

In the example above, the translated NP is almost incomprehensible because it consists of three modifiers preceding the noun, and one of the modifiers (*horse-radish*) is a compound with the premodifier *ground*. In addition, the premodifiers are hyphenated to form one unit. Thus the unit premodifying the noun *sauce* is undoubtedly unnecessarily complex.

The NPs in translated texts are most commonly very complex because of the Lithuanian structures used for English compounds. Such instances are especially numerous in the collected data; some of them are presented in examples (38)–(41).

(38) a. *su majonezo-jogurto padažu*

b. *with **mayonnaise-yogurth** [sic] sauce*

(39) a. *pievagrybių-grietinėlės padažas*

b. *champignons-sour cream dressing*

(40) a. *su citrinų, aliejaus užpilu*

b. *with **lemon-oil** sauce*

(41) a. *bulvių skiltelėmis ir sūrio-grietinėlės padažu*

b. *baked potatoes with **cheese cream** sauce*

Structures as the ones in (38)–(41) are possible in Lithuanian because of its case system which allows speakers to indicate the relations between words in complex noun phrases that are often hyphenated in Lithuanian menus. However, in English, such NPs are just a list of individual words that are not interrelated, as in (41). Hyphenated compounds used as noun premodifiers can even be misleading in English. For instance, *lemon-oil* in example (40) suggests that the oil is made of lemon.

Because of improper structuring of NPs, syntactic ambiguity can arise, as can be seen in example (42).

(42) a. *salotos su kepta lašiša*

b. *baked salmon salad*

In example (42) two interpretations are possible. The translated dish name can mean that a salad is made of baked salmon; on the other hand, it can mean that a salad made of salmon is baked. As has already been mentioned, improper choice of syntactic structures in translated menus make the information insufficient or even misleading, which is against one of the primary aims of menus, to be informative.

TRANSLATION OF LITHUANIAN NAMES FOR DISHES

A number of dishes have appealing Lithuanian names that do not offer much information about the dish, but are used primarily as an appellative and eye-catching technique, which performs the function of advertising. Sometimes such Lithuanian names are translated into

English, but in some cases they are left in the original. Here are some examples in (43)–(45) where Lithuanian names are translated into English:

- (43) a. Dobilėlis penkialapis
b. “Clover”
- (44) a. Pavasaris
b. “Spring”
- (45) a. Kepsnys “Sodžius”
b. Roast “Village”

Such names as in the examples above are most commonly followed by an explanation of what the dish is made of.

Some Lithuanian names, however, are not translated into English, though such cases are rare; see example (46).

- (46) a. Jautienos kepsnys “Bizonas”
b. Roast beef “Bizonas”

When a name like *Bizonas* (*Buffalo*) is not translated, part of its appealing effect is lost.

Fancy names of dishes are sometimes translated into English but are left unexplained, as in example (47).

- (47) a. Paparčio žiedas
b. Blossom of fern

Such names may sound intriguing, but there is no familiar information in them to reassure unadventurous customers. The only clue about the dish is the heading *desserts* under which it appears. Thus the translator’s decision to add no commentary to the exotic name is rather risky.

Another technique that is used when translating fancy Lithuanian names is omission of the name. As can be seen in example (48), the Lithuanian name *Gai-vumas* (*Freshness*) in the TT is omitted.

- (48) a. Šviežio ananaso desertas “GAIVUMAS”
b. Fresh pineapple dessert

In this example, the aspect of freshness which is highlighted by the Lithuanian name is reflected only in the descriptive adjective *fresh* in English.

MISSPELLING

The final observation about the Lithuanian menu translations is that there are a number of misspellings, some of which can cause comic effects, as can be seen in the following list:

- (49) *beef peaces*
- (50) *caned tangerines*
- (51) *carry sauce*
- (52) *plumps in hot syrup*
- (53) *1000 irland (island) sauce*
- (54) *soy*
- (55) *variuos vegetables*
- (56) *yogurth / jogurt*

In examples (53)–(56), the spelling mistakes demonstrate a lack of proofreading and care. In examples (49)–(53), such a lack of consideration makes the names of the dishes or their ingredients sound comic. All these instances of misspelling again show that translators often disregard the function of menus to advertise the restaurant and to represent it in apposite light

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The analysis has revealed that menu translators use different techniques of translation, not all of which are successful. Translated menus are made either more or less informative by using the techniques of (1) overspecification of the TT and (2) underspecification of the TT. The tendencies that have been observed on the lexical level include (1) lack of consistency in the choice of equivalents, (2) choice of overly specific lexis, and (3) improper choice of equivalents. On the syntactic level, menu translations are often made unnecessarily complex by using improper constructions of the NP. The techniques of translating fan-

cy or exotic dish names include (1) translating the Lithuanian name into English; (2) leaving the Lithuanian name untranslated; or (3) omitting the Lithuanian name in the English translation. Finally, there are numerous cases of misspelling.

