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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ISO 9000:2015 TERMINOLOGY AND ITS RUSSIAN TRANSLATION

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Abstract: The article presents the findings of the comparative analysis of ISO 9000:2015 terminology and its Russian translated version. The paper discusses the difficulties of translating the system of terms and studies how well it is rendered from English into Russian in respect of its semantic, conceptual and structural dimensions.

Keywords: Terminology, translation, system of terms, semantics, conceptual framework, ISO 9000:2015, GOST R ISO 9000-2015

1. Introduction

In recent years, English has asserted itself as a source language for borrowing terms into other languages. Apart from single terms, certain fields of knowledge and subsequently their terminological systems are transplanted from English into other languages. Russification of certain areas of human activity has led to borrowing a number of terminological systems into the

Russian language. The terminology of Quality Management System (QMS) is one of those newly acquired systems. Developed by the Technical Committee 176 of the International Standardization Organization, it is described and defined in ISO 9000, which has seen five editions since 1987. In Russia, the first translated version was released in 2001, with two subsequent versions published in 2008 and 2015. The paper presents the comparative analysis of the terminology from the most recent version ISO 9000:2015 and its Russian analogue referred to as GOST R ISO 9000-2015.

The interest towards the QMS terminology is justified by the pronounced dissatisfaction of Russian professional community with the terminology, which is reflected in a series of articles with self-evident titles: “Faulty Terminology as a Threat to Security” by Dr. A. Bukrinsky, who challenges the appropriateness and applicability of certain QMS terms in the sphere of nuclear energy use (Bukrinsky, A.M., 2013: 84); “ISO 9000 Principles and Terminology and the Crisis of their Use” by Prof. V. U. Ogvozdin, who questions the adequacy of certain terminological definitions (Ogvozdin, V. U., 2013: 28); and the article by Prof. M. Bazhutina and I. Bazhutin (Bazhutin, I. A., Bazhutina, M.M., 2016: 80), which discusses the coexistence in the Russian language of the two equivalents of the term *management* -- *управление* (of Russian origin) and *менеджмент* (borrowed from English via transcribing). The variation in the terms denoting the field under consideration signals the lack of order and consistency in the terminology. The National Standard GOST R 9000 prescribes the borrowed equivalent, while other regulatory documents (such as Guidelines on Developing Regulations on Quality Management System) favour the term of the Russian origin.

2. Objectives/Purpose of the study

The objective of the present study is to carry out comparative analysis of the English QMS terminology and its

Russian equivalent, to assess the level of consistency of the Russian system of terms, and to identify the challenges and constraints related to its translation from the English language.

3. Methodology

The methods involved in the study are comparative analysis, quantitative analysis, as well as semantic and syntagmatic analysis of the terminology under consideration.

4. Result/Findings

The comparative analysis of the 138 terms of the English terminology, their Russian equivalents and the corresponding definitions, reveals that translating a system of terms from English into Russian results in lack of coherence caused by lexical and syntagmatic asymmetry, lengthening of a terminological unit, lack of consistency of the Russian terminology to conceptual framework due to translation inaccuracies, and distortion caused by additional associations of Russian equivalents.

4.1. Lack of coherence due to lexical and syntagmatic asymmetry

The lexical unit “*quality*” as a key element of the terminological system forms part of a number of attributive compounds (as the first component), thus ensuring order and clarity in the group of terms referring to quality in the English terminology: *quality management, quality manual, quality plan, quality planning, quality assurance, quality control, quality improvement, quality characteristic, quality policy, quality requirement, quality objective*. In the process of translation, the structural differences in the two languages cause asymmetry due to the fact that the first element in attributive compounds is rendered into the Russian language in a number of ways, given the semantic and structural interrelation between the elements. For instance, in the material under consideration the element *quality* is rendered with a noun

in the genitive case (*quality plan* → план качества, *quality management* → менеджмент качества, *quality improvement* → улучшение качества), a noun in the instrumental case (*quality control* → управление качеством), a noun with a preposition (*quality manual* → руководство по качеству, *quality requirement* → требование к качеству), with the addition of the phrase «в области (*in the field of*)» (*quality objective* → цель в области качества, *quality policy* → политика в области качества). As a result, in terms of their structure, the Russian equivalents do not form an orderly system of terms; moreover, in certain instances they are not as concise as the original English terms, since in the process of translation the number of elements in the terminological compound increases.

