

## TRANSLATION LANGUAGE: THE MAJOR FORCE IN SHAPING MODERN LATVIAN

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Cross-cultural communication affects not only the translations *per se*, but also target culture and thinking in general. Globalization, migration, tourism, student exchanges, international trade and business, and first of all the openness of media brings numerous new concepts and terms into languages. Yet, the direct lexical impact is only part of the process; there is also a broad effect on target language composition/corpus, conventions, norms and even deep structures. Most 'original' texts today carry many of the same traits as translations. Interference has long ceased to be characteristic of translated texts only. Translations in many languages constitute more than half of the texts that an average citizen 'consumes'. We cannot speak anymore of a clear dichotomy of 'translation language' versus the real language – there is no isolation in the modern world. One can view this asymmetrical phenomenon as a deplorable interference, as linguistic and cultural imperialism or as a general standardization of languages with a consequent potential loss of cultural uniqueness. Yet it can hardly be affected, as language change is inevitable, and in the modern world translation functions as a major vehicle of change. It also calls for a review of some of the traditional approaches to translation theory issues within the framework of the new globalized, international and multilingual communication.

### INTRODUCTION

The traditional dichotomy of translation and the original, translation language and the language of the original is as old as translation itself. Traditionally, translation theory, lexicography, contrastive and corpus linguistics, operate within the dichotomy. Translation language is opposed to the genuine, natural, real one. Yet the pervasiveness of translations in the modern, globalized world puts the dichotomy under a big question. The sharp distinction between the two is further marred by an obvious and well recognized cline of translated texts from carefully domesticated and literally edited to carelessly done and/or foreignized ones.

Widespread cross-language and cross-cultural communication affects not only translations and their language, but also target culture and thinking, as well as target language composition/corpus, conventions, norms and even deep structures. These issues can also be viewed in terms of translation theory discussions of minor and major cultures/languages, where an asymmetrical culture exchange takes place. Some, mostly dominant cultures (Toury 1995), tend to impose their own linguistic and cultural conventions when translating from minority languages and cultures. At the same time they are also increasingly absorbing lexemes, sememes and other memes of the global diversity. The opposite, however, is stronger – the hegemonistic pressures of the prestige languages are well known and minor cultures (willingly or unwillingly) absorb the dictum of the major ones. Besides, the latter generally being more familiar with the major ones than vice versa, they are prone to borrow, imitate and adapt. The result is a growing internationalization, in fact, hybridization and levelling of the national peculiarities.

#### TRANSLATIONESE AND CORPORA ISSUE: A RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE

Within the framework of lexicography, corpus linguistics and translation studies, parallel texts (Hartmann 1994, 293) are usually divided into texts that are the result of translation (often called bitexts or translated texts) and independently formulated texts (comparable texts) (Hartmann 2001, 105) matched by the same topic, similar discourse participants, footing, i.e. their intertextuality. The latter are viewed as more appropriate for linguistic processing, contrastive and textual analysis; the former are regarded with some suspicion as they might have features (slips, shifts, wrong usage) inherent in translations. These features going against what is called naturalness (Lewandowska 2001, 177) are viewed as alien and translation language as constrained language production (Toury 1995). Naturalness is interpreted in terms of frequency and preference in native texts from which translation language allegedly deviates.

Deviations of translationese are usually ascribed to the interference of the source language (Lewandowska 2001, 178), breaching some target language norms. Even deliberately covert translations that conform to target text-type norms (not to speak of overt ones) may contain linguistic features that have different distributions as compared to non-translated, parallel texts (Chesterman 1999, 51). While less frequent in domesticated translations, these would

be more pronounced in translations done according to foreignizing strategies, 'deviating from prevailing domestic values' (Venutti 1998, 240).

In no way disputing the theoretical possibility of differentiating between the translation texts and native texts I still suppose that a quality translation using domestication strategy may in fact be unrecognizable as translation, while many 'native' texts suffer from breeches of norms caused by ignorance or deliberate manipulations, as well as the ever-present interference (see further).

Also, the principles of selecting comparable texts seem to carry a congenital fault. Often, as a typical example for these texts, encyclopedia articles on the same topic are adduced, e.g. descriptions of *iceberg*, *Biedermeier chair*, *pagoda*. However, let us be realistic: where would the author of an encyclopedia entry get the information on items like *pagoda*, *iceberg*, *camel*, *sampan*, *kungfu*, *blog*, *media*, non-native fauna and flora, recipes, chemical elements, notions of physics, general and international legal items (like *presumption of innocence* or *PoW*), if not in some other encyclopedia or reference source in another language, or by being in contact with another language community or comparing other language sources.

