Rendering indefinite-personal actant subjects:
the English-Ukrainian language-pair translation

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Abstract. The article considers the English-Ukrainian language-pair specific contrastive research on rendering the indefinite-personal actant subjects, focusing on lexically unexpressed or pronominal types with the 'one' component. It discusses the influence which the semantic sentence structure produces on subject transformations application in the English-Ukrainian language-pair translation, reviewing reasons and principles of their application. The study also discusses the ways of rendering the category of definiteness/indefiniteness concerning non-related language pairs on the basis of fiction prose, and illustrates how structural and semantic properties are tackled for achieving translation ecology.

Keywords: category of definiteness/indefiniteness, indefinite-personal actant subject, syntactic transformations, translation ecology.

The issues of translation adequacy, correlation between the source and target text meaning as well as linguistic means of its expression remain key issues in the descriptive translation studies. Within this topicality, the ways of transferring grammatical, particularly, syntactic meanings of the source text have become relevant lately. A number of eminent scholars (L. Barkhudarov, O. Jespersen, V. Gak, N. Grabovskyi, V. Karaban, Th. Krzeszowski) studied the peculiarities of a subject transformation during translation activity for reaching functional equivalence. L. Ternier contributed considerably to the contrastive research on the sentence structure transformation at the intra- and interlingual levels [11]. Recently, the syntactically related issues in the descriptive translation studies were addressed in the contrastive explorations by I. Korunets [8], whereas a semantic aspect of translation is covered in V. Gak's works [4].

The present stage of descriptive translation studies is characterised by lack of a thorough systematic analysis on syntactic transformations in non-related languages. Specifically, the research discusses ways of communicating logical category of 'definiteness/indefiniteness' which involves lexically unexpressed (zero) and pronominal subjects with the 'one' component, which results in the ambiguity of the subject transformations status, the ways of their classification and their application procedures are still being elaborated. With regard to English-Ukrainian translation pair, the interrelation and coordination of syntactic units with lexically unexpressed (zero) subjects by the source and target languages as well as the reasons for sentence rearrangement during translation need to be clearly motivated.

Relevance of the suggested research can be explained by insufficient study in which the sentence semantic structure on the subject transformations application. Hence, there appears a need for identifying the ways of overcoming obstacles that arise during rendering lexically unexpressed (zero) and pronominal subjects with the 'one' component, which may cause the need for an adequate conveying a deep sentence structure under surface sentence structure disparities. The article aims at discussing semantic and grammatical ways of communicating the category of 'indefiniteness' in English-Ukrainian language-pair translation. The specific objectives are three-fold: first, to identify indefinite-personal and generalizing-personal subject syntaxemes in the selected fiction texts; second, to describe means of rendering English indefinite-personal and generalizing-personal sentences into Ukrainian, specifically those which constitute personal pronouns 'you', 'we', 'they' and indefinite pronoun 'one'; third, to justify the applicability of transformation methods for rendering indefinite actant subjects from English into Ukrainian.

The research is based on the information from selected linguistic corpora from original fiction texts and their translated variants performed by a number of interpreters. The source base consists of indefinite-personal sentences with impersonal subjects in English and Ukrainian, which aims to analyze the correlation between presentation of formal-syntactic and semantic-syntactic properties of impersonal sentence structures in pair languages.

The suggested study also considers N. Chomsky's approach to transformation generative grammar [1] in which the linguist treats translation as hypothesizing certain mental procedures inherent to translation processes. Hence, while rendering, one faces the necessity to transform formal-syntactic (so called surface) sentence structure: subject into the predicate (or a predicative), object etc. Although externally occurring in the surface sentence structure, the changes might be basically conditioned by the necessity to introduce changes to the actant (deep) sentence structure, which frequently emerges during a translation process.

Furthermore, in the view of syntax, the research looks into an issue of the 'definiteness/indefiniteness' category representation in non-related languages that has been a focus in numerous linguistic investigations which number elaborations on the definite, indefinite-personal and generalizing-personal sentence types. The key point of an indefinite-personal sentence's semantics lies in expressing an action, while the subject is semantically unmarked. Necessity of syntactic subject transformations in rendering texts might also be conditioned by the specifics of the actant sentence structure in the source and target languages. At the level of logics, a subject of an action can be correlated with one person, a group of persons, and, finally, with all agents, which are potentially characterized by a corresponding action.

