

**CULTURAL AND TEMPORAL SPECIFICS OF LEXIS IN RUSSIAN FICTION:
ASPECTS OF ENGLISH TRANSLATION (IN CASE OF 'A COUNTRY DOCTOR'S
NOTEBOOK' BY M.A. BULGAKOV)**

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Abstract. *The article researches specifics of temporal and cultural markers of Russian work of literature 'A Country Doctor's Notebook' by M.A. Bulgakov and its' English translation. Elicited lexical units fall into thematic groups: person, artifact, actions, diseases and place. The part-of-speech classification followed and revealed prevailing nouns. Further stage involved the study of immediate context of the units.*

Keywords: *cultural marker, temporal marker, medical discourse, Bulgakov, corpora, modifier.*

The subject of our research were the words and phrases which are marked with cultural and temporal specifics in the English translation of the cycle of short stories 'A Country Doctor's Notebook'[1] by Mikhail Afanasyevich Bulgakov (1925-26) performed by Michael Glenny [2] (1975). The aim is to study and justify the use of borrowings, idioms to explain the plot of the work. The goal defines the objectives of the study: 1) to select the words in Russian text and their translation in English; 2) to perform etymological classification of the units under study; 3) to classify the units under study into thematic groups; 4) to find synonyms for the lexis with cultural and temporal specifics; 5) to analyze the frequency of synonyms; 6) to determine which parts of speech are most often borrowed.

At the first stage (I) of our work, 20 words and expressions were selected from M. Bulgakov's original work and their translations were found in an adaptation by Michael Glenny (1975). For example, **feldsher-фельдшер**, **mustard plaster-горчичник**, **fel-low-голубчик**, **speckled rash-звездная сыть**, **mottled chest-мраморная грудь**, **footcloths-портянки**, **flannel shawl-байковый платок**, **lived under a Sword of Damocles-меч повис над головой**, **clerk-конторщик**, **nearby town-уездный город**, **washtub-корыто**, **sheepskin-шуба**, **driver-возница**, **gave a gold metal-озолотить**, **rouble-**

целковые, sexton-дьячок, wretched outcast-выброшен за борт, mattress-сенник, samovar-самовар, corn-chandler's store-лабаз.

The second stage (II) involved the etymological analysis of words. In the course of which were identified 11 words of the Middle English, 2 Old English words, 3 words of Russian origin. For example, **feldsher**, the medical or surgical practitioner without full professional qualifications or status in Russia. The word from German Feldscher- 'field' which means an expanse of open or cleared ground + 'to shear' with meaning to remove by or as if by cutting or clipping with a sharp instrument; **rouble**, the basic monetary unit of Russia. Old Russian rublĭ literally, but over time there was a reduction in the word; **samovar-** a metal urn, used especially by Russians for heating water for making tea. Word consists of two components 'samo-' self (or same) + '-var', noun derivative of varit' to cook, boil), and 1 word originally from Persia, 2 Russian and 1 idiom of both Russian and English.

The third stage (III) included the selection of the words and phrases, which are marked with cultural and temporal specifications. Cultural markers were determined in 4 words (feldsher, footcloths, samovar, corn-chandler's store) and temporally marked – that is, out of use 2 words (washtub, tselkovykh).

The next stage (IV) was marked by the selection of synonyms for the lexis under study [3, 4, 5, 6, 7]. For each word or expression were selected words that could replace them in the context of the translation. As for example, the word '**feldscher**' can be replaced by *medical assistant; paramedic; medical orderly; first-aid man*, which are more familiar to the English-speaking readers.

The fifth stage (V) was based on the identification of the frequency of words in the translation of Michael Glenny and synonyms, found at stage IV. By using the tool

<https://books.google.com/ngrams>, the analysis of the use of all the above words was carried out (see Figure 1) and revealed that since 1970 and nowadays the word '**paramedic**' is the most common. At the same time, it should be noted that the term '**medical assistant**', comes second in the application frequency, has been known since 1775, so its use in this context would look more harmonious. Each word and its synonym were analyzed in this program. The table (Table 1) shows in bold italics the most frequently used word in literary works.