Thus, it seems that quality translated texts can be used for general language corpus. Including translated texts in a general corpus may be a relevant problem for smaller languages (languages of limited diffusion), where some spheres and domains may be covered by a few translations only. To leave them out because they are translations would do more harm than good as it would seriously narrow the lexis represented. This also means that, for example, translations of European *acquis* – EU official texts – amounting to hundreds of thousands of pages, can be included in corpus.

## INTERFERENCE

My second argument concerns interference. Interference (elements of one code in the context of another) is an omnibus term (Baetens-Beardsmore 1986, 45) and can have a narrow or broad understanding. Yet neither in the narrow or broad sense can it be exclusively linked to translation. Interference is in fact inherent in bilingualism or multilingualism as such – a bilingual or multilingual person may/will have interference also in the 'native' speech without necessarily doing translation. A bilingual's use of language will be affected by his/her knowledge of the situation, e.g. perhaps less interference in conversation with or writing for monolinguals, more for bilinguals.

Two examples – a quality translation of a general text might not have any elements whatsoever to suggest that it is a translation; it is the subject, the foreign markers (exotic lexical elements, placenames, names, surnames) perhaps the subject, that betray its foreign origin. Another case, a conversation or an internet chat between two computer experts (whatever their nationality, Latvian, Finnish, Vietnamese) on their problems, in their native language – could have so many deviations (mainly on the lexical and semantic level) that its transcript would have all elements of interference saturated translation.

Interference in the broader sense is not limited to formal features only: there may be serious or not so serious interference on the semantic, pragmatic or as-sociative level, which is very difficult to trace in corpora. Moreover, there is an abundance of interlingual texts with frequent code-switching depending on the topic, situation, participants. In order to find ‘pure’ untainted samples of speech/text one has to find:

1. a monolingual,
2. this person should preferably be in touch with monolinguals only, and
3. this person should be cut off from any means of modern communication.

Yet most of our contemporaries read books, or at least magazines or papers and watch TV, use the internet, purchase imported food and goods, take medicine, etc. many of which carry translations. Such isolation would be difficult in the modern world and it seems that corpora compilers in general would not be able to carry off this surgical task. Finally, it should be pointed out that with time most untranslatable and ‘foreign’ items become virtually native or semi-native for the non-expert.

## HYBRIDITY

Most modern texts are characterized by hybridity which extends in the global village not only to translations and translated texts but also to most of the original/natural texts. We live in a translated world where international mass culture competes and interacts with local forms. Discursive similarities, irrespective of the language in which a text has been created appear (Zauberga 2006, 150) and ‘transnational’ and ‘translational’ concepts have become synonyms (Zauberga 1999, 265). While stressing the hybrid character of modern media and intercourse we by no means want to suggest this is something new – borrowing of linguistic elements, and ideas, and memes has a long history, suffice it to mention the Bible and its translations which by means of endless repetition have deeply

affected the wordstock, idiom stock, and metaphoric thinking of the Christian societies. Yet the modern scope is broader.

Not attempting to cover all field and set an exhaustive list of the translation-dominated spheres where hybridity is rife and inevitable (unless consciously combated), the following could be mentioned:

- any texts on international matters (politics, economy),
- most texts on popular international culture (cinema, music, football, celebrities),
- recipes,
- travel books, guides and descriptions,
- international (and EU) laws transposed, contracts (legal concepts and language in general for most nations are borrowed from Latin or some other dominating language),
- localization of software,
- advertising,
- films, dubbed, voice over and/or subtitled according to the tradition,
- TV dubbed, voice over and/or subtitled, international media in various languages,
- localized, franchised TV shows and games which add to the import of modes, norms and conventions,
- usage instructions, labels (food, equipment, medicine),
- higher education textbooks, education books,
- reference books, encyclopedias,
- fiction translations (deliberately at the end of the list – though translation studies usually have a bias for literary texts/translation – these texts constitute a tiny fraction of the whole). Also, local fiction and many ‘original’ writings tend to be influenced by trends and currents in other countries.

These must be complemented by the spheres where people are in direct contact with another language, like companies and their branches operating in another language, pop music, the Internet, satellite TV, original soundtracks in subtitled films, broadcasts, sports, etc., which increase linguistic interference and mentally affect ‘natural’ original speech/text norms and conventions. Of course, many countries have official bilingualism and a close mass language contact.

