

# LITERALISM IN TRANSLATION: EVIL TO BE AVOIDED OR UNAVOIDABLE REALITY?

Irina I. Chironova

## *Abstract*

*This paper explores the controversial notion of literalism in translation, linguistic and psychological reasons that explain its wide-spread occurrence, reveals its nature, and distinguishing features. It is suggested that the notion “literal translation” should be exonerated from negative connotation and be unbiasedly studied as one of translation strategies. The paper also dwells on how literalism is manifested in the target text and distinguishes between literal and literalistic translation. Literal translation is characterized by a justified transfer of source language elements into translation, while literalistic translation means an unjustified violation of target language rules and constitutes a translation error.*

*Keywords: empirical translation studies, literalism, literal translation, literalistic translation, translation strategy, communicative purpose.*

## **1. Introduction**

One of the ongoing debates about translation revolves around the question of how close a target text (TT) and a source text (ST) should be. This used to be and still is a dilemma for both practising translators and scholars involved in translation studies. In the academic discourse about translation researchers who represent both literary theory and linguistic translation theory oppose the terms “word-for-word”, “literal”, or “source-centred” translations to “sense-for-sense”, “free”, or “target-centred” translations.

In Russia two translation extremes – the formal literalism and the translator’s abuse of discretion – have been one of the main topics for critical discourse analysis in literary translation studies. How the two translation techniques differ from each other has been so obvious to the critics that they have never questioned or inquired into the above dichotomy but used it as a starting point for further speculations on the topic. The terms “literal” or “literalistic” translation have been used to criticize mechanically done translations and their authors, scholastic translators, who word by word transfer the TT into the ST, thus deforming the source language (SL) and totally distorting the purpose of the original text. Such emphasis on the damaging impact of literalism on the literary process highlights only its negative features and is by its nature judgmental (e.g. Chukovsky 1964).

There is also no agreement of opinions on the nature of literalism among the linguistic branch of Russian translation studies. The term “literal” as a synonym of inadequate, low quality translation has been used in the works by a number of linguists (e.g. Akhmanova 2004), others have highlighted the ambivalent nature of the notion (Minyar-Beloruhev 1996) or even treated it as a positive factor that enriches and develops the target language (TL) through borrowings from the SL (Komissarov 1990). Such contradictory observations indicate that until now no consensus on the nature of literalism has been reached and its

assessment criteria have not been identified and interpreted. Thus, the popular dichotomy “literal versus free” requires reexamination and clarification. The paper attempts to close this gap in translation studies.

Translators and researchers who made reflections on the two conflicting forces – literal and free translation - have always remained within prescriptive and normative approaches, the aim of their speculations being to determine a “good” translation, to give advice about how to increase its quality and what translation strategy to favour. This study views translation and target text production from the descriptive perspective and tends to avoid subjective evaluations. Literalism is believed to be an intrinsic feature of translation that reveals its many-sided nature.

The purpose of the paper is to explore the multifold phenomenon of literalism in translation, its nature and peculiarities. To achieve this goal it is necessary to solve the following tasks:

- to identify and describe linguistic and psychological preconditions of literalism in translation;
- to analyze literalism as a translation strategy;
- to elicit two types of literal translation and to distinguish between them.

Translation in general, and literal translation in particular, may be considered from two different angles: as a process and a product. On the one hand, literalism is used in translating as one of translation techniques, on the other, it appears in the target text where it finds expression in various translation decisions. The study endeavors to analyze literalism from both sides. Section 4 “Literalism as a translation strategy” is devoted to the process oriented empirical study of translation and views translation as a two-phase process, while Section 5 “Two types of literal translation” considers lexical and syntactic transfers from the SL into the TL and introduces criteria for TT equivalence assessment, that is views translation as a result.

Since it is impossible to have a single model that would encompass all aspects and peculiarities of translation, it is necessary to introduce some limitations of the research. The same translation model can not describe translation from a foreign into a native language and back because the mechanisms of text perception and production vary in both cases. Related languages that have descended from the same root and genetically unallied languages also require separate translation models. Therefore, the paper arrives at conclusions on how literalism is manifested in translation only in regard to typologically related European languages.

