STRETCHING REALITY: THE FUNCTION & TRANSLATION OF HYPERBOLE IN ANGLOPHONE SATIRICAL SCIENCE FICTION LITERATURE

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Abstract: This study investigates the use of hyperbole as a satirical device in English-language science fiction, examining its stylistic conveyance and translation into Russian. Employing linguo-stylistic analysis, translation analysis, and functional-linguistic component examination, various definitions of hyperbole are explored. The results indicate that hyperbole serves as an artistic tool for deliberate exaggeration, capturing the reader's attention and emphasizing the author's stance. Focusing on Harry Harrison's science fiction novel "Bill, the Galactic Hero" and its two translations by V. P. Kovalevsky, the research scrutinizes hyperbole's contribution to satirical effects and identifies two types of hyperbolic exaggerations: contextual and hidden. Hidden hyperbole is further expressed through stylistic contrast and enumeration. In the Russian translations, the satirical effect is largely preserved, albeit with some losses. The study underscores the significance of hyperbole in engaging readers' critical thinking and directing their focus towards real-world issues within the science fiction narrative. For professional translators, recognizing and conveying hyperbole is crucial in accurately representing the author's intended meaning.

Keywords: Hyperbole, Satire, Science fiction, Translation, Linguo-stylistic analysis, Professional competencies, Cultural transfer.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the creation of a fictional work, authors utilize various expressive techniques to achieve communicative-pragmatic objectives. Some of these techniques are characteristic of specific genres, while others are bound only by the author's creativity and expertise. Satirical works frequently employ biting ridicule of real-world phenomena, pushing them to ludicrous extremes to draw readers' attention to issues that may be problematic in everyday life. This pragmatic effect is achieved through the use of hyperbole, which allows authors to emphasize the flaws of real-world situations by exaggerating aspects such as character traits, events, or settings in their fictional worlds.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the role of hyperbole in generating satirical effects within English-language satirical novels. It will delve into the linguistic and stylistic methods employed to convey the pragmatic value of exaggeration within the context of the text's artistic style. Additionally, the paper will explore the challenges and strategies involved in accurately translating these effects into Russian. To achieve these objectives, the research methods employed in this study encompass linguistic, functional-linguistic, comparative, and componential analyses of fictional discourse.

By examining the interplay between hyperbole and satire, this research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that underpin the creation of satirical effects in literature. Furthermore, it aims to offer valuable insights for translators tasked with preserving these effects across languages and cultures.

2. HYPERBOLE IN FICTIONAL LITERATURE

Hyperbole is a common rhetorical device in literature and everyday conversation, where exaggeration is used to make a point or create a specific effect. Scholars have studied hyperbole from various angles, including its use in English language corpora [Claridge, 2010], in everyday conversations [McCarthy & Carter, 2004], and in combination with other figures of speech such as metaphor and simile [Carston & Wearing, 2011]. Hyperbole has been analyzed in various literary works, including, for instance, Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" [Bian et al., 2021] and Keats's love letters [Altikriti, 2016]. Linguistic methods for identifying hyperbole in discourse have also been proposed [Burgers et al., 2016], and hyperbole has been studied in relation to other figures of speech, such as metaphor and irony [Burgers et al., 2018; Wilson, 2017]. Hyperbole is a versatile and widely used rhetorical device that plays an important role in both literature and everyday communication.

The use of hyperbole in literary texts has been analyzed through various interpretations. According to Belyaev [1989] hyperbolization is a technique of artistic generalization, where artistic imagery is achieved by intentionally exaggerating the properties, qualities, and features of an object, phenomenon, or process. Gorkin [2006] defines hyperbole as an expressive figurative device, intentional exaggeration of a feature of an object or person. Timofeev & Turaev [1974] consider hyperbole as excessive exaggeration of the properties of a depicted object or phenomenon, which serves as a tool for the author to emphasize what he ridicules and what he glorifies. Therefore, hyperbole is an artistic device used for intentional exaggeration of the properties of a phenomenon or object. Authors use hyperbole to break the plausibility of events and vividly demonstrate their evaluation of what they approve or condemn, deeming it unacceptable.