The English terminology of Quality Management System as opposed to its Russian translated equivalent is well established, which manifests itself in the fact that a number of multi-compound terms have gained wide currency in their abbreviated form. For instance, the term *DRP-provider* is an entry of ISO 9000:2015, while the full version of the term (*dispute resolution process provider*) is provided only in the definition. The Russian standard includes the non-abbreviated term «провайдер процесса урегулирования спорных вопросов», and provides its abbreviation in parenthesis «ПУСВ-провайдер» (it should be noted that the viability of the abbreviation is doubtful due to the structure and sound of the acronym in Russian).

Coherence and consistency, guaranteed by lexical means, are also typical of the English QMS terminology. It is ensured by both morphological means (*auditor-auditee, compare to the Russian equivalent: аудит – проверяемая организация*) and with the help of compounds which reflect the generic relations between the elements (***audit***: *combined audit -- joint audit*; ***requirement***: *quality requirement -- statutory requirement -- regulatory requirement*).

4.2. Conciseness of a term – requirement difficult to fulfil in the context of translation

Traditionally one of the basic requirements to terminology is conciseness of a term, since short terms are more convenient to use. At the present stage of human development this requirement is not primary (since adding new attributes to the previously described objects and phenomena is inevitable (Averbukh, K.Ya., 2004: 156)), but conciseness is still preferable. The comparative analysis of the original English terminology and the Russian translated equivalents reveal the increase of the term's length of the latter, e.g. *dispute* – *спорный вопрос*, *dispute resolver* – *представитель по урегулированию спорных вопросов*, *metrological confirmation* – *метрологическое подтверждение пригодности*. Overall, 14% of terms are rendered with a term that consists of more elements than the original, which can be explained by the syntagmatic norms of the Russian language (*quality management system consultant* – *консультант по системе менеджмента качества*, *configuration authority* – *полномочия по конфигурации*, *product configuration information* – *информация о конфигурации продукции*) and lexical asymmetry (*performance* – *результаты деятельности*, *feedback* – *обратная связь*, *scrap* – *перевод в отходы*, *concession* – *разрешение на отклонение*).

4.3. Lack of consistency of the Russian terminology to conceptual framework due to translation inaccuracies

Linguistic coherence and consistency in terminology are desirable, but difficult to achieve when the system of terms is transplanted from one language into another via translation. However, the consistency of the terminology to conceptual framework is essential. Prof. A. S. Gherd points out that “modelling knowledge and building terminological systems are two sides of the same process, namely, building the model of knowledge (Gherd, A.S., 1988: 117).” Translating terminology involves the risk of deficiency of borrowed terminology in respect of its con-

ceptual consistency. Since the QMS terminology was not designed and modelled in the Russian language, but is a result of translation, there are some instances of conceptual incoherence within the system of terms represented in GOST R ISO 9000-2015. For example, the English term *activity*, that forms part of the subsystem “*project management*”, and defined as *smallest identified object of work in a project*, is rendered through the word “*действие*”. At the same time in the two interrelated English terms *preventive action* (*action to eliminate the cause of potential nonconformity or other potential undesirable situation*) and *corrective action* (*action to eliminate the cause of a nonconformity and to prevent recurrence*) the element *action* is also translated as “*действие*”: “*предупреждающее действие*” and “*корректирующее действие*”. Using one Russian word for two English terms leads to misconception about the logical relations between the notions “*действие*” (*activity*) – “*предупреждающее действие*” (*preventive action*) – “*корректирующее действие*” (*corrective action*), which is not true to the original.