Such a broad and pervasive impact cannot but trigger noticeable changes in home conventions and norms at an amazing speed and scope. We can talk of higher or lower levels of hybridity depending on the degree of foreign element concentration (Zauberga 2006, 150), but translation certainly destabilizes

cultural identities and makes it difficult to draw the line between national and international, similarly between translation and non-translation.

#### ALL WRITING AND SPEECH IS TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION

This is the fourth philosophical argument, or, in fact, Chesterman's fifth (and the most basic A.V.) supermeme. Translation is rewriting – we resort to various types of rewriting/retelling often. Our words are not ours, they have been used before, and our own use is inevitably tainted by their previous usage, in other people's mouths/writings. There are no 'originals'; all we can do is translate (Chesterman 1997, 14). The same issue can be approached from the other end, as Gutt suggests; he does not believe that 'translational language' is somehow a linguistically distinct variety of language (Back 2005, 151). A variety of factors accounts for that as a particular form of communication, rather than purely linguistic peculiarities, among them the purpose (Scopos) of the translation or, to that matter, the purpose of any text.

Thus, though theoretically feasible and practically in some cases valuable, a contrastive study of broad corpora of translational language versus non-translational language certainly can produce some data on the peculiarities of the first (particular types of interference within a concrete language pair, concrete domain, dealing with unique items, etc.). However, in the modern situation clear delineation of the two seems both impractical and often impossible. Translations are part and parcel of language use and thus part and parcel of its corpus.

#### LATVIAN

After 50 years of soviet occupation and dominance of the Russian language, Latvia regained its independence in 1991. Already during the late 1980s when *glasnost* ('openness') policies broke the information iron curtain, serious changes started – the use of Latvian as an official language was renewed in administration, the media became open to the rest of the world. The volume of translation (until then restricted to informative texts from Russian and limited fiction texts from other languages) started growing, and, with it, the influence of the new source languages. As linguistic processes are less subjected to conscious rationalizing than many others, they reflect the essence of the cultural processes more clearly. Thus English, apart from its general weight, in a way symbolizing the free

world, carrying with it the additional novel attraction of the hitherto forbidden fruit, had an immense impact on the 'information-starved' masses.

Independence brought the necessary legal framework for sustaining the Latvian language in the new conditions. The use of Latvian in administrative and legal functions was fully renewed. Many spheres and domains of language functioning were regained (administration, defence, shipping), with old terminology revived or new created. From the mid-1990s integration into the European Union called for further development of terminology, developing of serious translation and interpretation capacity. Media and trade openness brought numerous new concepts and terms, mainly from English. The official status of Latvian and integration into the EU called for the development of enormous translation capacity which has grown manifold. The growth of globalization in the last 20 years enhanced these processes. Globalization cannot be reduced to translations only as it affects the 'original' language/discourse in other ways as well – direct contacts, mass travel, instant communication opportunities, etc. Though far from being a novel phenomenon (one can view Christianization or spread of the Bible translations as early samples of globalization), the ever faster communication contributes also to an ever faster and deeper language change. As a result translations constitute about 70% of texts that an average speaker consumes in Latvia today. It is not some strange 'translation language', it is the language.

English being the main direct, indirect and intermediary contact language of Latvian, contributes not only to the Latvian wordstock by means of loans but also affects the language system, structure and conventions. Thus apart from traditional loans, one can see semantic loans, change of meaning, ousting of earlier borrowings, spreading of less usual word formation patterns, enhanced use of idiom transformation and wordplay elements. Translation and translation language has become a major vehicle of change of Latvian.

A huge change in the whole translation language pattern has occurred. The tip of the iceberg can be seen in the statistics of the pattern of fiction translations into Latvian:

1985	209 books translated;	140 Russian : 9 English	(proportion 15 : 1)
1994	519 books translated;	40 Russian : 243 English	(proportion 1 : 6)
2004	679 books translated;	68 Russian : 359 English	(proportion 1 : 6)
2007	844 books translated;	89 Russian : 481 English	(proportion 1 : 5.5)

Apart from the U-turn of proportions in the early 1990s it is worth noting the general growth and an interesting fact – two thirds of all books translated

were and are from the dominant language of the period. One should also bear in mind that fiction in today's information world constitutes a small percentage of translated texts. Its relevance and proportions have clearly diminished over the last decades, yet the proportion seen in fiction might be true for the other texts as well. We now live in a translated world. Translations are everywhere – world news, Latvian laws – copies of EU texts, medical instructions, food labels, fiction, internet, computer games, and films.