Hyperbole is a widely used technique in various genres, from epic poems to folk tales. As an example, we can take the epic of Svyatogor, who is described as a mighty ancient warrior, guarding the Russian land and ordinary people from enemies [Svyatogor-bogatyr'. Bylina, n.d.]. The authors exaggerate his physical characteristics, attributing to him extraordinary strength and immense height, to show his reliability and power. In the fairy tale of The Frog Princess, hyperbole is used to denote the incredible weight of the path that the main character must travel to find his wife in the Kingdom of Koschei. Through the use of hyperbole, the authors want to show how strong and brave the main character is, ready to undergo all trials for the sake of his beloved.

Let us turn our attention to the analysis of satirical works, among which the vivid example is Jonathan Swift's "Gulliver's Travels." The novel represents a multifaceted analysis of various manifestations of human vices. For instance, the first part of the book, "A Voyage to Lilliput," ridicules the contemporary English society through the lens of the Lilliputians and their emperor.

The Lilliputians evaluate themselves and their role in the world exceedingly highly, despite their small stature. This is reflected in the epithets used in the titles that the Lilliputian emperor bestows upon himself: "the mightiest Emperor," "the delight and terror of the universe," "monarch of monarchs," "the greatest of all human beings," "whose head touches the sun" [Swift, 2020]. Hyperbole makes the phenomena that the author focuses on excessively huge, outstanding, and out of context. Departure from the real world, the creation of a new world with its own rules and distinctive elements, is inherent in fantasy and, in particular, one of its offshoots, science fiction.

Science fiction is a literary genre whose foundation is based on imagination, grounded in scientific achievements that confront humanity with new realities of life and observe society's response to these realities. In this case, exaggerations can take different forms. Firstly, hyperbolizing the significance of the main character in the world of the work. For example, the sci-fi duology "Draft" and "Clean Copy" by Sergey Lukyanenko, where the main character Kirill becomes the chosen one and can influence this world, alternative worlds, and their further destiny. The series of science fiction books "Stalker" exaggerates the impact of the Chernobyl explosion in 1986, which generated special anomalous zones with unusual properties. In the novel "Jester" by Alexey Pehov, the element that forms the world and all its technological achievements is the exaggerated value of steam engines. In the novel "Roadside Picnic" by Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, hyperbole is utilized to create an exaggerated depiction of a mysterious "Zone" that has appeared on Earth, altering the laws of physics and affecting the lives of those who encounter it. Through the use of hyperbole, the authors are able to explore the implications of this phenomenon in a more engaging and imaginative manner, drawing readers into their fictional world and encouraging them to reflect on the real-life issues being satirized.

Thus, hyperbole is one of the most effective techniques of satire that allows authors to enhance the effect of criticism and mockery by exaggerating flaws and vices, as well as creating absurd characters and situations. By utilizing this technique, authors are able not only to expose social issues but also to make their works engaging and memorable. Hyperbole is an important tool of satirical art that has remained relevant and popular in both Russian and English-language literature from old times to the present day. The connection between science fiction and hyperbole is evident in the way that the world or plot element in such works becomes an exaggerated phenomenon of reality invented by the author, such as technological progress and others.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The material for this study consists of the English-language science fiction novel "Bill, the Galactic Hero" by Harry Harrison and two translations into the Russian language by V. P. Kovalevsky. The study employed a functional-linguistic approach to analyzing the use of hyperbole in the selected fictional texts. Specifically, the study utilized the following methods of analysis:

1. Stylistic analysis: The study conducted a detailed analysis of the language and lexicon used in the novels. This analysis focused on identifying instances of hyperbole and their specific linguistic features, including the use of exaggerated vocabulary, metaphors, and similes.

