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**Выпускная квалификационная работа**

**Language of social status and role as a translation problem (based on literary translation from Russian into English) / Перевод языковых репрезентаций социально-ролевых отношений как лингвокультурологическая проблема (на материале переводов художественной литературы с русского языка на английский)**

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## Introduction

This research studies the ways of conveying information about the social statuses and communicative roles of characters in translations of fiction from Russian into English.

When addressing complexities of translating fiction, a well-known English-to-Russian translator Viktor Petrovich Golyshev mentioned challenges inherent in conveying the communicative distance between characters. He pointed out that English fictional characters appear to maintain a greater communicative distance in their interactions as compared to corresponding Russian characters in translations, and this communicative distance does not translate well into Russian.

As noted by V. P. Golyshev, there seems to be “a screen of coldness” between characters of English works of fiction [Golyshev 2010: 11:50]. Indeed, the norms and expression of communicative distance differ across linguistic communities. Therefore, such aspects as social status, communicative role and communicative distance are represented by unique vocabulary, grammar structures, and types of utterances in each culture.

The difficulties involved in conveying the communicative distance between the characters are linked to specific cultural and historical social scripts. In many translated works, the information about the communicative distance between characters, their social status and communicative roles, is simply omitted because it is not crucial for communicating the author’s central message. Thus, in order to explore translations of such information, it is useful to conduct an analysis of characters’ utterances in works of fiction where the social statuses and communicative roles of characters are in the focus of the author’s attention.

Many works of fiction of the early Soviet era, such as works by M.A. Bulgakov and M.M. Zoshchenko, fall under this category. The analysis would provide valuable insights into the challenges of rendering social statuses, communicative roles, and the intended communicative distance of the characters in the context where this information cannot be omitted in the translation.

**The relevance** of the research is determined by the fact that it is carried out in compliance with modern pragmatic and sociolinguistic studies of literary translation.

The **novelty** of the research. The research examines the translation strategies for conveying the language of social status and role in texts where the information about social status and role is the main theme and is, therefore, a translation priority. The work develops new translation-oriented ways of examining the linguistic expression of social status and communicative role.

**Theoretical framework.** The research approach is based on Language and Culture studies (Larina, Brown and Levinson, Wierzbicka); Sociolinguistics (Karasik, Krysin, Bell, Leech); Translation studies (Retzker, Alexeyeva, Fedorov, Komissarov, Barkhudarov).

**The subject** of the study is the linguistic expression of social status and communicative role in English translations of Russian fiction.

**The focus** is on the translation strategies applied by English translators to convey the Russian meanings associated with social status and communicative role.

The primary **aim** of this study is to investigate the ways in which linguistic expressions of social status and communicative role are translated from Russian into English without losing the meaning, nuance, and voice of the original text.

With regard to this aim, the study will pursue the following **objectives**:

1. To study translation equivalence in literary translation.
2. To identify the means of linguistic representation of the social status and communication role of characters, and of the interplay between them, in works of fiction.
3. To investigate ways of translating information about the social status and communication role of characters, and about the interplay between them.
4. To describe the artistic originality of the works of M.M. Zoshchenko and M.A. Bulgakov

5. To analyze the translation of various linguistic markers of social status and communicative role.

The following **methods** will be applied: comparative analysis, translation analysis, definition analysis, semantic analysis, and component analysis

For the analysis, the following **data sources** will be used:

1. Original texts by M. A. Bulgakov, M. M. Zoshchenko;
2. English translations of the texts under investigation.

**The theoretical significance** of the research lies in its contribution to the field of translation studies. By exploring the relationship between language and social status in literary works and analyzing the challenges of translating this aspect into English, the research can offer insights into the complexities of translation and shed light on the importance of considering social and cultural factors in the translation process.

**The practical significance** of the research lies in its potential to identify and systematize the techniques used by literary translation experts to convey the information about the communicative distance between characters, their social status and communicative roles from Russian into English. The results can also be applied in practical classes on literary translation.

**The main theses to be defended:**

1. The social status and communication role of characters, and the interplay between them in literary works are expressed in the character's direct and indirect speech, author's remarks, comments from other characters, addresses, titles, and impositive utterances. These elements are crucial for conveying the social dynamics and roles within the narrative in translation.

2. Translating the artistic originality of M. M. Zoshchenko and M. A. Bulgakov's works, particularly their intricate depictions of social roles and communicative behaviors, presents significant challenges. These challenges are rooted in conveying the complex social dynamics of post-revolutionary Russia, where a new social hierarchy was being established.

3. Translations at the lexical level, which includes noun groups and terms of imposition, from Russian into English manage to convey the narrator's dissociation from the groups. However, they often fail to preserve diminutive, pejorative, and informal connotations. It results in the elevation of the narrator's social status and shifts in the nuances of the communicative role.

4. Translations at the pragmatic level, which include impositive utterances, often result in milder imposition due to changes in syntax, the addition of modality, and the use of more formal language. It increases the social distance between the speakers and mitigates the strength of the imposition in the utterance.

5. The most common level of equivalence found in translations is the level of the situation, with fewer translations achieving the level of description of situation or the level of lexical correspondence. While translations generally fully render the content of the proposition (the agents and their actions), they often fail to preserve the nuanced impositive force, leading to shifts in the social status and communicative roles of the characters in translation.