Openness brought about also a general change in Latvian norms and conventions: a more colloquial style of general language used by most media, a freer use of substandard lexis in printed media (formerly taboo). It would be impossible to say whether this is a transfer of English conventions, thus a contact-induced change (Thomason 2007, 41), or just the result of what could be called democratization of society language and naturally more democratic speech conventions. There is a confusion or blend of styles in many media. This shift applies to both written/oral divide as well as class/educational register. One cannot also ignore the general switch from reading to watching, from traditional sources of information to postmodern ones, which contribute to the above.

## LINGUISTIC IMPACT

In this paper we focus on the lexical and semantic change in Latvian, which is easiest to perceive and analyze. Yet the influence of English is felt also in grammar constructions, spelling norms (use of multiple initial capitals in complex names and titles is growing), also Latvian phonetic system has felt some change. It should be emphasized that the material has been gleaned from 'genuine' Latvian texts (reflecting only written language which is always more conservative and rule bound). Some covert translations might be naturally expected.

### *1. Traditional impact*

Major influences of English, some of which are direct and obvious, others less perceivable, are as follows.

- Colloquial loans:

*kreizī* ('crazy'), *super* ('super'), *friks* ('freak'), *vau* ('wau'), *kūl*, *kūls* ('cool'), *kamon* ('come on'), *feiss* ('face'), *filings* ('feeling'), *tops* ('top'), *čats* ('chat'), *čarts* ('chart'), *saits* ('site'), *meils* ('mail'), *mesidžs* ('message'), *fans* ('fan'), *sneks* ('snack'), *lūzers* ('loser'), *geits* ('gate'), *bla bla bla*;

some are more adapted and Latvian derivatives have appeared:

*fiļs* ('feeling'), *fakucis* ('fucker'), *fakains* ('fucking'), *tīnis* ('teenager'), *ciopot* ('to zip'), *topiņš* ('top'), *topot* ('to top'), *kompis* ('computer'), *rullēt* ('to rule'), *čiksa* ('chick'), *fiča* ('feature'), *superīgs* ('super').

Though these loans are often referred to with resentment by 'cultured' Latvian speakers, their use is close to universal, especially among the younger generation. Their number, however, should not be exaggerated as it would hardly reach a hundred. Their frequency of use is very high in colloquial language. These are mostly short Anglo-Saxon words some of which are fully assimilated, others grammatically only partially assimilated: *kūl*, *vau*, *kamon*, *bla bla bla*.

Similarly slang and colloquial language also retain and accumulate a fair number of Russian loans: *močīt*, *kruts*, *fufelis*, *koļīt*, *kruts*, *besīt*, *muhļīt*, *mudrīt*, *rubīt*, *tusiņš*, *gruzīt*, *davai*, *da jebko*, *mož*, *bļin*, *pričom*.

• Traditional Neoclassical borrowing:

*politkorektums* ('political correctness'), *loģistika* ('logistics'), *rafinērija* ('refinery'), *multiplekss* ('multiplex'), *prezentācija* ('presentation'), *antioksidants* ('anti-oxidant'), *kleptokrātija* ('kleptocracy'), *monitors* ('monitor'), *koronārs* ('coronary'), *naratīvs* ('narrative'), *iniciēt* ('initiate'), *koeksistēt* ('coexist'), *komitoloģija* ('commitology').

Traditional borrowing from English and via English has expanded. This is in no way a new phenomenon for Latvian as before the 'tsunami' several thousand loans had already been borrowed from English (Baldunčiks 1989).

## 2. Impact of new borrowings

Today we can reckon that about four to five thousand new borrowings (not counting specific narrow terms) have been added. Thus it is not a tremendous influx. Yet it is the frequency of several hundred of these vogue words that is usually noticed and often deplored, e.g. *konsens(u)s* ('consensus'), *interfeiss* ('interface'), *parametrs* ('parameter'), *sinerģija* ('synergy'), *paradigma* ('paradigm'), *interoperabilitāte* ('interoperability'), *inovācija* ('innovation'), *kapacitāte* ('capacity'), *eksponenciāls* ('exponential'), *reģenerācija* ('regeneration'), *eksogēns* ('exogenous'), *dihotomija* ('dichotomy'), *alianse* ('alliance'), *apropriācija* ('appropriation'). Most of these lexemes are Neoclassical internationalisms that Latvian has borrowed in tens of thousands before. These loans are transcribed, supplied with traditional endings according to the Latvian norms, they are neutral or

formal and can be well integrated in the language. Under traditional borrowing one can also see numerous loan translations and semicalques: *jā-lautiņi* ('yes-men'), *eksvīrs* ('ex-husband'), *guļošais policists* ('sleeping policeman'), *sierburgers* ('cheeseburger'), *ziepju opera* ('soap opera'), *e-pasts* ('e-mail'), *vēstuļbumba* ('letter bomb'), *viedkarte* ('smart card').