## **2. Translation antinomies**

The history of translation knows not a few cases when translators summarized their experience in the form of theoretical principles. For instance, Güttinger (1963: 223-229) cited a number of statements with contradictory requirements to translation. However, it was Savory (1968: 50) who has collected all requirements to translation and presented them in the form of mutually exclusive statements or antinomies:

1. A translation must give the words of the original.  
A translation must give the ideas of the original.
2. A translation should read like a translation.  
A Translation should read like an original work.

3. A translation should reflect the style of the original.  
A translation should possess the style of the translation
4. A translation should read as a contemporary of the original.  
A translation should read as a contemporary of the translation.
5. A translation may never add to or omit from the original.  
A translation may add or omit from the original.
6. A translation of verse should be in verse.  
A translation of verse should be in prose.

The “paradoxes” reflect the contradictory nature of translation. It is evident that the first pair forms the basis for the other ones because it demonstrates the main translation controversy: tendency to ultimate accuracy vs. reproduction of the ST “spirit”.

This basic antinomy sends us back to the age-old opposition of literal and free translation, to the rivalry between the two ancient trends which has continued for centuries, and each time with good reason theorists proved their choice of a particular translation method. The literal translation followed “the letter” of the original and there appeared faithful texts that obviously demonstrated their foreign origin. Such were, amongst others, translations by the German Romantics (Schleiermacher, Humboldt, Goethe). Ideological or social conditions changed, and following the fashion, throughout the 18th century French translators “improved” and “enhanced” imperfections of the original texts with the help of their translations. The Enlightenment saw another shift from translations serving to please the public back to literalism, and thus the two trends came and went in the course of time. Similar developments took place in Russia where, on the one hand, a famous Russian poet Vyasemsky refused to translate poetry in verse because he was sure that prose may better communicate and express the SL spirit. On the other hand, Vvedensky, who translated Dickens and Thackeray into Russian in the 19-th century, transferred English characters into the Russian culture, dressed them in Russian folk costumes and made them use Russian colloquialisms. As a matter of fact, for a long time his translations remained reference materials and some were used in a new edition of collected works by Dickens in the 20-th century.

These glimpses into the history of translation, no matter how curious, are important not as such but for critical reevaluation of translation. Many translators not only translated literary texts but also theorized about the translation process and tried to single out its types. Thus, they produced their own terminology to denote word-for-word and sense-for-sense dichotomy<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, despite some insignificant differences in specifying the two translation types, the essence of the matter remains unchanged: controversy over the old dualism is recognized but not analyzed by most theorists. Only a few translation scholars have argued the basic binarism of the choice between two methods and claimed that the traditional dichotomy does not help empirical analysis and is useless on practical level (e.g. Pym 1995: 8-9). Pym (1995) has raised a vulnerable point of the long-standing opposition and acknowledged that there must be something in the middle and answered the question from sociological and intercultural point of view. This paper attempts to throw light on how and why translators choose one of the strategies and regards literal translation as a complex and manifold phenomenon present in the TT due to some objective linguistic and psychological reasons.

### **3. Preconditions of literalism in translation**

### 3.1. Semantic and structural uniformity of languages

Following the ideas of cognitive linguistics about language universals and Chomsky's notion of Universal Grammar, the Russian translation school has always considered the existence of concurrent semantic and structural patterns in the target and source languages to be the basis for successful translation (Revzin and Rozentsveyg 1964; Komissarov 1990). The premise of language uniformity first put forward by Chomsky and later ingeniously described by Pinker who stated that "according to Chomsky, a visiting Martian scientist would surely conclude that aside from their mutually unintelligible vocabularies, Earthlings speak a single language" (Pinker 1994: 232) may be regarded as a precondition for tenacity and survivability of literalism in translation. The fundamental isomorphism of languages is proved by the existence of such linguistic universals as the word, the sentence, grammatical relations and lexical meaning. It leads to the possible equivalence of the ST and TT at every level of linguistic organization. In most languages a text is divided into sentences what results in equivalence at the level of syntactic organization. Sentences consist of words and expressions combined according to grammar rules, thus allowing equivalence at the lower levels including lexis and syntax. All translators know that there exist interlingual consistent equivalents with similar denotative meaning and grammatical parallelism that facilitate the translation process.

