

## STRATEGIES OF COLOUR LEXICAL UNITS' TRANSLATION IN THE TEXTS OF FASHION MAGAZINES

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*The article deals with different peculiarities of colour namings' translation into the Russian language in the texts of fashion magazines such as "MademoiZelle", "Vogue", "Cosmopolitan", "3 Suisses", "Tendances de Mode" and fashion blogs such as "Carolecellier", "Mode de Mahayanna", "Modepro". Colour naming is the unique element of the linguistic world view of all nations. In the age of advertising, when it comes to colour lexical units' translation, which aims at preservation of its original function, to increase attractiveness and maintain the brand of goods is very important. The following strategies of colour lexical units' translation are used: full and partial equivalents, translation transformations. Among the transformations one can distinguish lexical ones (generalization, meaning extension) and grammatical (transposition, replacement, addition, omission) transformations. Exact equivalents, lexical transformations of meaning extension and grammatical transformations of replacement and transposition are the most productive strategies of colour namings' translation. In a number of situations, in order to grab the attention, colour namings keep their original spelling.*

***Keywords:*** *colour naming, full equivalent, partial equivalent, lexical translation transformations, grammatical translation transformations, zero translation.*

In the age of advertising, colour lexical units' translation aims at preservation of its original function; meanwhile, to increase the attractiveness and maintain the brand of goods is very important. Colour or colour system is one of the important objects of study in psychology, physiology, psycholinguistics, culturology, philosophy, history, heraldry, semiotics, and also linguistics [Bahilina 1975; Romanova, Savina 2010; Vasilevich, Kuznetsova, Mischenko 2005; Wierzbicka 1996]. This phenomenon is of great interest, since the concept of "colour" is associated with the features of national thinking, ethnic culture identity, the development of sciences etc.

The theory of colour and colour system gets a special significance, especially nowadays – in the age of advertising. The ability to operate with colour naming in order to enhance the attractiveness of goods is a real art. In the

era of globalization and international integration colour lexical units' translation with preserving its original function is still important.

Colour naming, as a constituent part of the lexico-semantic system of the language, is least studied in translation. It should be noted that in general, the fields of basic colour terms in Russian and French are the same [Gak 1966: 225], but the French system of colour terms is much richer and more varied in its contexts [Gak 1966: 229].

A translator faces a number of difficulties during the process of translation of some colour namings. It should also be noted that in the process of colour lexical units' translation the role of context is minimal, and in the absence of clarity, a translator can easily make a mistake especially if we are talking about the translation of advertising texts or, in particular, fashion catalogues.

In A. Syrkina's, A. Priakhina's and A. Shevchenko's works [Syrkina, Priakhina 2014; Syrkina, Shevchenko 2014] advertisement communication is considered from the point of view of intercultural communication. They analyze the influence of advertisement as a social institute on the society and conduct a profound research on advertisement's social functions.

The problem of the "colour continuum" is examined in details by A. Vasilevich, S. Kuznetsova and S. Mischenko in their work "Colour and colour namings in the Russian language" (2005). As far as colour lexical units development is concerned, they believe that there are two crucial circumstances. The first is the establishment of a certain "common market" of goods and services. Second – the appearance of a catalogue selling the model [Vasilevich et al. 2005: 27]. One is to choose an item, taking into account its advertisement in a catalogue or a magazine, and the colour is evaluated as well as the item itself. The colour naming is sort of a part of the "package". A new type of colour naming has appeared: they can be called "advertising words". Their main function is to attract attention to the given colour shade but not to name it [Vasilevich et al. 2005: 28].

The authors conclude that the viability of lexical borrowings is, first of all, determined by their associative level. The number of associations of a word is closely connected to the historical and cultural traditions of the people. A strong association can be proficiently used to create a colour naming. Ignoring the association patterns, to the contrary, makes the name ineffective [Vasilevich et al. 2005: 29] and this fact is to be noted when translating.