2. Functional analysis: The study analyzed the function and purpose of hyperbole in the selected novels. This analysis focused on identifying the pragmatic effects of hyperbole on the reader and the ways in which it contributes to the satirical tone and message of the novels.

3. Comparative analysis: The study compared the use of hyperbole in the selected novel to other examples of satirical literature in the English language. This analysis aimed to identify common patterns and stylistic devices used by authors to achieve a satirical effect through hyperbole. Moreover, comparative analysis of translations was employed to specifically examine the original text of a novel and two of its translations. The aim of the analysis was to identify the methods used to translate hyperbole as a means of achieving a satirical effect and to evaluate the adequacy of these translations. The study focused on the translation of hyperbole as a significant tool for creating humor and satire in the target language, with the goal of determining how effective the translations are in conveying the original text's satirical intent. By comparing the original text with its translations, this research provides valuable insights into the challenges of translating humor and satire, and the strategies used to overcome them.

The data for this study were collected through close reading of the above-mentioned texts, with specific attention paid to instances of hyperbole.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Satire and science fiction are closely intertwined, as the genre of science fiction allows authors to explore and comment on contemporary issues in a more imaginative and engaging manner. Through the use of scientific and technological advancements, science fiction authors can create their own worlds and examine humanity's interaction with new phenomena. And within these created worlds, authors can utilize satire, including the use of hyperbole, to express their positions and dissent.

However, the challenge arises when translating works of satire from English to Russian. Translators face numerous challenges, as the expressive means used by the author may not have direct or equivalent counterparts in the Russian language. Thus, translators must consider finding an adequate replacement that does not distort the author's intentions and contributes to a holistic perception of the work and its design.

In addition, translators must consider the cultural context in which the work was originally written and how it might be received by readers in the target language. Satire, in particular, often relies on cultural references and specific contextual knowledge, which may not be readily apparent to readers in the target language. The translator must be able to navigate these cultural differences and find ways to convey the satirical effect without losing the impact of the original work.

The use of hyperbole in science fiction as a tool of satire highlights the importance of the translator's role in conveying the author's intended meaning across linguistic and cultural barriers. By carefully considering the expressive means used by the author and finding adequate replacements in the target language, translators can help ensure that the satirical elements of a work are preserved, contributing to a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the original work.

This paper aims to observe how hyperbole works in the satirical science fiction novel "Bill, the Galactic Hero" by Harry Harrison and how the translator copes with conveying it into Russian. The main character of the novel, Bill, is recruited into the Imperial Galactic Army to fight the chinger race, which has been waging war with varying success for many years. The army constantly needs new recruits, and unfair methods are used to achieve this, as no one willingly joins. A colorful propaganda campaign is conducted on all planets of the galaxy to attract new recruits. However, the harsh reality of the training camps and war differs greatly from the beautiful pictures presented in the campaign.

The novel has two editions with different translation variants by the same translator, V.P. Kovalevsky. The first expressive means used to convey the author's satirical intent is contextual hyperbole. During Bill's recruitment into the army, the sergeant does not hesitate to use the most radical methods, as no one would willingly go there.

"Here, I saved some for you," the sergeant said, passing over a prepared cup so loaded with dissolved ego-reducing drugs that they were crystallizing out at the bottom [Harrison, 2016, p. 3].

«Глянь-ка, парень, что я тут припас для тебя, — сказал сержант, протягивая ему заранее приготовленный стакан, в котором было растворено такое количество подавляющего волю наркотика, что на дно выпал кристаллический осадок» [Harrison, 2001, p. 6].

«Глянь-ка, парень, что я тут принес для тебя, - сказал сержант, протягивая ему стакан с таким количеством подавляющего волю наркотика, что часть его выпала на дно в осадок» [Harrison, 1991, p. 9].

