Pronouns in Translational Lithuanian
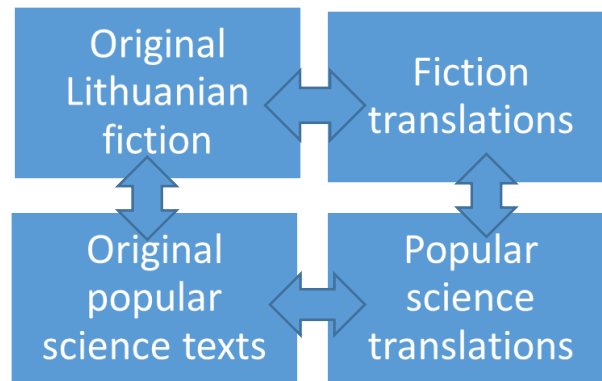
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Education 360°

Research background, questions and data

- "Tolerance of **interference** <...> tend to increase when translation is carried out from a 'major' or highly prestigious language/culture, especially if the target language/culture is 'minor', or 'weak' in any other sense,…" (Toury 1995: 278).

- "Translations tend to "<...> over-represent features that have straightforward translation equivalents which are frequently used in the source language (functioning as some kind of stimuli in the source texts)" (Eskola 2004: 96).

- Phenomena existing in the grammatical, lexical or other patterning of the target language but absent or manifested differently in the source language "do not suggest themselves as translation equivalents as there is no obvious linguistic stimulus for them in the source text" (Trikkonen-Condit 2004: 177-178).Translations are more likely to have lower frequencies of these **unique items** in comparison to original texts of the target language (ibid.).

- **Questions:**
  - Which, how and why particular semantic subclasses of pronouns are used differently in translations from English to Lithuanian?
  - What are the frequency and form variations of **dual pronouns**, unique to Lithuanian, in translations?

- **Data:**

  - Parallel corpus

  - **ORVELIT**: A comparable, automatically morphologically annotated 4 mln. word corpus of original and translated Lithuanian. Access: CLARIN-LT repository

Results: highlights of SL interference

Semantic subclass		Original Pop Sci	Translated Pop Sci	Original fiction	Translated fiction
Personal	Proper	25653	45296	62240	80628
	Possessive	262	236	418	308
	Reflexive	4484	7322	5259	4711
Demonstrative		18420	23025	19912	20580
Indefinite	Proper	3192	4904	4448	5296
	Generalizing	6498	8937	11414	10785
Interrogative-Relative		10666	14098	13611	13499
Total:		**78491**	**114328**	**126277**	**143631**

Lemmas of selected personal pronouns		Original Pop Sci	Translated Pop Sci	Original fiction	Translated fiction
Proper and possessive forms in different cases (duals included)	Aš (I)	5042	10970	17981	26948
	Jis (He)	19215	25881	36617	45259
	Tu (You)	1392	8445	7538	8419

Examples

Pronoun forms underused in translations

- Personal:
  - *tamsta*/ polite form 'you'
- Demonstrative:
  - *anas*/ that
  - *šitas*/ this
  - *šitoks*/ of this kind
- Indefinite:
  - *keliasdešimt*/ some 'between 30 and 90'
  - *keliolika*/ some 'between 11-19'
  - *kitoks*/ of another kind
- Generalizing:
  - *visoks*/ of all kinds
- Interrogative-relative:
  - *katras*/which
  - *kelintas*/ which
  - *keleri*/how many

Pronoun overuse in translations in subject position, optional in Lithuanian

- **You** have additional security on Haz-Mat?"/ Pavojingų medžiagų saugykloje **(jūs)** es<u>ate</u> įsirengę papildomą apsaugos sistemą?

- **You** think this is a crime of conscience, Mr. Langdon?/ **(Jūs)** man<u>ote</u>, jog šios žmogžudystės tikslas — atimti gyvybę, pone Lengdonai?

- Did **you** make that up?"/ Ar **(tu)** <u>pati</u> tai sugalvojai?

- **You** take the train -- but look, I'll draw it out for you."/ **(Tu)** įlip<u>si</u> į traukinį... ne, geriau žiūrėk, aš tau nupiešiu

- What could **you** have done with it even if you had kept it?"/ Ką **(tu)** su ja dary<u>tum</u> pasilikęs?

- Do **you** know where you are, Winston?"/ (**Jūs**) žinote, kur es<u>ate</u>, Vinstonai?

- "**I** think the camerlegno's address may have worked./ — **(Aš)** man<u>au</u>, rūmų valdytojo kreipimasis davė rezultatų.