The researchers say that in a number of cases advertisement agencies don't bother with translating the names and simply transliterate them into Russian (e.g. *амаретто, грин, игуана, санрайз*). Russian customers are not familiar with such terms and the words themselves are devoid of sense and association that were implied for the original [Vasilevich et al. 2005: 28].

A. Astakhova made a substantial contribution into the understanding of the problem of the "colour continuum" in her thesis "Colour lexical units in the

Russian language world picture” by elaborating on the topic of linguistic use of colour in advertisement [Astakhova 2014].

A. Wierzbicka has invented a “method of colour namings semantizing” based on verbalizing “prototype referents” which are associated to this or that colour in people’s minds [Wierzbicka 1996: 231–283]. The main advantage of this method is allowing to trace the dynamics of the colour naming process.

Therefore, different issues of colour naming have been the focus of linguistic research for quite some time. Nevertheless, colour namings translation requires a systematic approach comprising all the aspects of the matter.

The purpose of this article is to examine the different peculiarities of color namings’ translation into the Russian language. The material for the study is provided by French fashion magazines such as Cosmopolitan (2016–2017), MadmoiZelle (2009–2011, 2017), 3 Suisses (2016), Tendances de Mode (2007–2012) and fashion blogs such as Carolecellier (2011–2012), Mode de Mahayanna (2017), Modepro (2017).

In the process of working with fashion catalogues texts for representation of French colour namings the following translation methods have been used:

I. Full equivalents.

II. Partial equivalents.

III. Translation transformations.

**I. Full equivalents** are semantically identical. Basing on the developed terminology, let us analyze the implementation of translation techniques when rendering French colour names into the Russian language. In particular:

*Les couleurs: Les associations de couleurs secondaires (comme le vert et le rose par exemple); Violet; Rouge; Noir.* [MadmoiZelle.com. Les tendances mode printemps / été 2017] – *Цветовая гамма: Преобладание вторичных цветов (например, зеленого и розового). Модные тенденции цвета: фиолетовый, красный, черный.* (Our translation)

As French (*vert, rose, violet, rouge, noir*) and Russian (*зеленый, розовый, фиолетовый, красный, черный*) semantic fields of colour namings coincide, the translator has no problems in their translation.

*Pour porter les coloris favoris de la saison, on vous conseille d'opter pour du jaune, du vert, du bleu, du violet, du rouge... Et surtout du rose. C'est LA couleur tendance de cet hiver.* [Cosmopolitan. Quelles sont les couleurs mode de l'automne hiver 2016/2017?] – *Палитру шика и элегантности данного сезона составляют желтый, зеленый, синий, фиолетовый и красный... Обратит особое внимание: этой зимой доминирует розовый ЦВЕТ.* (Our translation)

Translation of French names of colours into Russian cannot cause any problems because the French and Russian colour namings have the same meanings.

*Tout est à appréhender du moment que ce soit... Bleu!* [3 Suisses 2016: 18] – ...ведь балом правит синий цвет! (Our translation)

This example emphasizes the use not only of denotative but also of connotative meaning in the translation. Both in French and Russian linguistic cultures blue is the colour of sky, thus it has positive word connotation.

*Du côté des couleurs punk/pop, le rouge, le blanc, le noir, le jaune et le bleu principalement.* [MadmoiZelle.com. Les tendances mode printemps été 2011] – ...Рядом с ними основные цвета панк и поп, красный, белый, черный, желтый и синий. (Our translation)

The semantics of the analyzed French colour lexemes coincides with the range of meanings of Russian ones.

*Stars de la saison, les lies de vin, lavande, rouille et autre briques s'avèrent particulièrement faciles à porter et à associer.* [Tendances de Mode. Tendances automne/hiver 2011-2012] – Прекрасно сочетаются между собой хиты сезона – винный осадок, лаванда, ржавчина и кирпич. (Our translation)

A translator has no problems in translation because the analyzed lexemes of both languages are morphologically identical (they are represented by the same part of speech – the noun).