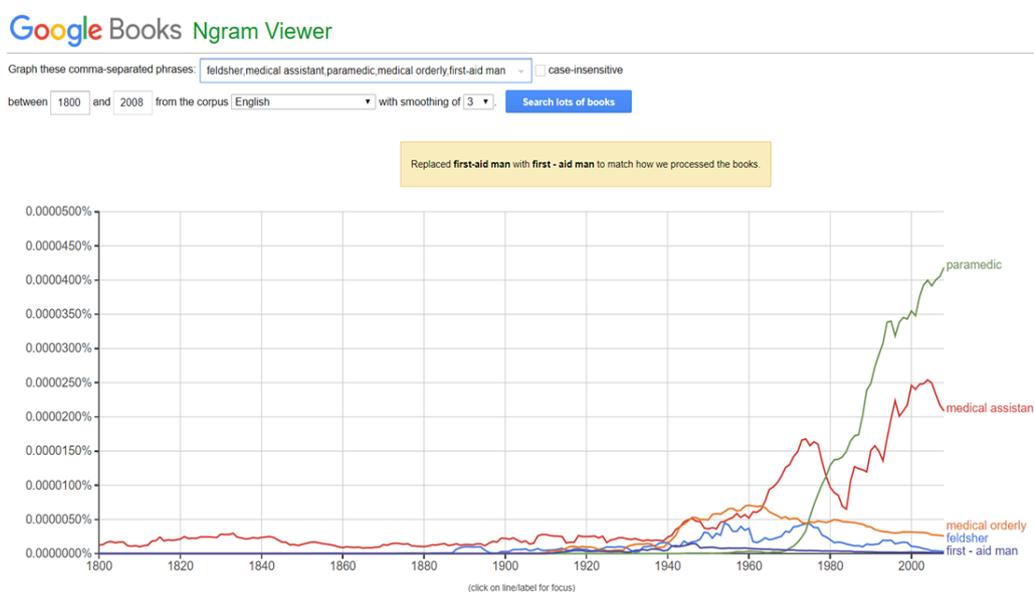


Figure 1. The frequency of synonyms to the word «feldscher»

Table 1. The synonyms for the lexical units marked with cultural and temporal features

Lexical unit	Synonym
Feldsher	Medical assistant , paramedic, medical orderly, first-aid man.
Mustard plaster	Sinapisms
Fellow	Honey, dear, comrade, colleague, companion, associate
The speckled_rash	The star rash
Mottled chest	Marble chest
Foot-cloths	-
Flannel shawl	Handkerchief
She lived under a Sword of Damocles	Danger, risk , hazard
Clerk	Officeman, secretary, office worker
Nearby town	District city, county town, district town
Washtub	Tub, pan
Sheepskin	Fur coat, fur
Driver	Charioteer, teamster
Gave a gold metal	Get rich
Rouble	Tselkovyh
Sexton	Sacristan, lector
Wretched outcast	Irrelevance, uselessness
Mattress	Sennik
Samovar	Container, jar , vase
Corn-chandler's store	Shed

Since 1840, the popularity of the idiom 'Sword of Damocles' increases every year, but all its synonyms 'danger', 'risk', 'hazard' are used much more often. The term 'clerk' is used more often than its synonyms 'office man', 'office worker'. 'Sheepskin' and its synonym 'fur coat' in the literature occur with the same frequency, in contrast to the word 'fur', which is the leader in frequency of use. The word 'driver' compared with its synonyms (charioteer, teamster) is found several times more often and every year it is only gaining popularity. The idiom 'gave a gold metal' is rarely used in works; it is replaced with the phrase 'get rich'.

The use of the word 'rouble' in literature is many times more frequent than its synonym 'tselkovyh'. At the time of writing and translating the book, the word 'sexton' was used more often than 'sacristan' and 'lector'. The translation of the Russian idiom 'wretched outcast' is less used than its synonyms such as 'irrelevance', 'uselessness'. At the same

time, other borrowing 'samovar' almost not used in the literature, replaced by 'container', 'jar', 'vase'. 'Corn-chandler's store' is virtually non-existent in literature, with the word 'shed' usually appearing in its place.