The existence of common patterns and isomorphic objects in languages has become the basis for some translation models which reside in "natural equivalence" paradigm (Pym 2010) and view translation process mostly as a linguistic operation. The first models within linguistic approach date back as far as the 1950s (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958), or the 1960s (Nida 1964), others are more recent (Malone 1988). Unlike semantic translation models that see translation process in terms of transformational grammar and a deep structures theory, the shared ground for the above models is the premise that languages have much in common in meaning and syntactic organization. Vinay and Darbelnet, as well as Malone offered a list of translation techniques, many of which include variations on the theme "literalism", while Nida (1964: 159) identified two types of equivalence and, along with dynamic or content-bound equivalence, introduced the idea of formal or form-bound equivalence which "focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content", the main concern being that "the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language".

As was already mentioned, most Russian translation modeling rests within equivalence paradigm, the linguistic influence being very strong. It is hardly surprising that Russian translation modeling concentrates on the accuracy of translation. The first attempt to start translation modeling in Russia was made by Yakov Retsker (1974) in the 1950s which he later developed into the "theory of regular correspondence" in translation. The theory distinguishes three types of correspondence between SL and TL: (1) complete equivalence (one-to-one correspondence); (2) partial equivalence (contextual correspondence); and (3) transfer operations. Another model where semantic and structural uniformity of languages occupies a central position is "interpretative model" by Russian theorists Revzin and Rozentsveyg (1964: 58) in which the translation process is divided into two parts: translation as such and interpretation. "Translation" means that transfer from SL to TL is carried out directly in compliance with the existing set of fixed equivalents at the language level without reference to the extralinguistic situation. With all variety in approaches to translation the

mentioned models have something in common. Namely, they do not deny the presence of certain interlingual symmetry which is best manifested at the levels of lexis and syntactical structures and is widely used in translations done according to the objectively existing semantic and structural equivalence between the SL and TL<sup>2</sup>.

### 3.2. *Psychological preconditions*

Psychologists differentiate between productive and reproductive thinking. If people reproduce previously developed patterns or repeat what was learned or mastered before and their actions do not create anything new, they are involved in reproductive activity (Vygotsky 2006: 7). This type of thinking is closely linked to our previous experience because we apply techniques which are known to us or extract the answers to the problem from our memory. The main criterion of productive thinking is the creation of something new. If we can not find an answer using familiar patterns or means, the problem situation arises (“problem” derives from the Greek *próblēma* – obstacle and *probállein* - to lay before). The activity directed at solving problems we have never encountered before is called creative or combinatorial behaviour because “the brain combines and creatively reworks elements of the past experience and uses them to generate new propositions and new behaviour” (Vygotsky 2006: 9)<sup>3</sup>.

Consequently, from the psychological viewpoint, any human activity consists of a set of operations containing productive and reproductive parts. The proportion of both behaviour types may vary with predominance of either creative or stereotyped elements. Any creative act, translation among them, includes elements of reproductive thinking. Moreover, some scholars hold the view that “real life actions are mostly reproductive rather than productive even for so called creative occupations” (Sukhodolsky 1998: 21 – *my translation*). This is understandable since creative behaviour is the most “wasteful” use of human resources and people tend to resort to it only in case reproductive type of thinking fails to cope with the problem.

In the translation process two types of behaviour correspond to two well known translation techniques, i.e. word-by-word translation and transformation. As Wilss (1978: 148) has shown, they never take place separately but only in combination, and are usually represented in a passage simultaneously. The ratio of their occurrence in the text depends on a number of subjective and objective factors, e.g. the level of text complexity or a translator’s competence.

Besides, the proportion of stereotype to creativity in translation is influenced by the translator’s mental set. The idea to take into account the way translators tend to approach problem situations has gained ground in some papers on translation studies, especially in those within the German tradition (e.g. Kussmaul 2009; Reiss and Vermeer 1984). German scholars have borrowed minimax strategy from a game theory and extended it to decision making process in translation. The assumption is that a translator tries to achieve maximum result making a minimum effort. In this case the quality of the decision taken cannot be lower than a certain minimal level acceptable from linguistic and esthetic positions. Though it is assumed that if more time and effort were spent, a better decision could be found (Levý 1967: 1179-1180). This low-effort strategy implies that a translator pursues the objective of creating an optimal rather than an ideal translation.

