Comparative Diagnostics of The Suggestive Potential of a Poetic Text

Authors: Palina Khanchyna, Gymnasium №8 of Vitebsk
Abstract ID: 472
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 25. Translation
Presenter Name: Palina Khanchyna

Abstract

This study addresses the challenge of preserving the "suggestive potential" – the subconscious emotional and aesthetic impact – of a poetic text during translation. The primary objective is to measure the congruence between an original poem *and* its translated equivalents to determine how specific phonetic and prosodic shifts affect the reader's emotional perception. The research analyzes Robert Burns's poem "My Heart's in the Highlands" alongside three Russian translations by S. Marshak, T. Shchepkina-Kupernik, and A. Troshina.

The research applies an integrated methodology that combines A. P. Zhuravlev's phonosemantic analysis (mapping sound-colour synesthesia at the segmental level) with W. Kandinsky's theory of geometric expression (correlating prosodic features with visual form and movement at the suprasegmental level). The analytical process uses a multi-stage algorithm: phonetic transcription, phonosemantic analysis via the VAAL-mini system, automated prosodic analysis using a custom Python script, and the generation of visual-emotional profiles through AI technologies.

The findings indicate that while phonosemantic colour palettes remain largely consistent across languages due to shared phonetic inventories, significant variations emerge at the prosodic level. The comparative diagnostics, summarized in an eight-point congruence coefficient, reveal that Marshak and Shchepkina-Kupernik achieve a high degree of suggestive equivalence (87.5%). However, they achieve this through different means: Marshak alters the rhyme type but preserves the original meter, whereas Shchepkina-Kupernik expands the meter but maintains the feminine rhymes. A. Troshina's translation scores lower (75%) due to broader structural deviations.

The study concludes that while exact reproduction of all prosodic features is unattainable in poetry translation, it is still possible to preserve the emotional-aesthetic core of the original. The developed integrated methodology provides a practical framework for translation studies. The results show that changes in specific phonosemantic and prosodic indicators directly affect how a reader experiences a text's suggestive impact. This approach can be used to evaluate and refine poetic translations in the future.