The sixth stage (VI) of the research has focused on part-of-speech classification [8], in which there have been three expressions (lived under a Sword of Damocles, gave a gold metal, wretched outcast), 4 adjectives (mustard, speckled) and 13 nouns (feldsher, fellow, corn-chandler's store).

During the seventh stage (VII), modifiers were considered before the words of cultural and temporal coloring [9, 10]. For comparison, fragments of the book and the site <https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/> [11], which highlights the search word in newspapers, magazines and books, were used.

In Glenn's translation, a book most often has possessive pronoun or no modifier in front of it. In the case of the corpora adjectives are most often used.

Table 2. The modifiers in pre-position to culturally and temporally labeled words

	Lexical unit	The corpora
Cultural labeled words		
feldsher	<p>1. <u>Possessive pronoun</u> My feldsher was called Demyan Lukich, the midwives were Pelagea Ivanovna and Anna Nikolaevna.</p> <p>2. - 'Yes ...' the feldsher pronounced softly and that was all he said.</p> <p>3. <u>Numeral</u> It had a Medical Superintendent, three interns (beside myself), several feldshers, midwives, nurses, a dispensary and a laboratory.</p>	<p>1. <u>Proper name</u> News Analysis, March 27), I'm very glad the government check <i>Riva</i> Feldsher is receiving will stop in 90 days.</p> <p>2. <u>Proper name</u> Her sister should maintain <i>Riva</i> Feldsher</p>
foot-cloths	<p>1. <u>Possessive pronoun</u> I can clearly picture him unwrapping <i>his</i> foot-cloths and looking for sympathy.</p>	-
corn-chandler's store	<p>1. <u>Adjective</u> we were at the <i>last</i> corn-chandler's store on the outskirts of the remarkable town of Grachyovka</p>	-
Temporal labeled words		
washtub	<p>1. - I was sitting naked in the washtub with a lathered head.</p> <p>2. - I sat down again in the washtub and opened the letter.</p>	<p>1. <u>Adjective</u> and a large, <i>empty</i> washtub</p> <p>2. <u>Adjective</u> Aaron started lugging the dented <i>zinc</i> washtub</p> <p>3. - Washing a washtub</p>
roubles	<p>1. <u>Numeral</u> <i>Twenty</i> roubles a month</p>	<p>1. <u>Numeral</u> The hussar handed him twenty-<i>five</i> roubles for the visit</p> <p>2. <u>Preposition</u> its staff had been paid <i>in</i> roubles</p> <p>3. <u>Numeral</u> to stagger more than <i>ten billion</i> roubles</p>

In the course of the study of the translation of the work the conclusions were made:

1. Words that are difficult to translate into English were not only truly Russian, there were also words originally from Germany and Persia.

2. The use of the words chosen by the translator Glenny is less than their synonyms

we have chosen in literary sources. This may be due to the desire to give the translation feeling of the last century.

3. For the 6 found culturally and temporally colored words, a search for modifiers was conducted, which revealed the prevalence of pronouns and adjectives.

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КУЛЬТУРНАЯ И ТЕМПОРАЛЬНАЯ СПЕЦИФИКА ЛЕКСИКИ В РУССКОЙ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ: АСПЕКТЫ ПЕРЕВОДА НА АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК (НА ПРИМЕРЕ ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЯ «ЗАПИСКИ ЮНОГО ВРАЧА» М.А. БУЛГАКОВА)

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Аннотация. В статье рассматривается специфика темпоральной и культурной маркированности лексики в русскоязычных художественных произведениях и их передачи при переводе на английский язык. В частности изучается произведение «Записки юного врача» М.А. Булгакова. Рассматриваемые единицы составляют ряд тематических групп: лицо, артефакт, действия, болезни и место. Частеречная классификация выявила преобладание однословных существительных. Далее был изучен ближайший лексико-синтаксический контекст исследуемого материала.

Ключевые слова: культурная маркированность, темпоральная маркированность, медицинский дискурс, Булгаков, корпус, модификатор.