- Semantic borrowing

A more interesting is the type of semantic borrowing when new meanings are added to old Latvian words (rarely) or older borrowed internationalisms because of the polysemy of their English counterparts, e.g. *zvaigzne* ('star'), *vīruss* ('virus'), *pele* ('mouse'), *zālīte* ('grass'), *attīstītājs* ('developer'), *laineris* ('liner'), *zaļais* ('green'), *pilārs* ('pillar'), *arhitektūra* ('architecture'), *sūkāt* ('suck'), *rullēt* ('rule').

There are comparatively few Russian semantic borrowings, mostly constructions: *pa lielam, nu neko sev*.

English meaning import has led to great shifts in the so called 'false friends' category: *biljons* ('billion'), *dekāde* ('decade'), *ambulance* ('ambulance'), *studija* ('study'), *aktivitāte* ('activity'), *kapacitāte* ('capacity'), *konservācija* ('conservation'), *romance* ('romance'), *konspirācija* ('conspiracy'), *asistēt* ('to assist'), *impotence* ('impotence'), *spekulācija* ('speculation'), *divīzija* ('division'), *intervence* ('intervention'), *prēmija* ('premium'), *akadēmiķis* ('academic'), *plenērs* ('plain air'), *premjera* ('premier'). E.g. formerly *kapacitāte* was a physics term only, now it is frequently used in the meaning of 'ability'. *Ambulance* in the past was an 'outpatients doctor's office', today it is more frequently used in the meaning of 'first aid van', *klasificēts* (classified – formerly *arranged* now also 'secret').

The shift has come about from a realignment of meaning system similar to Russian to a meaning system similar to English; as a result many false friends of the Latvian-English language pair have become 'true friends' in the Latvian-English dichotomy. Consequently they have often become false friends in Russian-Latvian dichotomy, unless a similar change takes place also in Russian. Expansion of polysemy has taken place, and though sometimes it can be fought (as it occasionally creates misunderstanding) the likely outcome will be a permanent change of meaning of these Latvian words. The collateral process is a rarer use of the traditional word for these meanings.

Apart from new meanings, broadening of meaning can be noted in many cases *produkts* ('product'), *pārdot* ('to sell'), e.g. if 'sell' was normally used for things, now also for ideas, party line, yourself, occasionally creating problems as the old meaning of sell is also there ('betray').

Real change of meaning in monosemantic words under the influence of English is as yet rare. The word *drastisks* ('drastic'), formerly meaning 'rough, playful, carefree' tends to be used more and more in the English meaning of 'radical, sharp'. *Kritisks* ('critical', 'difficult') is now frequently used for 'very important'. *Dramatisks* ('dramatic') (connected with plays, emotional) stands to be used in the English meaning of 'sudden, striking'. *Klasificēts* ('classified') is used almost solely as 'secret'.

- Substitution of loans

Some older loans are gradually ousted by English ones: *elastība* > *fleksibilitāte* ('flexibility'); *prezervatīvs* > *kondoms* ('condom'); *pisuārs* > *urināls* ('urinal'); *kadri* > *personāls* ('personnel'); *multiplikācijas* > *animācijas* ('animation'); *ferments* – *enzīms* ('enzyme').

The general drift of change can be exemplified with the 'polar bear' change: *leduslācis* (from German *Eisbaer* ('ice bear')) > *baltais lācis* (Russian *belij medved* ('white bear')) > *polārlācis* ('polar bear').

Occasionally substitution leads to formation of etymological doublets with identical or close to identical sense, e.g. *želeja* – *gels* ('gel, jelly'), *novators* – *innovators* ('innovator').

While analyzing a corpus of new lexis, it strikes that many new notions have come to have two lexemes in Latvian – a borrowed one and a native, created by Latvian terminologists. The loans seem to have a higher distribution and frequency of use. One could partly explain it also by their relative brevity, something to note for Latvian terminologists: *čats* – *tēršanās*, *mediji* – *plašsaziņas līdzekļi*, *spams* – *elektroniskais surogātpasts*, *eksplōzīvs* – *sprādzienbīstams*, *(at)mazgāšana* – *noziedzīgi iegūtu līdzekļu (nelikumīga) legalizācija*, *peintbols* – *krāslodišu šaušanas sacensības*.