In addition to the identity of meaning, Russian and French colour namings are represented by the same part of speech, it means that they are morphologically identical as well. For a translator it is enough to know the equivalent or to use the first dictionary meaning. Among the analyzed translations there are 61 cases of using full equivalents.

**II. Partial equivalents** may be used when for one French word there is a chain of contextual synonyms in Russian language. Some of them may not be fixed in the dictionary. As an example, let us consider some cases of the use of partial equivalents:

*le bleu délicat* – мягкий (деликатный, приглушенный, изящный) синий in the context: *Le bleu turquoise, l'indigo, le bleu vert céladon, le bleu ciel, le bleu violet, le bleu délicat, le bleu marine, le bleu camaïeu...* [3 Suisses 2016: 23] – Бирюза, индиго, селадон, небесно-голубой, сине-фиолетовый, мягкий синий, морская волна, синий камень... (Our translation)

Among all meanings of the adjective *delicat* we chose the lexeme *мягкий* because it more precisely describes the word *le bleu* (синий).

*le bleu sombre* – темно-синий (мрачный синий, глубокий синий, унылый синий, хмурый синий) in the context: *Dries Van Noten été 2007, bleu sombre, bleu dur, bleu scintillant et jaune marguerite servent la nouvelle orientation plus sport du créateur belge.* [Tendances de Mode. Eté 2007, la couleur sera tendance!] – Лето 2007 с Дрисом Ван Нотеном: темно-синий, ярко-синий, сверкающий синий и желтый ромашковый – новые тенденции в творчестве бельгийского модельера. (Our translation)

In the French language the intensity of blue colour can be emphasized with the help of the lexeme *sombre*. According to the combinability of Russian words, we use a complex meaning of two adjectives: *темно-синий*.

*le turquoise vif* – яркий (живой, сочный, резкий) бирюзовый, раскрывающийся в контексте: *Les dix couleurs les plus tendance pour l'été prochain sont: Turquoise frais : Un turquoise clair et vif...* [Modepro. Tendance couleurs 2017] – 10 самых популярных цветов следующего лета: свежий бирюзовый – бирюзовый светлый и яркий ... (Our translation)

According to the context we use the adjective *яркий*, which verbalize the sema *бирюзовый*.

In fashion magazines when translating colour namings contextual synonyms combined with certain transformations are necessary because of the divergence of the languages (for example, a word order noun + adjective in French language and vice versa in Russian). We have used partial equivalents in 49 cases.

**III.** The use of **transformations** is associated with the impossibility to establish equivalent relations between the units of 2 languages. Especially it concerns the translation of colour lexical units where the same phenomenon of reality (namely the colour) can have a name consisted of several components. On the basis of the several classifications of translation transformations [Aleekseeva 2001; Fedorov 2002; Komissarov 1999; Retsker 2007; Shetinkin 1987] we distinguish the following varieties:

A) Lexical transformations:

- 1) generalization;
- 2) concretization;
- 3) semantic development.

B) Grammatical transformations:

- 1) transposition;
- 2) replacement;
- 3) addition;
- 4) omission.

**A. Lexical transformations**

1. **Generalization** is the type of translation transformation in which the sub notion of the original text is replaced by the general notion in the translated text or something individual is replaced by the common [Aleekseeva 2001: 42]. In particular:

*Le bleu turquoise, l'indigo, le bleu vert céladon, le bleu ciel, le bleu violet, le bleu délicat...* [3 Suisses 2016: 23] – Бирюза (~~синяя бирюза~~), индиго, селадон (~~синне-зеленый селадон~~), небесно-голубой, сине-фиолетовый, мягкий синий... (Our translation)

In the linguistic view of the world of two nations, generalization, as translation method, is motivated by features of colour naming: “In French

vocabulary, the tones of colour naming are distinguished in more details, than in Russian.” [Gak 1966: 229].