The distinction between stereotyped and creative behaviour is vital for understanding how translation goes on since translators know that any translation constitutes a combination

of creativity and routine, and solving challenging translation puzzles is always accompanied by simple, often mechanical actions. Therefore, it may be concluded that controversial “literal” and “free” translation methods correlate with reproductive and productive ways of thinking and elements of literal translation are an integral part of translating.

#### **4. Literalism as a translation strategy**

##### *4.1. Empirical studies of translation procedures*

Unfortunately, research into the procedures that take place during translation process is complicated by the invisible nature of this process. Mental operations performed by a translator are hidden from direct observation and technical resources to interfere into the human brain are still limited. Consequently, scholars interested in empirical research of translation strategies have to recourse to indirect methods of reconstruction and look for some material manifestations of what is happening in the translator’s mind. For instance, interviews, written self-reports, rough copies and drafts of translations, as well as corrections in translations made by colour pencils may serve as indicators of the hidden brain activity. Another method used to look into the ‘black box’ of our minds which has gained popularity is the technique of introspective protocol analysis or Think Aloud Strategy whereby translators describe aloud all their thoughts and ideas simultaneously with target text production. This verbalized “stream of consciousness” is recorded, analyzed, and thus some implicit features of translation process are reconstructed.

Amongst others (Lörscher 1991; Jones 2006), think-aloud protocols were used by Krings (1986) who has conducted a series of experiments and developed his own model of translation process. According to this model, a translator always aims for equivalence and tries to establish it at one of three levels: (1) surface level of interlingual associations; (2) level of inter- and intralingual paraphrase, and (3) deep structure level (Krings 1986: 29). The first level is characterized by the selection of equivalents based on associations or literal translation. Such equivalence is typically established at the single word level and less frequently at the syntagmatic level. As introspective protocols have shown, the search for literal equivalent is the first strategy subjects invoke, and furthermore, in many cases they confine themselves to this level. In case the associative translation does not work, that is, a direct equivalent seems unsatisfactory, the subject returns to the passage and applies a higher level strategy. The second level of equivalence follows immediately after literal translation and in fact reverbilizes the first ‘raw’ translation. The use of transformations and synonymous expressions are typical strategies here. Subjects applied an “acceptability check” as the main means to control the quality of their translation, and used judgments like “it does not sound well”, “that's not good grammar”, etc. (Krings 1986: 311-314). The last level is the most time and effort consuming for translators because here they encounter with most serious difficulties and need to resort to substantial semantic and structural changes<sup>4</sup>.

The balance between deep structure and surface structure equivalence may be compared with “unstable equilibrium” from gravitation theory. The gravitational force in translation is the desire to preserve SL structures as closely as possible, and the only way to overcome the literalism gravity is to exert a force in the direction opposite of gravitation (Krings 1986: 511). Thus, the empirical research of translation procedures has proved the hypotheses by Wilss and Levy that in all cases when translation process can not be narrowed

down to finding unambiguous interlingual equivalents, the TT production takes the form of decision making with the employment of minimax strategies.

#### *4.2. Translation as a two-stage process*

Being in full agreement with Krings' ideas about the primary character of surface level equivalence, I uphold the view that it is more appropriate to distinguish between two rather than three translation techniques. The interlingual paraphrase and search for deep structure equivalents may be combined into one strategy which may provisionally be called "non-literal" phase. Such incorporation seems logical as long as interlingual paraphrase and a shift towards deep structure analysis though from psychological perspective constitute somewhat different processes, within the linguistic approach may be studied together as they both are transformations by their nature.

Therefore, translation process has a two-phase structure and may be described as a constant movement from the simple to the complicated. Two stages of the translation process may be pictured as a dichotomy of text fragments that pose or do not pose a problem. If a problem arises, translation becomes a decision making process where several solutions are possible, a translator has to apply creative techniques and the process turns into creative activity. If selecting an interlingual equivalent causes no problem, the procedure loses its creative nature, and productive methods are replaced by standard mechanical actions.