In a situation where everyone knows that nothing good awaits them in the army, either the recruits cannot even pass the training camp where the methods are characterized by exceptional cruelty, or they are highly likely to be killed in war, making a person sign a contract can only be achieved through psychological and psychotropic influence (officially permitted). The drug was so plentiful that he fell into a stupor and became clearly visible. Both translations, carried out through calque, fully convey the original, varying only in the use of the word "кристаллический" to specify the quality of the stupor, which is not necessarily required in this case.

Another example of contextual hyperbole can be seen during the regular troops inspection:

Since the morning was a bit cooler than usual the Monday parade was postponed until upon when the ferro concrete drill ground would have warmed up nicely and there would be the maximum number of heat prostration cases [Harrison, 2016, p. 18].

1. Утро выдалось чуть прохладнее, чем обычно, поэтому смотр, регулярно проводимый по понедельникам, перенесли на полдень, чтобы железобетонные плиты плаца успели хорошенько раскалиться и обеспечили максимальное число солнечных ударов [Harrison, 2001, p. 21].

2. Это утро было чуть прохладнее, чем обычно, а поэтому парад перенесли на полдень, чтобы железобетонные плиты плаца успели хорошенько раскалиться и обеспечили максимальное число солнечных ударов [Harrison, 1991, p. 16].

Here we can also see a literal translation of the original text, with the colloquial word "хорошенько" chosen to translate the word "nicely," fitting the situation well and reflecting the general level of speech in the army, where all kinds of people come together and high-flown language is not a priority.

The second device used to express hyperbole is stylistic contrast. We can observe this in the scene where Bill and his friends arrive at the leave area and can finally indulge in all the things they were deprived of in training camp – fun and drinking.

It was to one of these establishments, a mortuary cum saloon, that Bill and his friends went. "No jokes," the landlord said, the smile vanishing for a second as he took down a bottle on which the garish label Rte. WHISKEY had been pasted over the etched in EMBALMING FLUID "Any trouble I call the MPs." The smile returned as money struck the counter. "Name your poison, gents." They sat around a long, narrow table as thick as it was wide, with brass handles on both sides, and let the blessed relief of ethyl alcohol trickle a path down their dust lined throats [Harrison, 2016, p. 25].

1. В одно из таких заведений - полусалун, полупохоронное бюро - и попал Билл со своими друзьями. - Не хулигань! - сказал хозяин, согнав с лица улыбку и доставая бутылку, на которой из-под яркой этикетки "Настоящее виски" просвечивала гравировка "Формальдегид". - Будете безобразничать, так и военную полицию вызвать недолго. - Как только по прилавку застучали монеты, улыбка вернулась на место. - Травитесь на здоровье! Они уселись вокруг длинного узкого стола с медными ручками по бокам и отдались блаженству, ощущая, как благословенный поток алкоголя омывает их забитые пылью глотки [Harrison, 2001, p. 29].

2. Именно в такое заведение — наполовину кабак, наполовину похоронное бюро — и попал Билл со своими друзьями. Не хулигань! — рыкнул хозяин, и улыбка стерлась с его лица. Он снял с полки бутылку с крикливой этикеткой «Настоящее виски», наклеенной поверх другой, на которой значилось «Жидкость для бальзамирования». — Начнется заварушка, так и военную полицию вызвать недолго.— Улыбка вернулась на свое место.— Какой же отравы тяпнем, ребята? Они уселись вокруг длинного узкого гроба с бронзовыми ручками по бокам и с наслаждением ощутили, как этиловый спирт прожигает дорожки в пропыленных глотках [Harrison, 1991, p. 20].

The hyperbole in this passage lies in the extent to which everyone in the city where soldiers are discharged wants to profit off of them. Every institution is transformed into either a saloon or a brothel. The scene is built on vivid contrasts, beginning with the location itself, halfway between a drinking establishment and a funeral home. The translator varies the translation of the word "saloon," offering both "салун" and "кабак" as options. "Салун" is the name for American bars, which also reflects the composition of their clientele, usually soldiers, cowboys, bandits, and other

similar individuals. On the other hand, the word "кабак" is much closer and more understandable to Russian-speaking readers. In this case, if the "letter" of the original is to be preserved, it would be appropriate to use the term "салун" with a translation note indicating the typical composition of patrons in saloons.