The imaginary actant is formed on the basis of a linguistic form, when in the result of nominalisation instead of a verb, which constitutes the utterance core, a verb-operator is used for denoting an action, thus taking over

the function of the syntactic subject. Rather, rendering indefinite-personal functionally corresponding, but formally divergent actant subjects in the Ukrainian language, i.e. indefinite-personal and generalizing-personal or impersonal sentence types generally accounts for isomorphic and allomorphic features [5, p. 37]. The availability of the mentioned sentence types in many languages can serve an evidence of a common way of thinking for these nations as well as specific language forms of expressing an idea based on its inner regulations. Interestingly, unlike Ukrainian, English indefinite-personal and generalizing-personal sentences are usually two-componential.

Semantic monocentrism is traced in indefinite-personal sentences which are used for generalizing, hence being verbally centered [3, p. 49] as being fully grammatised language means, indefinite-personal "one" allows to focus mainly on the action unlike the pronoun-subject 'you' that can't be characterized by the utterance nonpersonalisation [5, p. 12]. Due to this fact, impersonal sentences are usually applied by practitioners who deal with translating English indefinite-personal sentences with indefinite-personal pronoun"one" as a subject. Impersonal sentences are treated as functional corresponding units, which can be explained by the tendency of Ukrainian impersonal sentences to highlight action or its result without naming an agent. In impersonal constructions, the emphasis is put on an action, being perceived by someone indefinite. Thus, the agent is left out from the text, sometimes remaining unknown [2, p. 139], compare: ***One doesn't push a woman*** [19, p. 146] – *Жінок **не штовхають*** [12, p. 122]; ***No one has any leave*** *in this war.* [20, p. 259] – *В цій війні **відпусток не дають нікому*** [17, p. 325]. As observed in the suggested cases, when impersonal sentences convey predicted and arranged actions that refer to present or future tenses, and used for communicating the action irrespective an agent, thus seeming alike with the content of impersonal sentences like "it is possible to...". However, the Ukrainian variant is characterized by applying a syntactic transformation alongside with impersonal sentences as translation correlations : *the law is so complicated, **one must take precautions*** [19, p. 80] – *Закони такі складні, що **обережність ніколи не завадить*** [12, p. 68]. Among indefinite-personal sentences with a "one" subject one can single out the types, in which actions refer directly to the protagonist. In these cases, a indefinite-personal pronoun 'one' acts as an implication means of a certain personality, a protagonist seeks to avoid a direct reference to the interlocutor, an agent. While translating English sentences of this type into Ukrainian, an interpreter usually prefers generalizing-personal constructions, compare : *But that's a thing **one learns** with time* [19, p. 113] – *Але такі речі починаєш розуміти тільки з часом* [13, p. 90].

On the whole, in the Ukrainian translation, such actant structures are frequently characterized by the II singular present tense form : *But if **one writes** about war, self-respect demands that occasionally **one share** the risk* [19, p. 157] – *Та коли вже **пишеш** про війну, почуття власної гідності вимагає, щоб ти час від часу **поділяв** небезпеку з іншими* [13, p. 131]. Using the mentioned generalization form in the Ukrainian translation variant, actions and experiences affect everyone, including a reader, thus vitalizing narration and providing the sentence

with a categoricity tone [2, p. 140]. In case of indefiniteness, the source context is accompanied by more distinctive semantic components, translation of English indefinite-personal sentences a functional replacement – an allomorphic syntactic structure in which the subject is determined by any generalizing significant word – can be applied [5, p. 37; 10, p. 39], by means of separate words 'a person', 'an individual' (see an example 1 below) or its hyponym (see an example 2 below), or a pronoun 'ми/ we' being used for generalizing sense in cases when a protagonist pertains to a certain class (see an example 3 below). Let us consider the following examples : (1) ***One must be*** *humane* [23, p. 10] – *Людина повинна бути людяною* 14, p. 4];; (2) *Yet **one has a feeling** within one that blinds a man while he loves you* [20, p. 129] – *А тим часом і в потвори **буває щось таке**, що засліплює чоловіка, коли він кохає* [17, p. 225]; (3) *He decided to let Baby speak for him, as **one often lets** woman raise their voices over issues that are not in their hand* [18, p. 222] – *Він вирішив: нехай Бебі поговорить за нього; **ми часто надаємо** жінкам слово в тих випадках, коли вони нічого вирішити не можуть* [16, p. 324].