It should be noted that the separation of two translation stages is tentative and should not be taken too literally. In real life translations we do not often find each stage in an isolated form. Typically, both stages may be closely intertwined even within the translation of one syntagmatic structure. Besides, prevalence of a particular translation technique depends to a large extent on the translation type, but it is essential that the stage of literal translation is always present.

Two stages of the translation process – literal transfer and transformation – match two commonly known translation types. Brought to light by Cicero, two opposite translation trends which have been competing with each other for centuries, constitute intrinsically not an antinomy but two objective translation modes, so we may not apply judgemental assessments towards them, since procedures are neither good, nor bad, they are neutral. Accordingly, the traditional opposition of two methods summarized by Schleiermacher (1813/1963) loses its logical foundation. As follows from his often cited observation about bringing the reader either closer to, or further from the TT, he contrasted both methods as absolute and mutually exclusive and stated that a translator can follow only one of the paths. Methods and stages can not be evaluated; they only may be detected and described. What lends itself to interpretation and assessment is the result (TT) ensued in consequence of applying a given procedure. Hence, we get a TT that may be adequate or not adequate to the ST.

As has been established, a translator first tends to resort to direct or surface translation procedures and mechanically selects equivalents in the TL that match SL expressions and grammar patterns as closely as possible. At this stage translators reproduce direct established equivalents borrowed either from their memory or from dictionaries, transfer international words and unambiguous terminology, as well as try to save syntactic structures to the greatest possible extent. If the text produced as a result of such element-by-element transfer does not violate the norms of the target language, it is believed to be an equivalent translation. The procedure used and the result obtained may be called "literal translation" and should be

distinguished from the situation when the implementation of the same procedure leads to an inadequate result. If normative violations of the TL are evident, for example, the meaning is misrepresented, or the style of the ST is distorted, this translation may be defined as “literalistic”. Literalistic translations always amount to translation errors and are not the subject matter of this study.

## 5. Two types of literal translation

It is obvious that not every piece of literal translation is faulty, inaccurate or low quality. Lexical transfers from the original and the replication of its syntactic structures in the TT are often the simplest and the most natural way to translate a text if this transfer does not violate any TL rules. As has already been mentioned, such element-by-element translation is possible at both lexical and syntactic levels. Analysis of translations of various text types from English into Russian has demonstrated that a translator tends to keep the structural organisation of the SL sentence wherever possible. In Russia students who undergo translation training are taught to avoid translation options that considerably and unreasonably recede from the SL structures. In other words, if there is a choice between two adequate translation variants, a more literal one must be chosen.

Another type of literal translation covers the cases when the translator does not follow the traditional rule “a translated text must sound as natural as possible, as if it were written in the TL”. The norms of the TL may be violated but these violations are purposely designed translation techniques rather than translation errors. A translator deliberately uses literal translation in the situation where transformation is required thus inducing normative breaches. These deviations from the norm are justified by the communicative purpose of the text. Literal translation as a communicatively justified translation device is employed when it is required:

- to achieve academic and research goals;
- to preserve the accuracy of the wording;
- to create the sought after stylistic effect.

The first case involves a variation of word-for-word translation, i.e. the so called “philological” or “scientific” translation with its lack of interest in respect of text readability. It was widespread during the Enlightenment age, and its essence was explained by its consistent advocate, a reputable Swiss philologist Johann Breitinger (cited in: Kopanov 2002: 160), who wrote in 1740 in *Critische Dichtkunst* (Critical Poetry), “Translation is a daguerreotype; the more it looks like the original, the more praise it earns” (*my translation*). Examples of philological translation include inter alia the translation of Confucius’ *The Analects* by Richard from Chinese into German, and Pushkin’s *Eugenie Onegin* from Russian into English made by a famous Russian novelist Nabokov (1973). Both translations are accompanied by extensive and detailed comments that, like in Nabokov’s case, may exceed dramatically the volume of the original text. The target audience of these translations consists mostly of philologists who use them for the academic purposes.