Where briefer words are created by Latvian linguists or general public, native words have a higher currency of use: *ofšors* – *ārzona*, *brends* – *zīmols*, *kompjūters* – *dators*.

## Indirect influence

Apart from these direct influences one can observe general and deeper impact of English on some Latvian lexical processes, word formation patterns that affect Latvian wordstock.

- Conversion

Cases of English-induced conversion are growing: *nekrofīls* ('necrophile'), *kolektīvs* ('collective'), *reljefs* ('relief'), *analogs* ('analogue'), *poligēns* ('polygenic'),

*kontraceptīvs* ('contraceptive'), *hibrīds* ('hybrid'), *kompozīts* ('composite'), *homofobs* ('homophobe'), *deficīts* ('deficit'), *kolorīts* ('colourful'), *potenciāls* ('potential'), *memoriāls* ('memorial'), *veterinārs* ('veterinary'), *kuriozs* ('curious'), *oficiozs* ('official'), *normatīvs* ('normative'), *ambients* ('ambient'), *pedofīls* ('pedophile'). Conversion, though theoretically existing in Latvian (naturally limited by the flective nature of Latvian) was a rare word formation pattern, usually applied in specific word classes or a few isolated historical cases. The new samples of conversion are all borrowings or take-overs, and all of the adjective-noun type.

- Change of plural/singular system

This has affected nouns (internationalisms and native) that were used only in plural or singular in Latvian (Baldunčiks 2005), they have developed full paradigm now, though many people still feel that the new plural or singular forms are slightly odd (new plurals and singulars are usually connected also with meaning shifts): *prasmels* ('skill/s'), *tehnoloģijals* ('technology/ies'), *politikals* ('policy/ies'), *konsekvencels* ('consequence/s'), *kompetencels* ('competence/ies'), *kvalitātelis* ('quality/ies'), *aktivitātelis* ('activity/ies'), *efekts/i* ('effect/s'), *varals* ('power/s'), *ekonomikals* ('economy/ies'), *risk/i* ('risk/s'), *kvalifikācijals* ('qualification/s'), *taktikals* ('tactics'), *stratēģijals* ('strategy/ies'), *debatels* ('debate/s').

- Midclippings

Some words (usually older internationalisms borrowed through Russian have lost/are losing syllable to conform to the English counterparts:

<i>optimizēt</i>	<	<i>optimalizēt</i> ('optimize')
<i>aktivēt</i>	<	<i>aktivizēt</i> ('activate')
<i>digitizēt</i>	<	<i>digitalizēt</i> ('digitize')
<i>minimalizēt</i>	<	<i>minimizēt</i> ('minimize')
<i>komentārs</i>	<	<i>koments</i> ('comment')
<i>implants</i>	<	<i>implantāts</i> ('implant').

Perhaps the principle of economy is also at work here as some English compounds are sometimes back-clipped: *veikot* ('to wakeboard'), *kaitot* ('to kiteboard'), *snovot* ('to snowboard'), *baskets* ('basketball'); and syllables are lost also in words that contain them in English: *multlingv(ā)lisms*, *bilingv(ā)lisms*, *angli(ci)isms*, *rusi(ci)isms*.

Another category of words that has appeared under the influence of English are negative attributes formed on the basis of nouns in the genitive case (instead of the usual for Latvian negative adjective-based attributes). These are both

borrowings and native words (presumably loan translations): *nedzīvnieku* ('non-animal'), *nedzīvības* ('non-life'), *nepiena* ('non-milk'), etc.

- Word formation

Apart from direct and indirect effect on Latvian wordstock English has influenced also some structural and systemic aspects of Latvian as well as conventions of language use. Word formation creativity has been extended, e.g. occasional compounding and blending has spread enormously. In the beginning, most creative formations appeared in translated texts. Originally, practically all new formations of this type had English counterparts, mostly compounds, blends, semiloans – result of borrowing: *Bolivuda* ('Bollywood'), *vidiots* ('vidiot'), *seksperts* ('sexpert'), *kleptokrātija* ('cleptocracy'), *lukanomika* ('Lukanomics'), *kokakolonizācija* ('Cocacolonization'), *eksvīrs* ('ex-husband'), *darbaholiķis* ('workaholic'), *karjerholiķis* ('careerholic'), *sierburgers* ('cheeseburger').