*Robe sweat-shirt pêche pepsy chez Versace, vert laitue Onassis pour Marni et micro poussin chez DKNY.* [Tendances de Mode. Les couleurs flashy] – *Хлопчатобумажное платье цвета персика пепсу от Версаче, зеленый салат (зеленый-салат-латук) от Марни и цыплячий желтый от DKNY.* (Our translation)

In French the noun *laitue* (*салат-латук*) clarifies the background seme *vert* (*зеленый*). At the heart of colour naming there is “prototype referent” (the term of A. Wierzbicka) – plant. In Russian we borrow this mode, though changing the superordinate concept on the subordinate in the process of colour naming design.

In the analyzed translations there are 4 cases of the use of generalization. It should be noted that in general the generalization can be quite productive for translation of French colour namings in the Russian language. This is due to the fact that the lexical field of colour namings is much richer in French than in Russian.

2. **Concretization** is the opposite process to generalization; the general notion is replaced by a specific subnotion in translation [Shetinkin 1987: 42]. This type of transformation was not detected during the analysis of the translation of French fashion catalogues.

3. **Semantic development** (or **modulation**) is replacement of the word or word combination in the original language with a unit in the target language, the meaning of which can be derived logically from the original meaning [Komissarov 1999: 168]. The method of meaning extension is productive when translating the following French colour lexical items into the Russian language:

*Le blanc se devait de s'encanailler, de se muer en un blanc plus très blanc.* [Tendances de Mode. Le blanc, nouvelle couleur de l'hiver] – *Белый должен меняться, превращаться в белоснежный белый.* (Our translation)

Modulation method serves to express the connotative potential of colour naming. We emphasize natural colour of goods and produce the association area on the basis of colour naming, which serves to attract attention of customers.

*Toscane: un taupe tirant vers le brun.* [Modepro. Tendance couleurs 2017] – *Тоскана – темный как смоль, тяготеющий к коричневому.* (Our translation)

In the source language the metaphoric name of the colour is used – according to the colour of the animal *un taupe* (*крот*). In target language a colour is expressed by comparative phraseological unit – *темный как смоль*.

*Honey Yellow: le jaune or, la couleur ensoleillée.* [Le blog mode de Mahayanna. Couleurs] – *Honey Yellow – сияющий желтый отливает золотом.* (Our translation)

French colour namings are based on prototype referent – metal (*or* – *золото*). This colour naming is emphasized by the adjective *ensoleillée* (*солнечный*), which specifies its colour and it plays important role in emotional influence on recipient. In Russian psycholinguistic potential of French colour naming is compensated by metaphor *сияющий желтый отликает золотом*.

We have used a translation technique of semantic development in 13 cases. This transformation allows us to convey the inner form of colour namings preserving the co-occurrence range of norms of the target language.

## B. Grammatical transformations

1. **Transposition** is the changing of linear arrangement of sentence elements [Retsker 2007: 49]. The grammatical transformation of transposition may be used when transferring such color names as:

*Ayant permis au beige rosé de devenir cet été une couleur hype, la palette blush n'en finit pas de saupoudrer les toilettes de saison de ses pigments mélancoliques aux accents chicissimes...* [Tendances de Mode. Tendances automne/hiver 2009-2010] – *Еще летом в палитру красок ворвался розоватый бежевый, который по сей день обогащает гардероб тончайшими акцентами нежных румян...* (Our translation)

In the structure of Russian colour naming the element arrangement changes in comparison with French colour naming. Moreover for making the expressive implied sense we use morphological means such as suffix *-атый* (*розоватый*) that leads to the lessening of colour intensity.

*Quelques touches de rose shocking, violet magnétique ou rouge feu.* [MadmoiZelle.com. Tendances mode automne hiver 2009–2010] – *Несколько красок шокирующего розового, магнетического фиолетового или огненно-красного.* (Our translation)

Transferring the French lexical unit to the Russian language the determinants and dependent member change their places in the phrase.

*Eucalyptus: Un vert pâle doux et frais.* [Modepro. Tendances couleurs 2017] – *Эвкалипт – мягкий и свежий бледно-зеленый.* (Our translation)

French adjectives *pâle* (*бледный*), *doux* (*мягкий*), *frais* (*свежий*), that are related to the lexical unit *eucalyptus* (*эвкалипт*), make association of relieve, peace and joy. These epithets were translated but we had to change their linear arrangement in the sentence.