Literal translation as a translation tool is also selected when the communicative purpose requires preserving the accuracy of the SL wording. The precise wording is important for texts where every word is essential and may not be deleted or changed. In this case precise phrasing becomes the most important criterion of equivalence. This case may be illustrated by Bible translations, referred to as “Christian literalism” in the Russian translation

studies, as well as translations of philosophical treatises and texts of international legal and diplomatic documents. In the latter situation it is presumed that, whatever the number of languages involved, all versions of a document are equally authentic and none is considered to be a translation from any language. As a consequence, authentic texts present a linguistic compromise since they to the same extent violate stylistic rules of all languages.

The next situation when literal translation is used as a functionally justified device fits into the traditional dichotomy “foreignization versus domestication” of translation. Foreignization as a translation method is employed to indicate SL and TL cultural differences (Venuti 1995) or to denote the time gap that exists between an ancient ST and its modern translation so that the reader could discover other cultural worlds. Unusual lexis and unexpected word order remind the reader that the text belongs to another, unfamiliar culture. A good example here is the translation of Virgil’s *Aeneid* made by a famous Russian poet Valery Bryusov. This translation has an ill fame in the Russian translation studies. Each time it is necessary to condemn literalism in translation, people take out Bryusov’s lines full of strange words and hardly readable syntactic constructions which look like a jest about the reader. Nevertheless, Bryusov was very proud of his literal translation which he had been doing for more than twenty years. The final edition had been preceded by an earlier version, free from literalism, and characterized by the poet as ‘interpretation rather than translation’ (Gasparov 1971). Bryusov destroyed it and started from the very beginning. Obviously, such approach met the theoretical views of the poet. Retaining ST’s alterity helped the translator to create the stylistic effect of a distance between the reader and the non-contemporary world of the ST.

This variety of literal translation falls within the scope of ‘pragmatic equivalence’ introduced by Mona Baker as a type of equivalence which rises above the text level and is foregrounded in specific communicative situations there cultural context becomes important (2011: 230-263). These seemingly awkward and unnatural translations meet the expectations of a specific readership - the educated reader who enjoys literature at a deeper level and is ready to immerse oneself into the unknown and mysterious world of the Ancient Rome, thus “a given text comes to ‘make sense’ to a given readership” (Baker 2011: 217) .

In view of the foregoing, the definitions of literal and literalistic translations given before may be extended by adding the criterion of communicative justification for applying literal translation technique. Subsequently, the definitions may be reshaped as follows:

*Literal translation* is element-by-element transfer of semantic and structural components of the SL into the TL that does not violate the TL norms or the violation is communicatively justified.

*Literalistic translation* is a translation error that appears as a result of element-by-element transfer of semantic and structural components of the SL into the TL that violates the TL norms.

## **6. Conclusion**

There is considerable variation in attitudes towards literalism in translation from unquestionable glorification as the only possible translation method to no less revolutionary demands to root it out from translation practices. Whatever the standpoint, throughout the years literalism has demonstrated its great ability to survive. This study has attempted to find the underlying reasons for its vitality, researching into linguistic and psychological

preconditions of literalism. Linguistic preconditions include a certain interlingual symmetry which exists among typologically related languages. Isomorphism of languages creates the basis for translation equivalence and can be found at all language levels including lexis and structural organisation of sentences. This fact is well known to translators who use fixed interlingual equivalents as the simplest way to translate.

It has been concluded that traditional controversy of word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation methods correlate with reproductive and productive (creative) thinking identified in psychology. Any psychological activity, translation process among them, consists of creative and stereotyped elements. The ratio of both behaviour types may vary, but reproduction, as the less resource consuming activity, is always present even in the most creative actions. Psychologically, a translator holds out for optimal routine operations and resorts to finding new solutions only when necessary what is best described by a “minimax” strategy in translation.

In this study translation has been considered as both a process and a product. When observed as a process, translation is described as a two-stage advance from simple to more complicated decision making. At the first stage, a translator selects direct surface level equivalents borrowed from the memory or from a dictionary and tries to keep to the SL structures as closely as possible. If this strategy fails, a translator goes to the next stage and the process develops into creative activity when transformations are applied. Thus, the initial element-by-element translation proves to be the first stage of a translation process or a neutral linguistic strategy.

