"THEREFORE, YOU CLOWN, ABANDON, - WHICH IS IN THE VULGAR, LEAVE" – SPEECH VARIATION IN ENGLISH-GEORGIAN TRANSLATIONS

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Introduction

The translation norms concerning transposition of the speech variation markers are still a controversial issue among the translation theoreticians. Culture specific address forms as part of the intercultural communication are of special interest in the era of globalization. Moreover, not many studies have been devoted [1] to the critical analysis of sociolinguistic and sociocultural aspects of translation, and the same holds valid as regards the comparable correlatives between Georgian and English languages which reflect social roles and context-dependent speech variation.

The main purpose of the comparative analysis of the samples in translation is to distinguish between several socio-cultural aspects of differences between Georgian and English. The study concentrates on the sociolinguistic markers in translation, specifically, in the interactions which reflect different social settings, change of social roles and switching of code. Other sociolinguistics aspects of interest are markers of stratified speech, e.g. sociolect and slang, constructions containing formal address forms, and the appositive *old + FN / LN*. In this respect, the study categorizes the generated substitutes with specified meanings in the target language (TL) text for the situation – based context, unspecified meaning of the appositive *old + FN / LN*.

1. Data Collection and Analysis

As far as language variation is concerned, stratification and politeness strategies have been actively discussed by sociolinguists and pragmaticists. Scholarly studies by Labov (1962, 1972, 2006), by Gumperz (1975), Goffman (1981), Hymes (1982) and Brown and Levinson (1978) offered the basis for the sociolinguistic analysis of the interaction, social setting, social roles, register, speech variation and contextual meaning. According to them, translation theoreticians have paid attention to the specifics and untranslatability of the socio-culturally marked lexical units. For example, Vlahov and Florin (1980) devoted a systematic study to such problems, i.e. *The Untranslatable in Translation*.

The data analysis of this study is based on the collected corpus which consists of *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde, „დაირქვი ერნესტი, ანუ სერიოზულობის მაღლი", ოსკარ უაილდი, *The Catcher in the Rye* by Jerome Salinger, „თამაში ჭვავის ყანაში", ჯერომ სელინჯერი, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* by Capote, „საუზმე ტიფანისთან", ტრუმენ კეპოტი, „საუზმე ტიფანებთან", ტრუმენ ქეფოთი, and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, by Mark Twain, „ტომ სოიერის თავგადასავალი", მარკ ტვენი.

Since all the examined samples of the translated literature are dialogues, I had to deal with the phenomenon of the author's intention to produce the impression of a live interaction in the narrative. As this case study of mistranslations made it transparent, the

failure of the translation strategies was mostly due to the omissions, mismatching the socio-culturally sensitive linguistic phenomena, and the censorship-influenced translation of slang.

2. Theoretical Background

The social variation of the language is in immediate contact with speech as a social behavior. The verbal communicative behavior, studied by the interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1982) focuses on *situational meaning*.

Hymes (2009), in his study *Ethnography of Speaking*, classifies the heuristic set of components which make up a model of language and social setting interaction:

- Setting of scene;
- Participants or personnel;
- Ends (purposes and outcomes);
- Act characteristics (form and content of the utterance);
- Key (tone, manner);
- Instrumentalities (channel or code);
- Norms of interaction and Interpretation.

The language use is determined by the cultural and social factors. However, besides these factors, an individual strategy of a speaker is another major aspect that determines the language use (Brown and Levinson 1978).

Therefore, it is assumed that successful cross-cultural communication needs a translator to account for both linguistic and extralinguistic factors of social interaction in order to determine the speaker's strategy and find a solution for its adequate rendering into the TL.

It is significant to note, that the British writers and playwrights preceded linguists and phoneticians in representing the phonetic features and speech manner of different social classes in the 18th – 19th centuries. For example, in the novel *The Adventure of Harry Richmond* written by G. Meredith in 1871, one of the characters argues for the proper pronunciation of "h":

> "More than his eating and his drinking, that child's father worries about his learning to speak the language of a British gentleman...Before that child your "h's" must be like a punting of an engine - to please his father…and I'm to repeat what I said, to make sure the child haven't heard anything ungrammatical …"

Thomas Hardy (1873 in Crystal 1989) also focuses on the fashion of the vocabulary selection by the high class members:

> "I have noticed several ladies and gentlemen looking at me".
> "My dear, you mustn't say "gentlemen", nowadays…We have handed "gentleman" to lower classes.
> "What must I say then?"
> "Ladies and men" always"

Register is the most significant factor in the language variation. The term **register** or **tenor** as used by Halliday (1991) signifies a system of selection language facilities according to the specific social situation at three discreet levels: formal, informal and neutral. Shakespeare in the comedy *As You Like It* gives a perfect example of the register ranging from the colloquial to the high-flown:

> "Touch. "He sir, that must marry this woman. Therefore, you clown, abandon, - which is in the vulgar, leave, - the society,, - which in the boorish is, - company, - of this female, - which in the

common is, - woman; which together is abandon the society of this female, or, clown, thou perishest; or, to thy better understanding, diest" (p. 80).