In the analyzed translation there are 42 cases of using of the transposition. The frequency of the application of this type of transformation is due to the fact that while translating colour namings, we are constantly confronted with differences in the arrangement of the determined and the determining.

2. **Replacement** is the process of translation, in which the grammatical unit in the original language is converted into a unit of translation with a different grammatical meaning [Komissarov 1999: 170]. While translating

colour namings, we have used replacements at the level of morphology, in particular:

*Intemporelles, gracieuses et dramatiquement hitchcockiennes, les créations d'Alber Elbaz confèrent au beige crayeux ses lettres de noblesse.* [Tendances de Mode. Tendances automne/hiver 2009–2010] – *Туалеты Альбера Эльба, бесконечно грациозные, живущие вне времени, по-хичкоковски таинственные, обращаются в благородный бежевый мел (бежевый-меловой).* (Our translation)

In the process of representation of color naming *beige crayeux* French adjective *crayeux* that is the part of it, is transforming into Russian noun *мел* due to the difference of grammar of two languages.

*Certes le vert thé, pour ne pas dire marécage, est chez certains la couleur de la robe du soir.* [Tendances de Mode. Le vert, couleur tendance en 2007] – *Разумеется, цвет зеленого чайного листа, его менее привлекательное название – болотный (белот), обретает популярность в вечерней моде.* (Our translation)

In this case the noun *marécage* is transforming into adjective *болотный*.

*Purée de tomates: Un rouge vif tirant un peu vers le rose* [Modepro. Tendances couleurs 2017] – *Томатное пюре (пюре-из-томатов) – яркий красный, тяготеющий к розовому.* (Our translation)

The grammatical transformation of replacement of French noun *tomates* by Russian adjective *томатный* has the forced character: it obliges us to adapt the original text to the norms of the target language.

In the analyzed translations, we have met grammatical transpositions in 41 cases. The most frequent cases are replacements of the parts of speech (noun – adj., noun + preposition – adj., adj – noun., adj – adv.)

3. **Addition** is expansion of original text related to the need of expression its content fully and to the grammatical differences [Aleekseeva 2001: 166]. The grammatical transformation of addition is productive in the following cases:

*Le nouveau blanc rime avec candeur, perce-neige et sweetness.* [Tendances de Mode. Le blanc, nouvelle couleur de l'hiver] – *Новые оттенки белого являются воплощением чистоты: цвет подснежника и sweetness.* (Our translation)

In the source language the new naming of the white colour tone is forming according to the colour of the plant *perce-neige* (*подснежник*). We maintain a colour nuance in translation: we give semantic equivalent of the French lexeme adding the new lexical unit *цвет*.

*...robe minimaliste, un brin militaire rose thyrien.* [3 Suisses 2016: 54] – *...короткие платья из плотной ткани цвета розовый thyrien.* (Our translation)



In the Russian language we can see the text expanded by the use of the word *цвет*. A ground for this adding is the asymmetry of ways to express grammatical meanings in the target language.

*Nougat: marron nude, la touche raffinée.* [Carolecellier. Carole Cellier, un savoir-faire à partager] – *Нуга – изысканный телесный оттенок каштана.* (Our translation)

In order to properly understand and convey the sense of the source text we had to add the lexeme *оттенок*. The reason of the use of this translation means is the lack of distinct lexical-semantic equivalents in the Russian language.

There are only 13 examples of the usage of such transformation. Analysis revealed that a translator should add the lexeme «colour» in order to translate some colour naming.