The Standard features the term *design and development*, which is properly rendered into Russian through “*проектирование и разработка*». The notes to the term *project* – *проект*, however include the lexical item *project’s organization*, which is described as temporary, established for the lifetime of the project, and translated with a calque as “*проектная организация*”, the term traditionally defined in the Russian language as a company responsible for design and development. This can be exemplified with the following context from the Russian Language National Corpus: *Иностранные компании действительно участвуют в проектировании, но также участвуют и наши организации: Мосинжпроект, проектная организация метрополитена "Метростиль"*. Bilingual dictionaries, such as ABBYY Lingvo, provide the terms *developer* and *design organization* as equivalents for “*проектная организация*”. Thus, distortion in translation leads

to vague perception of the triad “*проектирование-проект-проектный*”.

Another instance that contributes to the lack of coherence and adequacy in the Russian QMS terminology concerns rendering the term *grade*, meaning *category or rank given to different requirements for an object*, through the Russian term “*градация*”. The Russian lexical item *градация* does not signify a category or grade, but rather a sequencing and placing in succession: “*последовательность, постепенность в расположении чего-либо, при переходе от одного к другому*” (Russian Explanatory Dictionary by С.И. Ozhegov and N. U. Shvedova). The situation is aggravated by the presence in ISO 9000 of the term *regrade* defined as “*alteration of the grade of a nonconforming product or service in order to make it conform to requirements differing from the initial requirements*”. The translator, following the logic of their previous choice in respect of the term *grade*, renders *regrade* through “*изменение градации*” (literally change of a sequencing).

4.4. Distortion due to additional associations of Russian equivalents

Distortion and inconsistency may be caused by additional associations and connotations of the Russian equivalent of an English term. For example, the original standard includes the term *human factor*, defined as “*characteristic of a person having an impact on an object under consideration*”. The term is translated into Russian with the word combination “*человеческий фактор*” whose definition in printed dictionaries is close to the one in the standard: “*роль и значение человека в общественной жизни, в социальных процессах; все то, что связано в этих процессах с человеком как субъектом деятельности*” (Russian Explanatory Dictionary by С.И. Ozhegov and N. U. Shvedova). Nevertheless, we should not overlook the fact that in recent years the compound “*человеческий фактор*” has gained a new meaning and connotation, which is registered in online dic-

tionaries (Electronic Dictionary dic.academic.ru) – “возможность принятия человеком ошибочных или алогичных решений в конкретных ситуациях, объяснение ошибками людей причин катастроф и аварий, повлёкших за собой убытки или человеческие жертвы” (in the English language this meaning is conveyed through the term *human error*). If we refer to the National Corpus of the Russian Language, the enquiry “человеческий фактор” produces 130 documents and 159 entries. The derogatory meaning of the lexical item is realized in about 50% of the entries. The most common collocation of the Russian term is “пресловутый” [notorious], the lexical item most often collocates with the verbs “нивелировать” [counteract], “устранить” [eliminate], “исключить” [avoid], “списать на” [blame for], “упираться в” [run into], “споткнуться о” [stumble]. In its immediate context it is surrounded with the words “слабое звено” [weak link], “причина аварий” [cause of accident], “вина” [guilt], “сложиться не так” [fail], “несмотря на” [no matter], etc. Thus, it is evident that through translation the term gains an unwanted additional meaning, alien to the original. Moreover, the Russian term does not meet one of the essential requirements to a term that it should be neutral and free of additional associations.

Overall, the evidence presented above suggests that asymmetry between the two languages and inaccuracies in translation lead to the lack of coherence and conceptual consistency of the translated Russian terminology.

5. Conclusion

While translation might be a way to harmonize and internationalize a terminology, and thus ensure cross-language equivalence, the comparative analysis of the ISO 9000:2015 terminology and its Russian version GOST R 9000-2015 reveals that the latter is inferior to the original with respect to its coherence, linguistic and conceptual consistency, as well as conciseness of the term.

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