THE ORDER OF THOUGHT AND THE ORDER OF WORDS

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Introductory remarks

From the point of view of translation strategy, translators seem to fall between two positions. Some of them (like Shapiro and his adherents) believe that the source text should sound completely neutral and natural in the target language. Typically, they prefer standard target language sentence patterns to achieve a smooth and transparent translation. Other translators (like Venuti and his followers) say that awkward wording in the target language should remain to remind the readers that they are reading a translation.

The present article addresses this controversy with respect to one formal phenomenon – sentence patterns, or word order, – and one discourse phenomenon – the communicative status of entities described by sentences.

In communication, the speaker/writer is naturally disposed to lean on what is known to, or shared by, the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader and to proceed towards the information which is most important. Such a disposition makes the user of the language ignore the grammatical principle of word order,[1] or, in other words, transform the grammatical word order pattern *Subject + Predicate + Object + Adjunct* in different ways to achieve particular communicative goals. The question arises whether sentence production in different languages is governed by the communicative intensions to the same extent. Lithuanian and English are particularly interesting in this respect as they differ typologically: in Lithuanian, the sentence is produced in accordance with the principle of FSP, or the communicative principle; while in English, the sentence is produced according to the grammatical principle.

In all probability, the Lithuanian grammatical word order pattern is more liable to transformation than the English grammatical pattern. This presumption, however, only raises the interest in the realization of the communicative perspective of the Lithuanian sentence in English calling for a repeated attempt at the communicative sentence analysis.

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[1] More about the principles of word order in Mathesius 1975 and Firbas 1995.

Objectives, material and method of the analysis

In attempting to investigate the realization of FSP of the Lithuanian sentence in English, the following objectives are set up:

– to determine the role of word order as a means of FSP in Lithuanian and English,
– to identify the means used to realize the functional (communicative) perspective of the Lithuanian sentence in English.

The analysis differs from other contrastive works based on FSP. It begins with the semantic description of the sentence and ends with the communicative level – a level responsible for the final shaping of the clause as a sentence.[2] The object of the study is the declarative text sentence. The focus is on the realization of the *thematic* information. The *Theme,* being responsible for the unity of the text, is responsible for the organization of the sentence at the communicative level. It is assumed that the function of the *Theme* is not unmotivated; it is determined by the speaker's/ writer's communicative intensions as well as by the requirements of cohesion. For reasons of space, this article presents the analysis of *Material Process* sentences, only, focusing on the thematization of the Participants of the Process.

The communicative sentence analysis is carried out by using two methods: descriptive analytical and contrastive. It starts with the description of the semantic structure of a Lithuanian sentence. The transition from the semantic level to the communicative level necessarily involves the syntactic level which has a pivotal role in the thematization of semantic components: the formal shape of a text sentence depends on the systemic peculiarities of the language. Having chosen a semantic component as the *Theme*, the speaker/writer makes use of the most appropriate means provided by his/her language and realizes the meaning by a particular sentence pattern.

Having revealed the communicative perspective of the Lithuanian sentence, we identify the linguistic means which are used to realize the communicative structure of the Lithuanian sentence in English.

The analysis is carried out with reference to the grammatical (basic) order of the constituents of the clause *Subject+Predicate+(Object)+(Adjunct),* the aim being to find out when the languages used the said standard and when it had to be subjected to appropriate transformations. The said pattern is treated as the syntactic deep structure which in the surface structure either repeated the order of the constituents or deviated from it.

In the course of analytical comparison, we came across many translation versions which were not marked as regards the means of FSP. Moreover, part of them did not seem adequate from the communicative point of view. Such being the case, we had to decide whether the target language had no such means or whether the translator gave preference to the context as a means of FSP and focused largely on the formal unity of the sentences.

A short description of the analysis

Participants of *Material Processes* were commonly used as *Themes*. *Agents* functioning as *Theme Proper* were exclusively assigned sentence-initial position in the Lithuanian and the corresponding

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[2] The full contrastive analysis is described in Petronienë 2007.

English sentences. This indicates that the *thematic Agents* in the two languages were realized in accordance with the communicative principle which in its own turn was realized by the grammatical word order pattern.

In the sentences with more than one *thematic* Participant, however, the realization of the *thematic* information differed in the two languages. Lithuanian demonstrated its susceptibility to the requirements of FSP and employed patterns of word order which directly reflected the order of semantic components. That is, the *thematic Affected* Participants and the *thematic Recipients* were assigned the function of the *Object* in the surface structure and shifted to preverbal position. Thus, they followed the *Agent* at *Subject* to mark their *thematic* role in extending the *Theme* of the sentence. In the corresponding English sentences, however, the pattern *Subject+Object+Predicate+(Adjunct)* was not used: the *thematic non-agentive* Participants either followed the Process in the sentence or were shifted to the beginning of the sentence, which was determined by the structural properties of the language. The *thematic* character of the Participants in postverbal position was hardly revealed by the context. Consider the following example:

(1a) *[Šitokie siuntiniai eidavo tiesioginėn Chemnico valdžion.] Chemnicas sau ir savo aptarnaujamom mergom pasiimdavo geresniąją dalį: lašinius, sviestą, cukrų, cigaretes, dešras...* (Sr. 340)