Yet, gradually, in a parallel process, we have witnessed a growing number of original Latvian compounds and blends (a fair share of these have foreign components borrowed by Latvian long ago which, perhaps, suggests a greater confidence in manipulating non-native words on the part of the users). This suggests a deeper penetration of the formerly unusual patterns, cf.:

*varastrīce* [*varas trīce*] ('(political) powerquake') on the analogy of *zemestrīce* ('earthquake'), *Šmerļavuda* ['Šmerlis Hollywood'] (Šmerlis – Riga outskirts where Latvian cinema industry centre was situated), *Zaķutēka* [*Zaķusalas diskotēka*] ('Zaķu Island disco'), *Natoremonts* [*NATO remonts*] ('NATO repairs') on the analogy of *eiroremonts*. *Natoremonts*, however, was an ironic term referring to those officials who used NATO integration money to acquire and repair their apartments.

Graphic wordplay has also become commonplace, including paronymic substitution of letters or sounds e.g. *migrorajons*: substitution of a letter in *mikrorajons* ('micro-region, dwelling region'), which results in a blend 'migrants' region'. *Valdības sastārdīšana*: (*valdības sastādīšana* – composition of the government; *saārdīšana* – destroying).

Graphic wordplay is rife in advertising. Much of word formation wordplay also occurs in the internet and chat pages, where its full potential as well as the resourcefulness of 'amateurs' can be seen.

- Blends

Growth in use of blends has been noted. Blending was a non-existing word formation pattern in Latvian in the past. A few English blends were borrowed

as root word, e.g. *smogs* ('smog'), *motelis* ('motel'). Today, however, nonce blending is rife and affects also native words: *ceļarāma* [*Latvijas ceļa panorāma*] ('Party 'Latvia's way' Panorama'), *sliktenis* [*slikts liktenis*] ('bad fate'), *ļeņineklis* [*Ļeņins piemineklis*] ('Lenin monument'), *cūkmens* [*cūka betmens*] ('pig Batman') a media image of a nature polluter, *Putinočets* [*Putins Pinočets*] ('Putin Pinochet'), *ģimnastrāde* [*ģimnāzija estrāde*] ('grammar school stage'), *pirraastroika* [*pirra uzvara perestroika*] ('Pyrrhic victory perestroika'); *gastronauts* [*gastronomija astronauti*] ('gastronomy astronaut').

Some of the former nonce words have gained wide usage and can be considered to have entered the Standard Latvian lexicon, e.g. *nacbols* (*nacionālboļševiks* – 'National Bolshevik'). Systemic novelty has even broken into the traditionally conservative stronghold of Latvian – that of terminology. If *kaplete* (*kapsula tablete*, 'capsule tablet') is viewed by some as an imported blend then, for example, the more genuinely Latvian *mēstule* (*mēslu vēstule*, 'junk e-letter'), *atkritne* (*atkritumu atvilktnē*, 'waste (recycle) bin') serves as proof that the expansion of new word formation patterns has been extended to all styles and registers of the language.

- Compound phrases

Nonce compound phrases of the type *on-the-spot creations*, *will-she-or-won't-she-get-the-guy comedy* were in fact nonexistent in Latvian before the 1990s and the hyphenated compound phrase model was certainly imported. Hyphenation is generally unusual in Latvian and can be viewed as a novel phenomenon even in short words like *e-pasts* ('e-mail'), *e-pārvalde* ('E-government'), *i-banka* ('internet bank') which appeared at approximately the same time. 'Temporary' or 'improvised' or nonce compound phrases which are quite popular in English were, however, usually not translated in their English format. They seem to have emerged from the very beginning in native texts. This innovation thus in a way bypassed the usual first 'translation' stage. The reasons for borrowing the model must have been several: novelty, imitation, but mainly the same as in English – this word formation pattern is a form of expression that offers denseness of content in a rapid form. These are usually, but not exclusively, adjectives which provide the writer with an almost unlimited stock of modifiers, which are novel and also graphically obtrusive.

