Semantic And Syntactic Losses in the English Translation of Allende’s Zorro

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Translation

Why should we study translation?

- Cultural Lessons
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
Lexicon

1. poor translations
2. altered meanings / interesting choices
3. not translated
   ‣ titles, places, foods
   ‣ borrowed words
   ‣ explained in text
1. Poor Translations

- “Furthermore, he was riding a horse that must have cost an eye from his head”
- “Además, montaba un caballo que le debe haber costado un ojo de la cara”
  - Why not an arm and a leg?
2. Interesting Translations

- “Once in a while one of them breached, falling gracefully back into the water”
- “De pronto, alguna se levantaba en el aire, daba una vuelta de tirabuzón, y caía con gracia”
3. Not Translated

- Titles, Places, Foods
- Borrowed words
- Explained in text
3. Not Translated

• Titles, Places, Food:

  • “I will speak with Don Juan Alcázar, but I doubt he will listen”
  • “Hablaré con don Juan Alcázar, pero dudo que me escuche”

• Borrowed Words:

  • “He greeted the old man with a deep bow, sweeping the cobblestones with his California sombrero”
  • “Lo saludó con una profunda inclinación, barriendo el empedrado con el sombrero”
3. Not Translated

- Explained in Text:
  
  
  "...would be at la Cruz de Las Calaveras with horses. This was a crossroads where two bandits had been hanged; their skulls, the calaveras, bleached by the rain and sun, were mounted on a wooden cross"

- "The nuqueadores, fabulous horsemen able to kill a steer by planting a dagger in the nape of its neck while riding at full tilt, were the kings of the roundup and tended to be signed up a year in advance"
Syntax

1. Adjectives
2. Pronouns
3. Subject / Null subject
They signal the presence of the living dead, Christian sailors who have drowned in attacks by Turkish pirates

Son marineros cristianos que naufragaron en asaltos de piratas turcos

...stirring up the sea with their impassioned leapings

...agitaban el mar con sus apasionados coletazos
2. Pronouns

• Se
• Le
“Logró captar la atención de los menos intoxicados y se formó un círculo a su alrededor, mientras las mujeres aprovechaban la distracción para recoger sus ropas y alejarse deprisa. Diego se vio rodeado de restros abotagados por el licor, ojos inyectados en sangre, bocas desdentadas que lo insultaban, zarpas que ya echaban mano de cuchillos. No les dio tiempo de organizarse.”
• Passive:

• “He gained the attention of the least intoxicated, and they formed a circle around him”

• “Logró captar la atención de los menos intoxicados y se formó un círculo a su alrededor”
Inchoative:

“...while the women used the distraction to pick up their clothes and **run**”

“...mientras las mujeres aprovechaban la distracción para recoger sus ropas y **alejarse deprisa**”
Inchoatives*:  

“Diego looked around at the puffy faces”  

“Diego se vio rodeado de restros abotagados por el licor”  
  ‣ “found himself surrounded”
Becoming:

“He did not give them time to organize”

“No les dio tiempo de organizarse.”
Le

- “...the privileges that **were his** by birth”
- “...los privilegios que **le correspondían** por nacimiento”
  - these are lost in translation
3. Null Subject

- “Diego found, to his delight, that his eloquence produced collective terror. He told his tales at night, after dinner…”
- “Comprobó, encantado, que su elocuencia producía pavor colectivo. Contaba sus suentos de noche, después de la cena…”
- “I suppose it must be because you saved her from marrying Moncada”
- “Supongo que debe de ser porque la salvaste de casarse con Moncada”
Conclusion

- What did we learn?
- What do we still have to learn?
Want to Learn More?

‣ Spanish Department Presentation
  ‣ May 6th, 2014 at 11:00am
  ‣ MURK G17