Even the drink containers were not changed; the liquid for embalming was simply poured out and a label reading "Настоящее виски" (Genuine Whiskey) was affixed on top, so that no one would even dare to doubt the contents. The only difference can be noted in the translation of "embalming fluid," which was translated as "Формальдегид" (formaldehyde) or "жидкость для бальзамирования" (liquid for embalming). In the former case, a substitution was used, while in the latter, a calque was used, and it looks more successful since it does not carry the specificity and narrowness of the term in the first option. Not everyone knows what formaldehyde is, but one way or another, they are familiar with the meaning of the word "бальзамирование" (embalming).

A new layer of contrast can be seen in how quickly the owner's mood changes, initially sullen and ready to call the military police upon seeing visitors, but immediately warming up upon seeing money, pouring drinks and ready to forgive any mischief.

After the owner gives the eager soldiers alcohol, he says, "Name your poison, gents." This phrase received two translations: "Травитесь на здоровье!" (Poison yourselves to your heart's content!) and "Какой же отравы тяпнем, ребята?" (Which poison shall we take, pals?). The first translation allowed the translator to create yet another layer of contrast expressed through an oxymoron, which the author did not intend, but which further intensifies the hyperbole. The second translation completely conveys the meaning of the original, without creating additional contrasts. In this case, the first translation option appears more successful and does not violate cause-and-effect relationships (the soldiers have already ordered their drinks, so it is illogical to ask them what they will be drinking).

And the final touch to this scene was the table around which Bill is sitting with his friends. Knowing that everything is happening in a hastily converted funeral parlor, it is not surprising that the table here is made from a coffin. Life and death are very close, with soldiers, the future of most of whom is that very table at which they drink, party and do not think about tomorrow. Let us consider the translations. In the first case the translator follows the letter of the original, creating an image, but not naming the specific attribute of the funeral industry, while in the second variant he is more specific and uses the word "гроб" (coffin) instead of "стол" (table). The translator omits the excessive descriptions from the original "as thick as it was wide," and this decision looks correct, not overloading the created image. The second translation option is more ironic and successful, corresponding to the author's intent, where the translator directly uses the word "гроб" (coffin).

The third device through which hyperbole is expressed is enumeration. It can be seen in the scene where the sergeant tries to get Bill to sign the military contract by hook or by crook. Here, hyperbole is expressed through the enumeration of the names of a multitude of useless medals with which Bill is adorned. This is a way of exerting psychological pressure on the almost ready recruit, planting the thought in his head that the further he goes up the military career ladder, the more and more awards he will have.

"This is the Honorable Enlistment Award," he intoned gravely, pinning a jewel encrusted nebula, pendant on chartreuse, to Bill's wide chest. "And the Emperor's Congratulatory Gilded Horn, the Forward to Victory Starburst, the Praise Be Given Salutation of the Mothers of the Victorious Fallen, and the Everflowing Cornucopia which does not mean anything but looks nice and can be used to carry contraceptives [Harrison, 2016, p. 8].

«Вот "Почетная медаль новобранца", - торжественно изрек он, прикалывая к широкой груди Билла инкрустированное камнями изображение туманности на зеленой ленте. - А вот "Императорский заздравный золоченый рог", "Вперед, к победе над звездами", "Честь и слава матерям павших героев" и "Неиссякаемый рог изобилия". Последний, правда, вообще ничего не значит, но выглядит классно, и в нем удобно хранить презервативы» [Harrison, 2001, p. 10].

«Вот «Почетный Знак Вступления в Ряды», — приговаривал он внушительно, прикалывая к широкой груди Билла усыпанную поддельными драгоценностями подвеску Туманности, болтавшуюся на зеленой ленте. — А вот «Императорский Поздравительный Позолоченный Рог», «Вперед к Победе Среди Звезд», «Памятная Медаль в Честь Матерей Достойно Павших Воинов» и «Неиссякаемый Рог Изобилия». Последний, правда, ровно ничего не означает, но выглядит славно и удобен для хранения презервативов» [Harrison, 1991, p. 10].