- Contextual use of idioms

Under the impact of English conventions and general liberalization of norms and conventions, as well as a more playful attitude towards the language Latvian

has enormously expanded 'occasional' or 'contextual' (Veisbergs 1997), or 'instantial' (Načisčione 2001) use of idioms, both in translated and native texts. Occasional transformations of idioms are intentional, subjectively and stylistically motivated transformations (Glaeser 2001, 142). The systemic character of occasional use, their modifiability (Čermak 2001) is embedded in the fundamental traits of phraseology. The effect stems from the contrast between the transformed speech variant and the normal reading of the idiom in its unchanged form, which defeats the reader's expectation. The means/types of occasional transformations are part of the language and are activated each time in the concrete speech situation. No new types of occasional transformation types have been noted in Latvian, the change lies in an enormous increase in the frequency of their use. And a change in frequency is a serious contact induced change. While in the past the frequency of occasional change could be estimated as very low (but corresponding to the conventions of use at that time), now it can be considered relatively high. Like in English (Moon 1998, 290; Hermeren 1999, 97–104) and other languages (Coffey 2001) this phenomenon is rife mainly in advertising, journalese and fiction. There are now Latvian texts that are saturated with occasional change, yet, according to small-scale interviews done by the author, they are not viewed as inappropriate or striking by the average Latvian reader.

## CONCLUSIONS

Summing up – interference and borrowing, as well as transfer of certain contact language patterns or changing some language use conventions are inevitable in the process of massive contact and translation. They are reflected also in the non-translated language. Regarding influencing deeper structures, the issue is far from clear. Should we see the change as

- (1) an activation of linguistic potential of the language under the influence of another language/culture (Veisbergs 2007) or
- (2) a detrimental interference, linguistic and cultural imperialism (Venuti 1995) or
- (3) a general standardization/homogenization of languages with a consequent loss of cultural uniqueness (Munat 2004, 115)?

Maybe, the answer lies in the question: does such activation mean an expansion of the linguostylistic potential of the language or does it oust something traditional? To put it in other words, do we see an externally conditioned change of traditional patterns or an enhancement of linguistic potential inherent in the language? The former might be partly appreciated subconsciously on the part of

the native speakers, as suggested by Thomason (2007, 59). In the Latvian case, it seems that the latter is closer to the truth. In any case, it can hardly be affected. The issues viewed in this paper are all elements of language change. Language change is inevitable. It is not a sign of decay. But neither is it a sign of progress (Aitchison 1998, 221).

The translation language is part of the language; in many cases it constitutes the majority of texts in a language as it pervades various ways of life and various text types. Under the conditions of massive language contact (vertical and horizontal) it is impossible to delineate 'pure' native corpora from those affected; also theoretically (unless pursuing purist aims) it is not correct. Under the above conditions the non-translational language is acquiring many elements characteristic of the language of translations. It also means that translators, interpreters and media have become major shapers of language.

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## VERTIMO KALBOS REIĶŠMĒ IR POVEIKIS ŠIUOLAIKINEI LATVIŪ KALBAI

ANDREJS VEISBERGS

S a n t r a u k a

Vertimo teorija, kontrastinė ir tekstynų lingvistika tradiciškai grindžiama autentiškos, natūralios kalbos priešpriešinimo vertimo kalbai dichotomija. Tačiau vertimo kalbos skvarba šiuolaikiniame pasaulyje tokia reikšminga, jog verčia abejoti šios dichotomijos teisingumu. Tarpkultūrinė komunikacija veikia ne tik pačią vertimo kalbą, bet ir ją supančią kultūrą ir mąstymą apskritai. Globalizacija, migracija, turizmas, studentų mainai, tarptautinė prekyba ir verslas ir, svarbiausia, masinės komunikacijos priemonių visuotinumas į kalbas atneša gausybę naujų sąvokų ir terminų. Bet tiesioginis poveikis leksikai – tai tik proceso dalelė. Per vertimą keičiasi teksto raiškos ir struktūros bruožai, konvencijos ir normos, ir net giluminės struktūros. Šiandien daugeliui „originalių“ tekstų būdingi tie patys bruožai kaip ir vertimo tekstams. Šiuolaikinis skaitytojas vertimo pavidalu „suvartoja“ daugiau nei pusę perskaitomų tekstų. Vargu ar verta ir toliau kalbėti apie aiškia originalo kalbos ir vertimo kalbos dichotomiją – šiuolaikiniame pasaulyje tokios atskirtys neegzistuoja. Kad ir kaip vertiname šį asimetrinį reiškinį – kaip netoleruotiną interferenciją, kalbos ir kultūros imperializmą ar kaip bendrą kalbų standartizacijos reiškinį, grasantį unikalių kultūrų išnykimu, – negalime daryti jam įtakos. Kalbos kaita neišvengiama, o vertimas šiuolaikiniame pasaulyje yra viena svarbiausių tokios kaitos varomųjų jėgų. Toks požiūris skatina iš naujo peržiūrėti kai kuriuos tradicinius vertimo teorijos teiginius ir juos aiškinti iš globalizacijos ir tarptautinės daugiakalbės komunikacijos pozicijų.