4. **Omission** – the opposite to the adding transformation where the semantically unnecessary units are omitted [Shetinkin 1987: 50]. For example:

*Le gris est aussi à revêtir sans concession, en jouant sur les nuances de tons, du gris perle au gris bitume.* [Tendances de Mode. Le blanc, nouvelle couleur de l'hiver] – *Пора снова надеть серый, играя его оттенками от жемчужного до асфальтового.* (Our translation)

French colour naming *gris* as a determined word is included in a series of word combinations (*gris perle, gris bitume*). The purpose of the determinants in these constructions is to clarify the shade of gray. It should be noted that in Russian the nuance of gray is reproduced. In the translation, the word *gris* is omitted and semantically redundant (in the original it occurs three times, in the text of the translation is once).

*Le bleu amparo: Un bleu très doux assez proche de celui des jeans.* [Modepro. Tendances couleurs 2017] – *Синий ампаро – мягкий синий, близок к джинсовому.* (Our translation)

The method of lexical omission implies the disregard in the translation of the semantic excess demonstrative pronoun *celui* (*этом*), which does not carry an important semantic load.

Such type of transformation is not so widespread: during our analysis we found only 3 examples of its usage.

The omission of some lexical units is conditioned by the context. In the case of translating colour naming taken outside of the context, such type of transformation is not so efficient.

Thus, when there is no full or partial equivalent while translating colour naming, a translator should use some of translation transformations.

Moreover, there are no difficulties for a translator when the catalogues contain colour namings in the foreign (in relation to the original) language. Foreign colour lexical units are converted to the text of the translation, while performing the function of advertising to attract attention. In the analyzed

translations there are 46 cases of “zero” translation, i.e. preserving of the foreign colour lexical unit.

*American Beauty: le rouge idéal qui donne du pep. Purple Heart: le violet, la couleur du raffinement et de la sensualité.* [Le blog mode de Mahayanna. Couleurs] – *American Beauty* – идеальный красный, заряжающий своей энергией; *Purple Heart* – изысканный и чувственный фиолетовый. (Our translation)

In the translation we can clearly see mechanical transfer of culture-specific elements that are unknown for Russian people: *American Beauty* and *Purple Heart*. The purpose of this translation method is to turn buyer’s attention to this colour naming.

Figure 1. Quantitative analysis of translation transformations.

Translation transformation	Frequency of use	Frequency of use (%)
Transposition	42	36,2
Replacement	41	35,3
Semantic development	13	11,2
Addition	13	11,2
Generalization	4	3,4
Omission	3	2,7
TOTAL	116	100

*Nomad: à mi-chemin entre le gris clair et le beige. Burnt Sienna: un orangé à l’allure d’un coucher de soleil automnal. Rapture Rose: un délicieux mélange de fuchsia et de rose pâle* [Le blog mode de Mahayanna. Couleurs]. – *Nomad* – нечто среднее между светло-серым и бежевым; *Burnt Sienna* – оранжевый, напоминающий осенние закаты; *Rapture Rose* – восхитительный микс фуксии и бледно-розового. (Our translation)

In order to strengthen pragmatic effect of colour naming on receiver, we add some English words in Russian text: *Nomad*, *Burnt Sienna*, *Rapture Rose*.

So, the majority of colour namings are translated with the help of exact, full equivalents in the texts of French fashion catalogues. This is due to the fact that French colour world view is similar to the Russian one: the same colours have got definite established names. Partial equivalents are used if there is a qualitative adjective with the colour naming. Then, on the basis of the context, a translator chooses one of the most suitable synonyms that is fully appropriate for the given text. Finally, a translator can use translation transformations when it is impossible to translate colour namings with the help of other means of translation.

Grammatical transpositions and replacements are the most popular translation strategies because grammar systems in French and in Russian are not

the same. The use of meaning extension is determined by the desire to accurately convey the meaning while using a different form. Additions help to make colour namings in Russian according to the pattern “colour...”.

To sum up, we can draw a conclusion: for most cases it was enough just to find the full equivalent of the foreign colour naming. However, it is possible only when it refers to the basic colour naming or some simple colours. Also we use partial equivalents if we have an opportunity to choose one among many contextual synonyms. Finally, there are lexical and grammatical transformations, especially a lot of transpositions and replacements. Moreover, in some cases colour namings keep their original spelling in order to focus attention on designers’ brand.

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