Understanding literal translation as one of the translation stages resolves the old controversy of faithful and free translation brought to light many centuries ago. In the same way the concept of translation antinomies is clarified since the description of translation process presented in this paper allows us to treat the paradoxes of translation as two translation phases rather than as contradictory and mutually exclusive trends. The use of literal transfer strategy may lead either to satisfactory or unsatisfactory results, thus adequate translations or translations violating TL rules may appear. This requires drawing a distinction between two types of literalism – literal translation and literalistic translation.

Situated within the descriptive approach, the paper neither comments on appropriateness or inappropriateness of literal translation elements in the TT, nor does it prescribe the “right” translation method. Instead, the unbiased assessment of literalism presented by this study contributes to better understanding of its nature and throws new light on different aspects of this multifold phenomenon.

#### Notes

1. For instance, Dryden (cited in: Lefevere, 1992: 18) differentiates between metaphrase and paraphrase, Schleiermacher (1813/1963) distinguishes translation and imitation, Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) use the terms direct and indirect translation, Nida (1964: 184-186) speaks about literal translation and literary transfer, Revzin and Rozentsveyg (1964) speculate about translation and interpretation, Catford (1965) considers rank-bound and unbounded translation, House (1977) analyzes covert vs. overt translation.
2. Outside the linguistic approach there are also some sociocultural models which justify the use of literal translation by assuming that the peculiarities of the SL should be preserved in translation (Berman 1984; Venuti 1992).
3. Similar distinction between two types of thinking is given by psychologists who use dichotomy convergent vs. divergent thinking where the former means the focus on finding a readily existing answer in previous experience and application of some standard thinking procedures, while the latter

presupposes the ability to analyze and combine elements, to explore many possible options and generate new solutions (e.g. Cropley 2006).

4. Though Krings' findings date back to as far as almost thirty years ago, they still have not lost their significance and have been proved by recent studies which applied more advanced research tools, e.g. computer software when subjects carried out a translation task on a computer and the system registered all keyboard revisions. In keeping with Krings, it has been established that literal translation constitutes an integral element of the translation process (Tirkkonen-Condit et al. 2008).

#### References:

AKHMANOVA, Olga S. (ed.). 2004. *Slovar' Linguisticheskikh Terminov [Dictionary of Linguistic Terminology]*. Moscow: URSS, 2004.

BAKER, Mona. 2011. *In Other Words. A Coursebook on Translation*. London; New York: Routledge, 2011.

BERMAN, Antonie. 1984. *L'Épreuve de l'étranger*. Paris: Editions Gallimard; trans. by HEYVAERT S. 1992: *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984.

CATFORD, John C. 1965. *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. London: Oxford University Press, 1965.

CHUKOVSKY Korney I. 1964. *Vysokoye Iskusstvo. O Principakh Khudozhestvennogo Perevoda [High Art. About the Principles of Lilerary Translation]*. Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1964.

CROPLEY Arthur. 2006. In Praise of Convergent Thinking. In *Creativity Research Journal*, 2006, vol. 18 (3), pp. 391–404.

GASPAROV Mikhail L. 1971. Bryusov i Bukvalism [Bryusov and Literalism]. In *Masterstvo perevoda*, 1971, vol. 8, pp. 88-128.

GUETTINGER, Fritz. 1963. *Zielsprache. Theorie und Technik des Übersetzens*. Zürich: Manesse, 1963.

JONES, Derek. 2006. Unlocking the Black Box: Researching Poetry Translation Processes. In PERTEGHELLA M., LOFFREDO E. *Translation and Creativity: Perspectives on Creative Writing and Translation Studies*. London: Continuum, 2006, pp. 59–74.

HOUSE, J. 1977. *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment*. Tübingen: Narr, 1977.

KOMISSAROV, Vilen N. 1990. *Teoriya Perevoda [Translation Theory]*. Moscow: Vysshaya shkola, 1990.

KOPANEV, Pavel.I. 2002. *Voprosy istorii i teorii khydozheztvennogo perevoda [Problems of History and Theory of Literary Translation]*. Minsk: Izdatelstvo BGU, 2002.