- **I** would die before I break that trust."/ **(Aš)** greičiau mirs<u>iu</u> nei išduosiu man parodytą pasitikėjimą.

- Am **I** dreaming?/ „Ar tik **(aš)** nesapnuoj<u>u</u>?"

- "**I** trust **you** to handle things unless you directly ask for help."/ " **(Aš)** tik<u>iu</u>, kad **(tu)** gal<u>į</u> viską padaryti pats ir kad tau nereikia pagalbos tol, kol pats jos nepaprašai."

Results: dual pronouns

Original fiction (426)					
Personal pronouns			**Demonstrative pronouns**		
Aš/ I (209)	**Tu/ You (16)**	**Jis/ He (171)**	**Anas/ That (6)**	**Šis/ This (7)**	**Tas / That(17)**
Mudu (150)	Judviejų (6)	Jiedu (118)	Aniedu (5)	Šiuodu (4)	Tuodu (8)
Mudviejų (24)	Judu (5)	Jųdviejų (27)	Aniedviem (1)	Šiedu (3)	Tiedu (7)
Mudvi (20)	Judvi (3)	Jiedvi (8)			Tiedviem (2)
Mudviem (15)	Judviem (2)	Juodu (7)			
		Jodvi (6)			
		Jiedviem (3)			
		Juodvi (2)			
Translated fiction (724)					
Aš / I (505)	**Tu / You (32)**	**Jis/ He (122)**	**Anas / That(3)**	**Šis / This(4)**	**Tas / That (18)**
Mudu (359)	Judu (17)	Jiedu (93)	Anuodu (3)	Šiedu (4)	Tiedu (10)
Mudvi (76)	Judvi (7)	Jųdviejų (29)			Tuodu (6)
Mudviejų (41)	Judviejų (5)	Jiedvi (24)			Tiedvi (1)
Mudviem (26)	Judviem (3)	Juodu (10)			Tuodvi (1)
Mudviems (3)		Jiedviem (5)			
		Juodvi (2)			
Original popular science (34)					
Aš/ I (13)	**Tu/ You (0)**	**Jis/ He (18)**	**Anas/ That(0)**	**Šis/ This (3)**	**Tas/ That (0)**
Mudu (9)		Jiedu (12)		Šiedu (3)	
Mudvi (2)		Jųdviejų (5)			
Mudviejų (1)		Jiedviem (1)			
Mudviem (1)					
Translated popular science (48)					
Aš/ I (22)	**Tu/ You (5)**	**Jis/ He (16)**	**Anas/ That (0)**	**Šis/ This (3)**	**Tas/ That (1)**
Mudu (11)	Judu (3)	Jųdviejų (10)		Šiedu (3)	Tiedu (1)
Mudvi (7)	Judvi (2)	Jiedu (4)			
Mudviejų (3)		Jiedvi (2)			
Mudviem (1)		Juodu (1)			

- Examples of patterns rendered by "mudu/mudvi" in Lithuanian:

  - Ourselves
  - X/ my (*wife, friend, etc.*) and I
  - I and X
  - Me and X
  - X and me
  - I + verb+ X
  - We
  - Us
  - Paraphrases:
    - *I shall keep out of your way/ mudu nesimatysime (we both won't see each other);*
    - *she kissed me/ mudvi pasibučiavome (we both kissed)*

Summing up

- Higher pronoun numbers in translations support the notion of SL interference: English pronouns tend to be directly transferred to Lithuanian although due to the inflectional nature of the language they might be omitted or rendered using other grammatical structures (e.g., participial instead of relative clauses with relative pronouns). In original Lithuanian, personal pronouns, especially in subject position, are less frequent as they are implied in verb endings.

- Often, pronoun forms that are less used in original Lithuanian or do not have a straightforward equivalent in English are absent or visibly less frequent in translations as well.

- An exception to this tendency is the overuse of the first person dual "mudu", which, according to the unique items hypothesis, should also be underused in translations. As the analysis of the parallel data shows, "mudu", as a stylistic rather than obligatory choice is used when there are clearly two referents implied in English or when paraphrasing the original content which sometimes adds implications absent in the original (e.g., proximity of interlocutors/ interpersonal relations).

References:

- Eskola, S. (2004). Untypical Frequencies in Translated Language: A Corpus-based Study on Literary Corpus of Translated and Non-Translated Finnish. In A. Mauraneen, & P. Kujamäki (eds.), *Translation Universals. Do they Exist?* Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 83–99.

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