

Influence of the category of definiteness on the semantic field – contrastive analysis of selected German-Polish translations of non-fictional and literary texts

The aim of this paper is to show the contrastive shape of the category of definiteness between two Indo-European languages, Polish from the group of Slavic languages and German from the group of Germanic languages. Looking at these two languages, one would think that Polish has worse conditions for expressing definiteness, since it does not use articles. However, this article aims to answer the question whether this is indeed the case.

In order to explore the essence of German articles, we must first look at the generally known three-way division into definite, indefinite and zero articles. The approach here is a pragmatic-semantic one, which means that attention is to be drawn above all to the use of the articles in concrete communication situations.

Since articles provide information on how different elements in the discourse relate to each other, the concept of frame semantics and mental approach used by Ronald Langacker (Langacker 2005: 129-133) is well suited to investigate the influence of definiteness on the semantic field (also a key term from the field of cognitive linguistics). This is because the field can change under the influence of a referential expression, including the definite and indefinite article, in such a way that a different overlap of meaning – the essence when transferring a concept from one language to another – arises during translation. In this context, all referential expressions have the same function – they ensure that speaker and hearer focus their attention on the same object of conceptualization (cf. Filar 2017: 27-38).

In the practical part of this work, the focus will be on the expressive possibilities of definiteness in the case of two types of text whose field of application is very different, but in which the article (in German) frequently appears as a constituent element. Examples are fixed expressions, phrases, in which it makes a decisive difference which degree of definiteness is used. In marketing texts, these tend to be conventionalized expressions, whereas in literature it is more likely to handle with momentary formations. In the latter, the article has the greater influence on semantics, since literary texts are the more expressive type of text. The aim of this analysis is therefore to show which compensatory strategies are to be used in Polish to keep the recipient's attention focused on the same object of conceptualization. In addition, it will be determined whether the absence of the linguistic device of articles semantically impoverishes the target text. Charles Fillmore's concept of scenes and frames semantics will serve this purpose, as it is the best way to determine what changes the scene created by the original frame in the recipient of the original is subjected to in the translation.

The illustrative material will be Herta Müller's *Herztier* (the English translation is entitled: *The Land of Green Plums*) and its translation into Polish created by Alicja Buras and entitled *Sercqtko* from the field of literature and selected advertising texts from my own translation work.

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