The translations of the medals vary, with both versions having successful and less successful examples. The first translation option demonstrates more concise and realistic names, while the second option is more in line with the author's intention, which uses inflated and pompous names to increase the effect of uselessness. Therefore, the latter translation is more successful. The sergeant himself emphasizes in his last phrase the fact that these medals have no sense or application, so the soldiers themselves came up with the idea of adapting one of the medals to store contraception. The practical benefit of the medal is quite down-to-earth compared to the meaning originally embedded in military medals, intended to showcase the heroism and positive qualities of their holder.

The fourth example of hyperbole can be highlighted through gradation and opposition. Here, the chief petty officer speaks to the new recruits in the training camp, setting the record straight on the commanding-subordinate relationships:

«I am your father and your mother and your whole universe and your dedicated enemy, and very soon I will have you regretting the day you were born» [Harrison, 2016, p. 12].

«Теперь я для вас отец и мать, вся ваша вселенная и ваш извечный враг, и очень скоро я заставлю вас пожалеть о том, что вы вообще родились на свет» [Harrison, 2001, p. 14].

«Я ваш отец, ваша мать, ваша вселенная и ваш извечный враг, и еще до того, как я покончу с вами, вы горько пожалеете, что родились на свет» [Harrison, 1991, p. 12].

Through the use of increasingly significant concepts such as parents, the entire world, and culminating in the unexpected appearance of an enemy, a hyperbolic effect is achieved. The sergeant embodies seemingly incompatible qualities, pushing the situation to absurdity. His promise that the recruits will regret ever being born completes the sergeant's image, in which he is not to be expected to do anything good, despite being *"your father and your mother and your whole universe,"* supposedly the only person who can take care of them. Through gradation and opposition, an exaggeratedly threatening image is created, making it clear that the sergeant does not care about the recruits' lives. In terms of gradation, both translation options are in agreement, with variations in the phrase *"I will have you regretting the day you were born,"* in which the first translation, an almost literal rendering, performed most successfully. The second translation option (which is a Russian version of "I'll finish you all") is overloaded with subordinate clauses (which were not in the original), needlessly complicating a rather simple idea. The sergeant speaks in a language

that is easy to understand for even the most intellectually challenged recruit. Therefore, the first translation option is more appropriate and logical in terms of realism. The ideal option would be to eliminate the pronoun "о том," which would further "lighten" the phrase and bring it closer to the original.

5. CONCLUSION

The use of hyperbole is a fundamental literary device that has been employed across various genres and time periods. Its primary purpose is to amplify and emphasize certain aspects of the work by exaggerating them, and it plays a critical role in satirical science fiction novels written in English. In these works, hyperbole is used to highlight the negative and incorrect aspects of reality that the author wants to critique.

Hyperbole can be conveyed in a variety of ways, including through context, enumeration, gradation, opposition, and contrast. The translations examined in this study utilized a variety of techniques, including calquing and rare substitutions, to effectively convey the intended meaning of the hyperbole. However, despite the translators' success, it is crucial to acknowledge the importance of cultural context when using hyperbole in translation. The exaggeration that works in one culture may not be as effective or appropriate in another.

It is essential to recognize that the use of hyperbole requires skillful execution by both the author and the translator to be successful. The author must carefully select the degree of exaggeration and ensure that it serves the intended purpose. Similarly, the translator must consider the cultural nuances and select the appropriate means to convey the hyperbole effectively.

In conclusion, hyperbole is a powerful tool in literature that can create a lasting impact on the reader if used effectively. By skillfully selecting the appropriate degree of exaggeration and means of conveying it, authors and translators can create memorable works of literature that effectively convey their intended message.

Conflict of interest
The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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