(1b) *[They (parcels) were sent straight to Chemnitz for disposal as he saw fit.] Chemnitz took the better part for himself and his mistress, choosing the bacon, butter, sugar, cigarettes, sausages…* (transl. 215)

Sentence (1b) is communicatively ambiguous in comparison to its Lithuanian counterpart, and clearly, the context does not solve the ambiguity. The English version is accurate from the grammatical point of view, but the communicative principle is violated, which means that the grammatical principle is not relevant here, and we have to make use of certain transformations. The choice of the syntactic transformation of *thematic* preposing can be grounded as follows: word for word translation is impossible because of the peculiarities of the English grammar — the sentence *Chemnitz for himself and his mistress took the better part* is not acceptable; the subjectivization of the *Beneficiary* is not felicitous in this case: the *Beneficiary* rarely becomes the *Subject* of a passive English sentence. A more appropriate version could be achieved with reference to the transformation of *thematic* preposing:

(1c) *For himself and his mistress Chemnitz took the better part, choosing the bacon, butter, sugar, cigarettes, sausages…*

The analysis of the Lithuanian sentences with *Beneficiary Themes* and their English versions shows that the use of the grammatical principle in English resulted in a text with a different meaning. *Thematic* preposing could have been used, as it was not pragmatically constrained.

The realization of the *Agents* when they served to merely extend the *Theme* of the sentence also differed in the two languages. When the function of the *Theme Proper* was undertaken by a non-agentive Participant (or the Circumstance) in Lithuanian, the *thematic Agent* followed it, thus revealing a growth of Communicative Dynamism (CD). In other words, to realize the communicative principle, Lithuanian used the pattern *Object+(Subject)+Predicate* by preposing constituents expressing *thematic* information.

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To render non-agentive Participants *Theme Proper*, English mainly subjectivized them, which means that the grammatical and communicative principles of word order were employed. An exception was only taken by the *thematic Beneficiary.* Its realization was mainly governed by the grammatical principle.

Like Lithuanian, English also resorted to the syntactic transformation of *thematic* preposing but it was not as frequent.

Worthy of note are cases when under the pressure of the grammatical principle the *thematic* Participants in English were actualized through the grammatical pattern *Subject+Predicate+Object.* The *thematicity* of Participants was mainly signalled by the context, and the perspective of the Lithuanian sentences was roughly preserved but the structure of the *Theme* of the sentence changed: the *thematic* Participant, extending the *Theme* of the Lithuanian sentence, placed at the beginning of the corresponding English sentence established a link to the preceding text more readily than the *thematic* Participant, functioning as the *Theme Proper* in the Lithuanian sentence, placed after the Process in the English sentence. In light of this, the role of transformations is particularly significant. Indeed, the relevant transformations were able to preserve not only the *thematicity* of particular semantic components but also the original *thematic* progression of the text. Consider the following examples:

(2a) *[Svarbiausios lageryje raštinės viršininkas, o vokiškai taisyklingai rašyti nemokėjo. Nuolat klausdavo kalinių – lenkų ir lietuvių – kaip kas vokiškai rašyti reikia.]* **Svarbesnius pranešimus jam vokiškai taip pat redaguodavo lenkai ir lietuviai – kaliniai.** (Sr. 245)

(2b) *[Though head of the camp's most important office, he didn't even know how to write decent German. He often had to consult Lithuanian and Polish prisoners on the proper spelling of German words.]* **Such prisoners also edited heavily his more significant announcements.** (transl. 156)

The context of sentence (2b) is not sufficient to conclude that the English sentence preserves the communicative structure of the Lithuanian sentence. In the Lithuanian sentence the *Theme* is the *Affected*. It is context-dependent. It is also the carrier of the lowest degree of CD. The Process and its *Agent* are *rhematic*. The *Agent* is also the carrier of the highest degree of CD, i.e. it is the *Rheme Proper*. In the English version, the *Agent* is presented as the *Theme*. It is Given and definite. Placed at the very beginning of the sentence, it functions as the point of departure for the message conveyed by the sentence, not as the entity towards which the sentence is perspectived. This goes to say that the grammatical principle in (2b) led to the creation of a new message. A more appropriate English variant of the Lithuanian sentence could be as follows:

(2c) *[Though head of the camp's most important office, he didn't even know how to write decent German. He often had to consult Lithuanian and Polish prisoners on the proper spelling of German words.]* **His more significant announcements were also edited heavily by such prisoners.**

The transformed sentence is more adequate not only from the point of view of their perspective but also from the point of view of text unity.