A number of the observations made in this investigation show that Lithuanian menu translations are often inadequate. Most of the inadequacies are related to the negligence of the main functions of a menu, i.e. to inform and to persuade. Frequent cases of underspecification, choice of overly specific lexis and choice of inappropriate equivalents definitely do not make translated menus either informative or appellative. Such inadequacies could be avoided if translators were more aware of the purpose of menus to appeal to the expected addressee. Besides, translated menus have to be international texts of almost universal applicability. Therefore, choice of overly specific lexis makes menus comprehensible to a very limited group of expected addressees. Ambiguities arising because of inappropriately constructed NPs as well as inappropriately selected equivalents function as anti-promotion and even violate consumer rights. Unintentionally humorous misspellings in menus can be treated as a signal of too little consideration for the customer. All the cases of inadequate translation can

have a very harmful outcome since they lower the standards of service and can cause miscommunication, not to mention that they lower the prestige of a restaurant. All these aspects are of special importance in tourism business.

Menus, being very strictly patterned, are highly predictable in their structure. Besides, their content is also very formulaic; the core lexis used in menus is restricted to a relatively limited list of words. Syntactic patterns in menus are not very complex either, since they consist mainly of noun phrases. Because menus are so much prepatterned, their translation can be facilitated and made more uniform and consistent by introducing a glossary of terms recurrent in most menus. Such a glossary would help translators avoid uninformative or misleading translations. Uniformity of equivalents would make the menus more consistent, reliable and representative and would help to avoid most of the problems observed in the present article. In addition, to aid menu translators and restaurant owners, an investigation of foreign customers' needs could be carried out to highlight the main functional problems of translated menus. A survey of foreign customers could provide some information about the problematic translation areas and could provide some practically useful insights for restaurant owners.

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Jūratė RUZAITĖ

TEKSTŲ TIPOLOGIJA VERTIME

Menu vertimo problemos ir ypatumai

S a n t r a u k a

Šiame straipsnyje siekiama parodyti, kokią reikšmę vertimo praktikoje turi teksto tipas ir jo atliekamos funkcijos. Tyrimas paremtas aštuonių restoranų meniu, kuriuos sudaro 618 patiekalų pavadinimų, analize. Visi meniu surinkti iš restoranų, esančių Kauno centre ir todėl dažniausiai lankomų užsienio turistų, į kuriuos ir yra (ar bent turėtų būti) orientuojamas restorano meniu vertimas. Meniu atlieka dvigubą funkciją: (1) informuoja apie restorano patiekalus ir (2) reklamuoja restoraną bei jo teikiamas paslaugas. Šios dvi funkcijos turėtų būti vienodai svarbios ir lietuviškame, ir angliškame meniu variante, tačiau dažnai angliškas vertimas nėra pakankamai informatyvus ir tampa ne restorano reklama, bet anti-reklama.

Atliktas tyrimas parodė, kad meniu vertėjai dažnai taiko kelias pagrindines strategijas versdami patiekalų pavadinimus. Pirma, meniu vertimuose gausu atvejų, kai angliškas vertimas yra mažiau informatyvus nei meniu originalo kalba, kas yra ypač ydinga, nes meniu dažnai atspindi tik tam tikrai kultūrai būdingus dalykus. Beje, kai kurie patiekalų pavadinimai yra informatyvesni anglų kalboje, tačiau tokie atvejai yra gana reti. Antra, angliškieji patiekalų atitikmenys anglų kalboje pasirenkami nenuosekliai arba net yra klaidingi. Sin-

taksiniu požiūriu meniu vertimai yra bereikalingai sudėtingi, o neretai ir dviprasmiški, nes daiktavardinė frazė dažnai sudaroma remiantis lietuvių kalbos taisyklėmis. Egzotiški ir neįprasti patiekalų pavadinimai, skirti klientų dėmesiui patraukti, verčiami keliais būdais: (a) lietuviškas pavadinimas yra verčiamas į anglų kalbą; (b) lietuviškas pavadinimas paliekamas neišverstas; (c) lietuviškas pavadinimas iš viso neminimas vertime. Meniu vertimuose taip pat gausu rašybos klaidų, kurios dažnai yra komiškos ar anekdotinės.

Akivaizdu, kad meniu dažnai verčiami neatsižvelgus į jų pagrindines funkcijas – informuoti klientą ir reklamuoti restoraną. Meniu turėtų būti universalus tekstas, nes jis yra skirtas bet kokios kultūros ir kalbos atstovui, todėl informacijos stoka angliškame vertime ar per daug specifiniai angliški terminai ne tik nepakankamai informuoja ir klaidina klientą, bet ir pažeidžia jo vartotojo teises. Netinkamai išverstas meniu mažina aptarnavimo efektyvumą, taip pat kenkia restorano bei šalies prestižui. Kadangi meniu yra itin specifinis teksto tipas, kurio struktūra ir netgi turinys yra aiškiai nuspėjami, jų vertimą galima būtų palengvinti ir suvienodinti sudarius maisto terminų žodynėlį, kuris padėtų išvengti daugelio šiame tyrime pastebėtų vertimo problemų.