KRINGS, Hans P. 1986. *Was in den Köpfen von Übersetzern vorgeht. Eine empirische Untersuchung der Struktur des Übersetzungsprozesses an fortgeschrittenen Französischlernern*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1986.

- KUSSMAUL, Paul. 2009. *Übersetzen - nicht leicht gemacht: Beiträge zur Translation*. Berlin: SAXA Verlag, 2009.
- LEFEVERE, Andre. 1992. *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context*. New York: MLA, 1992.
- LEVÝ, Jiří. 1967. Translation as a Decision Process. In *To Honour Roman Jakobson. Essays on the Occasion of his 70-th Birthday*. 1967, vol. 2, pp. 1171-1182.
- LOERSCHER, Wolfgang. 1991. *Translation Performance, Translation Process and Translation Strategies: A Psycholinguistic Investigation*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1991.
- MALONE, Joseph L. 1988. *The Science of Linguistics in the Art of Translation: Some Tools from Linguistics for the Analysis and Practice of Translation*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988.
- MINYAR-BELORUCHEV Rurik K. 1996. *Teoria i metody perevoda [Theory and Methods of translation]*. Moscow: Moscovsky Lizej, 1996.
- NABOKOV, Vladimir. 1990. *Strong Opinions*. New York: Vintage, 1990.
- NIDA, Eugene A. 1964. *Towards a Science of Translating*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964.
- PINKER, Steven. 1994. *The Language Instinct*. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1994.
- PYM, Anthony. 1995. Schleiermacher and the Problem of "Blendlinge". In *Translation and Literature*, 1995, vol. 4(1), pp. 5-30.
- PYM, Anthony. 2010. *Exploring Translation Theories*, New York: Routledge, 2010.
- REISS, Katharina, VERMEER, Hans J. 1984. *Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984.
- RETSKER, Yakov I. 1974. *Teoria Perevoda i Perevodicheskaya Praktika [Translation Theory and Translation Practice]*. Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1974.
- REVZIN, I.I., ROZENTSVEYG V.Yu. 1964. *Osnovy Obshchego i Mashinnogo Perevoda [Fundamentals of General and Machine Translation]*. Moscow: Vysshaya shkola, 1964.
- SAVORY, Theodore H. 1968. *The Art of Translation*. London: Cape, 1968.
- SCHLEIERMACHER, Friedrich. 1963. Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzungs. In STÖRIG, H.J. *Das Problem des Übersetzungs*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963, pp. 38–70.
- SUKHODOLSKY G.V. 1998. *Vvedeniye v Matematiko-Psichologicheskuyu Teoriyu Dejatelnosti [Introduction into Mathematics-Psychological Activity Theory]*. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg University Publishing House, 1998.

TIRKKONEN-CONDIT, Sonja, MÄKISALO, Jukka, IMMONEN, Sini. 2008. The Translation Process - Interplay Between Literal Rendering and a Search for Sense, In *Across Languages and Cultures*, 2008, vol. 9(1), pp. 1-17.

WILSS, Wolfram. 1978. Vorüberlegungen zu einer Didaktischen Grammatik des Übersetzens, In *Lebende Sprachen*, 1978, vol. 4, pp. 145-151.

VENUTI, Lawrence (ed.). 1992. *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology*, London; New York: Routledge, 1992.

VENUTI, Lawrence. 1995. *The Translator's Invisibility*, London; New York: Routledge, 1995.

VINAY, J.-P. and DARBELNET, Jean. 1977. *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais. Méthode de traduction*. Paris: Didier, 1977; trans. by Juan Sager and M.-J. Hamel (1995) as *Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology of Translation*. Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1995.

VYGOTSKY, Lev. 2006. Imagination and Creativity in Childhood, In *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology*, 2006, vol. 42(1), pp. 7-97.

*Irina I. Chironova*

*National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE)*

*20, Myasnitskaya str., Moscow, 101000, Russia*

[ichironova@hse.ru](mailto:ichironova@hse.ru)

In SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation [online]. 2014, vol. 7, no. 1 [cit. 2014-29-12]. Available online <[http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTI08/pdf\\_doc/03.pdf](http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTI08/pdf_doc/03.pdf)>. ISSN 1336-7811