Therefore, **register** is a set of language resources used according to some socially - acceptable norms. Since "language", "dialect", "standard", "register" and "style" all bear specific properties, sociolinguists unify them under one term, i.e. **code** (Wardhaugh 2002) which is therefore, a system of signs used in communication.

Sociolinguists distinguish between **social** and **situational variation** of the language (Rickford 2002). While the **social variation** of the language involves diglosia and dialects, the **situational variation** of the language occurs due to changing of social settings and /or social roles.

3. Codeswitching

The problem of analogization codeswitching in speech mostly stems from the differences between the language systems which may not always provide the compatible lexical forms, i.e. a translator may be faced with the lack of not only a direct equivalent, but even with the deficiency of a functional equivalent.

Consequently, stratified variation of speech, especially slang, being one of the most expressive elements of the stratified speech, seems to be one of the most problematic areas of the inter-lingual communication.

Literary translation, which should faithfully render the textual reality and the author's intention, has to reproduce both of them in an adequate manner. As a mediator in the inter-cultural and inter-linguistic communication, the literary translator should avoid ambivalencies in the TL text.

3.1. Codeswitching, Singular or Plural of the English "You"?

Social situations form the background for the enactment of a limited range of social relationships within the framework of specific status sets, i.e. systems of complementary distributions of rights and duties (Barth 1966: 92, in Wei 2000: 112). However, in a literary text, the code selection and switching can be based on the pragmatic intention of the author, to indicate shift from the formal to informal (or vice versa) situation and a new alignment in the status set between the characters. This phenomenon is called **situational switching**, which assumes a direct relationship between language and social situation (Blom and Gumperz 2000: 126).

Vereshchagin and Kostomarov (1983) categorized the communicative situation under two types: *standard situation* and *varying situation*, pointing out that in both situations the speech acts reveal that they are socially determined.

Standard situation is related to the verbal and non-verbal activities which are strictly regulated for a social situation, e.g. ritual of wedding, when standard, formulaic phrases are repeated.

Varying situation is a changing situation which demands a wide range of language resources, and reflects the interrelation of the participants and change of the interrelations during the communicative act.

The case of shifting from the standard situation to the varying situation can be illustrated by examples from literary texts, which reflect scenes of love confession. These scenes include a shift from the standard-ritual situation to the new social roles. The new social roles are signaled by the sociolinguistic correlations: e.g. the English language allows just *First Name* as a linguistic indicator of shifting from the formal register to the informal.

Since the Georgian language distinguishes plural and singular forms of the English "You", a translator's challenge is to infer the author's intention and adequately transpose a

situational switching, on the one hand, and a shift from the formal to informal status set between the characters, on the other. The varying situation in the play: *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde may offer a perfect example of situational code-switching:

> **ST1**: Jack (*nervously*): <u>Miss Fairfax</u>, ever since I met <u>you</u> I have admired you more than any
> girl… I have ever met since…I met <u>you</u>".
> Gwendolen: … and my ideal has always been to love some one of the name of Earnest. There is something in that name that inspires absolute confidence. The moment Algernon first mentioned to me that he had a friend called Earnest, I knew I was destined to love <u>you</u>.
> Jack: <u>You</u> really love me <u>Gwendolen</u>?
> Gwendolen: Passionately! (p. 290).

I have underlined the markers of formal address (<u>Miss Fairfax</u>) as opposed to the informal address marker (<u>Gwendolen</u>), and the marker of address **you**, since I want to show that, in the alignment with title + Last Name it is a formal marker of address, its Georgian equivalent being თქვენ */t'quen/* (transcribed as */t'qven/*) i.e. plural forms of the English **you**. Therefore, it explains the use of თქვენ */t'quen/* in the Georgian translation of **you**:

> **TT1**: ჯეკი (ნერვიულად): <u>**მის ფერფაქს,**</u> ჩვენი შეხვედრის პირველივე წუთიდან მე <u>თქვენ</u>
> <u>გაღმერთებთ</u>, მხოლოდ <u>თქვენ</u> და სხვას არავის.
> გვენდოლენი. … ჩემი იდეალი გახდა, შემყვარებოდა ვინმე ერნესტი. არის რაღაც ამ სახელში ისეთი, რაც ადამიანს რწმენას შთააგონებს და როგორც კი ალჯერნონმა ერთხელ მიხსენა, რომ მეგობარი მყავს, სახლად ერნესტიო, უკვე ვიცოდი, რომ <u>თქვენი</u> სიყვარული არ ამცდებოდა.
> ჯეკი. ნამდვილად ასე <u>გიყვარვარ</u>, <u>**გვენდოლენ?**</u>
> გვენდოლენი. ძალიან <u>მიყვარხარ</u>, გაგიჟებით. (p. 159)

However, the second **you** in the alignment with the First Name (<u>Gwendolen</u>) indicates a shift from the formal to the informal situation, and the new social roles of the characters are signaled, which explains the use of შენ */šen /* (transcribed as: *šæn /*) the singular form of the English **you** in the Georgian translation. This form is a necessary sociolinguistic indicator of the shift from the formal to informal relationships in the Georgian language. Hence, in comparison with English, which distinguishes title + Last Name/ First Name to indicate formal/informal address, Georgian distinguishes extra indicators: თქვენ */t'quen/* შენ */**šen/*** signaling the shift to formal/informal registers.

In Georgian, the use of შენ */šen/* also introduces verbs with singular nouns, while the verbs used with plural nouns have other formants specified below. Moreover, a verb can have the same morphemes for person and plural categories:

<div align="center">

Singular:
ვაღმერთებ */gagh'merteb /* = I admire
აღმერთებ */ag'hmerteb /* = you admire
აღმერთებს */agh'mertebs/* = he /she admires
Plural:
გაღმერთებთ */gagh'mertebt/* I admire you
აღმერთებთ */ag'hmertebt/* you admire
აღმერთებენ */ag'hmerteben /* they admire

</div>

Therefore, the verbs express both the category of person and number.   In Georgian, the verb *გაღმერთებთ /gag'hmertebt/* can express the construction *I have admired you*. While the initial sentence of the Georgian translation is marked with the plural form of the verb:

გალმერთებთ /gagh'mertebt/ the final sentence is marked with the singular form *მიყვარხარ* /mik'vark'har/.

The analysis of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain showed that in translation, shifting from the standard-ritual situations to the situational variation sometimes demands consideration of the intentionally comic scene created in the source language (SL) by the author. For instance, the formal tone in Tom's confession of love makes the episode rather comical:

> **ST2**: "Now that you treat me so I will *see*, Tom" - and she put her small hand on his, and a little scuffle ensued, Tom pretending to resist in earnest, but letting his hand slip by degrees till these words were revealed: "*I love you*".
> "Oh, you bad thing!" And she hit his hand a smart rap, but reddened and looked pleasant, nevertheless" (p. 50).

> **TT2**: თუ ასე გაჯიუტდებით, ტომ, სულ ერთია, ვნახავ.
> გოგონამ თავისი პატარა ხელი დასტაცა ტომის ხელს. ტომი ვითომდა წინააღმდეგობას უწევდა, მაგრამ თანდათანობით კი ხელს აშორებდა ნაწერს, და ბოლოს გამოჩნდა სიტყვები:
> „მე თქვენ მიყვარხართ!"
> -უჰ, რა საძაგელი ხართ! - და გოგონამ მაგრად დაარტყა ხელი, თან გაწითლდა, მაგრამ ეტყობოდა, გულში ეამა (p. 71).

It is appropriate to point out that the translator's strategy is to emphasize the comic interplay between the communicative situations and the variation of the social roles. Despite the fact that he does not select a direct equivalent for the construction: "Now that you treat me so", and rather gives preference to the free interpretation of it / *გაჯიუტდებით* / / *gaj'iutdebit*/ (the back translation being: *if you'll be so stubborn*/, it only gains from this lexical transformation. /*გაჯიუტდებით*//*gaj'iutdebit*/ and /*ხართ*/ /h'art/- are the verbs with plural formants which convey the formal tone of the speech. The further interaction between the children marks varying situations with several consequent shifts from the pseudo formal to informal socialization. In the Georgian translation the effect of the formal/informal variation of the register and tone is transposed through maneuvering between თქვენ */ t'quen /* and შენ */ šen/* forms, which is the key instrument for the translator in transposing the whole comical effect of the pseudo formal situation. Tom and Becky's interaction below presents an informal chatting as they shift to the new social roles:

> **ST3**: "…Do you remember what I wrote on the slate?"
> "Ye - yes".
> "What was it?"
> "I shan't tell you" (p. 54).

The translator shifts to the singular form of address to follow the informality of the interaction:

> **TT3**: გახსოვს გრიფელის დაფაზე რა დაგიწერე?
> მახსოვს.
> აბა, რა?
> არ გეტყვი (p. 75).