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(3a) *[1944 metais vasaros pradžioje Heidelis gavo mėnesį atostogų. Jo pavaduoti atvyko kitas gydytojas. <…> Jis atvežė naują metodą klipatoms gydyti. <…> Heidelis grįžo iš atostogų greičiau, negu reikėjo.]* **Gydytoją reformatorių** {*jis*} **pravijo. Naują gydymo metodą tuojau atšaukė.** (Sr. 147)

(3b) *[In early summer of 1944, Heidel was granted a month vacation. Another physician arrived to relieve him. <…> He brought along a new method of curing cripples. <…> Heidel returned from vacation sooner than he had to.]* **He chased out the reformist physician and immediately called off the new method of healing.** (transl. 93)

As shown in sentence (3b), the status of retrievable, or Given, information may not guarantee the Participant the status of *Theme*; at the syntactic level it may enter into a new relationship with other sentence constituents and thus function as *rhematic*. In *He chased out the reformist physician,* the focus seems to be on *physician*. Hence the English version does not unambiguously reflect the communicative structure of the corresponding Lithuanian sentence. The context alone is not sufficient to preserve the *thematic* status of the *Affected* Participant. Consider the following English variant which fully corresponds to the Lithuanian sentence in which the *Affected* is the *Theme Proper*, the *Agent* extends the *Theme* and the Process is the *Rheme*:

(3c) *[In early summer of 1944, Heidel was granted a month vacation. Another physician arrived to relieve him. <…> He brought along a new method of curing cripples. <…> Heidel returned from vacation sooner than he had to.]* **The reformist physician he chased out and the new method of healing he called off immediately.**

As is illustrated, the *thematic* preposing of the *Affected* Participants *reformist physician* and *new method of healing* in (3b) is not constrained either pragmatically or structurally. The transformation effects a greater text unity as well.

Results of the analysis

In the analyzed texts, both languages effected the thematization of Participants through subjectivization: a Participant to be thematized was assigned the syntactic function of the *Subject* and was used in sentence-initial position. Alternatively, thematization did not involve subjectivization. The two languages showed differences in the extent to which this transformation was applied.

In Lithuanian, due to the syntactic valency of the verb Participants were assigned syntactic functions other than that of the *Subject*. The thematicity of a non-*Subject* Participant was marked positionally: it was placed in sentence-initial or next-to-initial position, i.e. the transformation of *thematic* preposing was applied. The use of this transformation was in accordance with the communicative word order principle.

In English, *thematic* preposing was much less frequently used than in Lithuanian (the *Affected* Participant was thematized by the transformation of *thematic* preposing in 15% of the sentences; the *Effected* – 5%; the *Recipient* – 10%; the *Beneficiary* – 8%).[3] By contrast, subjectivization was more often used in English. As shown by the analysis, irrespective of its syntactic function, a

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[3] Petronienë 2007.

Lithuanian *thematic* Participant was realized as the *Subject* in English (the *Affected* Participant was subjectivized in 65% of the sentences; the *Effected* – 57%; the *Recipient* – 61%; the *Phenomenon* – 17%). Subjectivization was effected through passivization or through pairs of converse verbs; it also involved the semantic level of the sentence, i.e. a *thematic* Circumstance was converted into a Participant which was turned into the *Subject* used in sentence-initial position. This indicates that *thematic* Participants in English were mainly realized by the grammatical word order pattern which was determined by the communicative and the grammatical principles of word order operating in concert.

Conclusion

In the course of the analysis, we identified cases of communicative inadequacy. Such cases reflected the systemic peculiarities of the languages under investigation and the language user's ability to use his/her syntactic competence and bilingual intuition. The frequent use of the grammatical word order pattern in English points to the structural peculiarities of the language. The fact that it was not always appropriately used suggests that the translators of the analyzed sentences did not always regard the communicative principle with due respect focusing largely on formal unity and grammatical accuracy. This does not straightforwardly question the defensible status of a smooth and transparent translation but this clearly points to the phenomena which have to be carefully considered in the inquiry of the translation strategy.

The results of the analysis suggest that the translator's position must be somewhere in between the two approaches noted at the beginning of the article. Undoubtedly, a translation should not be so awkward that it is difficult to follow. However, to the extent possible, the translator should attempt to recreate his/her reading experience of the source text in the target language. Initially, for instance, the gradual rise of informativity in the sentence might seem awkward or emphatic to the English reader; however, when some inverted structure becomes the standard practice in the translation, it becomes normal for the text, and the inversion initially associated with the emphasis does not strike the reader as clumsy or unacceptable.

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The examples have been taken from:

1. Sruoga, B. 1960. *Dievų miškas.* Vilnius: Valstybinė grožinės literatūros leidykla. (Sr.)
2. Sruoga, B. 1996. *Forest of the Gods* (transl. by Byla A.). Vilnius: Vaga.

MINTIES EIGA IR ŽODŽIŲ TVARKA

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S a n t r a u k a

Šiame straipsnyje pateikiama vertimo analizė, atsižvelgiant į kalbų struktūrinius skirtingumus ir galimybes, kurias suteikia funkcinės sakinio perspektyvos (FSP) realizavimas. Pateikiami lietuvių grožinės literatūros tekstai ir jų angliškieji vertimai, siekiant nustatyti, kokią rolę funkcinės sakinio perspektyvos perteikime vaidina žodžių tvarka. Analizė atskleidžia nepanaudotų galimybių sritis, o antra vertus, ir priemones, kurios įgalina išreikšti funkcinę lietuviškojo sakinio perspektyvą, arba minties eigą, vertime.