Unlike the indefinite-personal 'one', English personal pronouns 'you', 'we', 'they' functioning as a subject of indefinite-personal and generalizing-personal sentence types retain the shades of the core lexical meaning: a pronoun 'you' refers to a protagonist, 'we' means "others and I", including a protagonist; 'they' introduces people uninvolved into the conversation. Together with personal pronouns and indefinite-personal 'one' for expressing a "general person" notion with nouns like 'a man', 'a fellow', 'people'. In fact, the latter nouns acquire indefinite-personal shade of meaning only within a certain context, creating a possibility for using indefinite-personal sentences in the Ukrainian translation.

Application of indefinite-personal and generalizing-personal utterances with 'you' subject are observed when a protagonist informs about the facts directly referring to it, treating it as mundane, thus approaching its description to a potential interlocutor. Despite a content difference between pronouns "you" та "one", Ukrainian translation devices in indefinite-personal and generalizing-personal sentence structures turn out akin. Indeed, Ukrainian translation variants of English indefinite actant subjects are characterized by applying actant structures with the II singular present tense forms : ***You could not send*** *them to a surprise attack against an enemy that was waiting for it* [20, p. 458] – ***Не можна посилати*** *людей у наступ, що має бути несподіваним, якщо ворог чекає цього наступу* [17, p. 473]; generalizing-personal sentence types :***You can't stop** a teacher when they want to do something* [23, p. 37] – ***Вчителів не спиниш**, коли вони щось надумають* [15, p. 12]; serve as functional translation correlations alongside with the syntactic structures: ***You couldn't even hear** any cars any more* [23, p. 69] – ***Ні машина ніде не** проїде, ніщо* [15, p. 43].

Application of 'they' in indefinite-personal meaning doesn't favour an utterance generalization, only highlighting the person's indefiniteness. In the mentioned sense, this pronoun is combined with a limited range of verbs, specifically, with the verbs of saying ('to say', 'to tell', 'to call'). The usage of verbs in the 3rd person plural – 'кажуть' [3, p. 180] can be observed in the cases when

the pronoun 'they' is substituted with 'one' : ***One writes of scars healed, a loose parallel to the pathology of the skin, but there is no such thing in the life of an individual*** [18, p. 287] – ***Кажуть,*** *душевні рани зарубцьовуються, – це вельми невдале порівняння з ушкодженнями фізичними, бо в житті так не буває* [16, p. 352].

Specific difficulties constitute the cases when the source text features stylistic and content differences between pronouns-subjects of indefinite-personal sentences with 'you' and 'one'. The definite-personal and generalizing-personal sentences with a subject-pronoun 'we' are less commonly used. Unlike the above-mentioned utterance types, construction with 'we' refers only to a certain number of persons with whom an interlocutor identifies himself and on behalf of whom he expresses his thoughts. Taking into consideration this specificity, the pronoun 'we' is preserved in the Ukrainian translation: *As we know – Як ми знаємо / Як відомо.*

The results of the survey show that a considerable number of impersonal actant subjects were rendered in a way that deviated from the original, being in a complete conformity with the source and target language regulations. Thus, the translation variant of English indefinite-personal sentences with the pronominal subject 'one' is determined by the meaning shade an utterance acquires in the Ukrainian language, which can be explained by the English sentence property to be used for transmitting general truths and producing sentences similar to definite personal ones.

To sum up, the following key points should be mentioned. Firstly, semantic and formal-syntactic aspects of subject transformations are closely interconnected in rendering impersonal sentences from English into Ukrainian. The results show that in most cases the majority of them undergo changes in the utterance actant structure, which fosters changes at the formal-syntactic level. The reasons seem to be found in the more flexibility of Ukrainian syntax in comparison with the English, as well as in disparities between English and Ukrainian grammar structures. Secondly, the selected corpus data enabled to analyse the ways of rendering impersonal sentences which assisted in identification common and divergent features in the English-Ukrainian language-pair translation. The latter has an obvious impact on translation ecology.

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Передача неопределенно-личных актантных подлежащих: англо-украинское направление перевода
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Аннотация. В статье рассмотрена сопоставительная характеристика перевода неопределенно-личных актантных подлежащих в англо-украинском направлении перевода, а также влияние семантической структуры предложения на использование субъектных трансформаций. Проанализированы причины и принципы их использвания в англо-украинском переводе. В статье предложены способы передачи категории неопределенности в неродственных языках на материале художественной прозы, а также рассмотрено взаимодействие струтурных и семантических характеристик для достижения точности перевода.

Ключевые слова: категория определенности/неопределенности, качество перевода, неопределенно-личное актантное подлежащее, синтаксические трансформации.