/*დაგიწერე*/ and /*გეტყვი*/ are verbs in the singular form, and their opposite plural forms in Georgian are: / *დაგიწერეთ*//*გეტყვით*/.

The next scene of the SL text reflects Becky's confession of love, which is made in a highly shy manner and in order to hide her shyness, the confession sounds rather formal and is adequately translated into Georgian applying address markers in plural:

ST4: "I love you" (ibid)
TT4: „მე თქვენ მიყვარხართ" (ibid).

In the Georgian translation informal vs formal address markers signal the change of the relations between June and Irene in the *The Man of Property* by John Galsworthy. The informal singular address marker in the translated interaction below illustrates their informal social roles:

ST5: "He would never give her up. She had said to June."
"Who cares? June cried; "Let him do what he likes - you've only to stick to it!" (p. 90).

TT5: -არასოდეს არ დამთმობს, - უთხრა მან ჯუნს.
- მერე რა? - წამოიძახა ჯუნმა, - როგორც უნდა ისე მოიქცეს, შენ ზურაფერს დაერიდები და შენს ნათქვამზე იდექი.

However, once the rivalry over the beloved man changes the social roles between the two ladies and their tone changes accordingly from a friendly to a cold and biting one, the translators select თქვენ **/t'quen/.** Jealousy and rivalry bring June and Irene to the emotional scene:

ST6: "What have you come for?... Don't stand there as if you were made of stone!..." Irene laughed: "I wish to God I were!..."
…"You have no right here!"she cried defiantly,
Irene answered: "I have no right anywhere…"
"What do you mean?"
"I have left Soames. You always wanted me to!"
The tears of rage and disappointment rolled down June's cheeks.
"How could you come?" she said. "You have been a false friend to me!"
Again Irene laughed. June saw that she had played a wrong card, and broke down.
"Why have you come?" she sobbed. "You have ruined my life and now you want to ruin his!" (p. 350).

The verbal duel between June and Irene reflects June's dramatic tone. Therefore, to reproduce the escalation of tensions and the rise of the tone effectively, the translators apply the grammatical category of pronouns and their change from the singular to the plural forms:

TT6: - რა ქვის ქანდაკივით სდუმხართ!
   აირენს მწარედ გაელიმა:
  -მინდა გავქვავდე!
- თქვენ აქ ყოფნის უფლება არ გაქვთ! - ყვირილით წარმოთქვა ჯუნმა.
მე არსად ყოფნის უფლება არა მაქვს, - მშვიდად მიუგო აირენმა.
  რას გულისმობთ?
სომსი დავტოვე. თქვენ ხომ მუდამ ამას მიჩიჩინებდით!
როგორ მოხვედით აქ? - წარმოთქვა ჯუნმა, - თქვენ ხომ ჩემი მეგობარი იყავით?! მუხთალო და მაცდურო ადამიანო!
-აირენმა კვლავ გაიღიმა. ჯუნმა შენიშნა, რომ თავდასაცავად რაღაც მცდარი გზა აირჩია და ხმამალლა ასლუკუნდა.
-მაინც რად მოხვედით? - ქვითინით წარმოთქვა ჯუნმა, - თქვენ დამიმგრიეთ ცხოვრება და ახლა გინდათ ბოსინიც დალუპოთ? (p. 297).

Conclusions

The paper examined cases of transposition with culture-sensitive sociolinguistic parameters of speech, based on the comparative study of the English-Georgian translated texts, laying stress on the social setting, change of social roles, shift of registers, speech variation and contextual meaning in the SL and TL texts. The study found that in Georgian, grammatical correlative for the address marker **you** in English is თქვენ /*t'quen*/ i.e. plural form of the English **you** for the following cases of situational variation of speech: (a) for the rising tone and escalation of tensions between the characters (b) in the alignment of the English **you** with title + Last Name which manifests a formal marker of address, (c) for indicating a false formal tone in the speech of the characters. Meanwhile, the address marker **you** in the alignment with the First Name indicates shift to the closer social relations in the situational variation of speech, and its equivalent is შენ /*šen* /i.e. the singular form of the English **you** in Georgian. Therefore, it is reasonable for the translator of a literary text to infer the author's pragmatic intention in each case of the situational variation of speech in order to select functional equivalent for the English address marker **you** in Georgian.

Notes
[1] Pym, A., M. *Shlesinger* and Z. *Jettmarová* (2006) *Sociocultural Aspects of Translating and Interpreting*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
[2] Sakvarelidze, N. (2000) *Theory of Translation*, Tbilisi: Tbilisi University Press.

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