The **structure** of the research. The thesis includes an introduction, two chapters (theoretical and practical), conclusions, a list of references (56 items, including 37 works in Russian and 19 works in English). The total number of pages in the thesis is 103.

The **number of examples** analyzed in the thesis is 50 (21 for linguistic representation of social groups, 14 for terms of imposition, and 15 for impositive utterances).

## **Chapter 1. Social and Role Relations as a Subject of Translation Studies**

### **1.1. Translation Equivalence in Literary Translation**

#### **1.1.1. The Concept of Translation Equivalence**

The most important task of translation theory is to identify linguistic and extralinguistic factors that make it possible to match the content of messages in different languages. The study of the actual interrelation between the content of the original and its translation enables researchers to establish the maximum possible semantic proximity between texts in different languages. It also allows for the determination of the minimum proximity to the original required for a text to be recognized as an equivalent translation.

The term “equivalent” was first used in relation to human translation by R. O. Jakobson in 1959 [Jakobson 1959: 233]. Changes in the understanding of equivalence reflect the evolution of views on the nature of translation activities. In 1974, Ya. I. Retsker noted that an equivalent should be considered a constant, context-independent correspondence [Retsker 2007: 13]. He proposed a theory of regular correspondences, which defined equivalence strictly in terms of connections between textual units, disregarding intertextual connections.

Ya. I. Retsker's theory of regular correspondences contrasts with Eugene Nida's concept of dynamic equivalence. At first glance, it might appear that Retsker focuses solely on the aspect of equivalence that Nida identifies as formal. However, this view is an oversimplification, as the key difference between their theories lies in the foundational principles they use to construct typologies of equivalence.

Eugene Nida, in his theory, emphasizes the importance of achieving a specific communicative effect in the translation process. He focuses on the impact the translated text has on the reader. E. Nida distinguishes between dynamic and formal equivalence: dynamic equivalence aims at the emotional and cognitive impact on the audience, while formal equivalence strives for a strict correspondence between the structures of the original and the translation [Nida

1974: 14]. For Nida, external factors, such as the audience's perception and response, play a crucial role in the translation process.

In contrast, Ya. I. Retsker places emphasis on the utterance itself as the basis for determining equivalence. He argues that translators should primarily rely on the original text; analyze and interpret its content, structure, and style [Retsker 2007: 18]. While Retsker acknowledges the importance of extratextual factors, he underscores that the text and its functional correspondences are fundamental to the translation process.

The provided definitions present the concept of equivalence in a generalized form. This implies that equivalence is viewed as a singular, indivisible criterion. Such an approach treats equivalence as a single, indivisible criterion. This understanding of equivalence does not account for its multifaceted and complex nature, which becomes apparent in various contexts and translation situations.

A. V. Fedorov also offered his interpretation of the concept of equivalence. In his works, he introduces the term “full value” as an attempt to replace the foreign term “translation adequacy,” viewing adequacy as synonymous with equivalence. Fedorov argues that the full value of a translation involves exhaustive accuracy in conveying the semantic content of the original and achieving a complete functional-stylistic correspondence.

Full value requires the use of linguistic means that, while often not matching the formal characteristics of the original elements, should conform to the norms of the target language and perform a similar expressive function within the system as a whole [Fedorov 2002: 144].

The concept of the full value has been subject to critique. I. S. Alexeeva has pointed out the ambiguous understanding of the terms "content" and "function," which are central to this theory. Alexeeva argues that the term "content" is not clearly defined; it can be narrowly interpreted to mean only the conceptual components of a text or more broadly to include elements that are opaque to meaning. As for the term "function," it seems not to account for cases where the



content itself can be functional, such as in advertising texts, which always serve a persuasive function [Alexeeva 2012: 144].

In her turn, I. S. Alexeeva notes that the term "equivalence" signifies an analogy between the source text and the translation. The researcher defines equivalence as a measure of correspondence between the translated text and the source text, regardless of the translation's purpose [Alexeeva 2012: 128].

In contemporary translation theory, the primacy of pragmatic equivalence is emphasized, as it establishes the interrelation between other types of equivalence. This concept aligns with the notion of a functional invariant introduced by A.D. Schweitzer. The researcher defines equivalence as the preservation of the dominant function of an utterance.

A.D. Schweitzer introduces the concept of syntactic equivalence, which involves substituting one unit for another while maintaining the syntactic pattern, such as translating "*The sun disappeared behind a cloud*" into «*Солнце скрылось за тучей*». The researcher further distinguishes semantic equivalence into two sublevels: componential and referential.

The pragmatic level, deemed the most crucial by A. D. Schweitzer, involves transformations like omission, addition, or complete paraphrasing to achieve communicative intention, address the recipient effectively, and produce the intended communicative effect. An example: "*Шоппинг*" – *значит, ходить по магазинам, прицениваться, делать покупки. До сих пор политический шоппинг был удачнее для республиканцев.* – *The shopping season will last two weeks. As to political shopping, so far it has favoured the Republicans*". The omission of redundant explanations for an English-speaking audience is obvious. Pragmatic equivalence stands at the pinnacle of a hierarchy of equivalence levels, influencing and integrating other levels to serve the broader communicative purposes [Schweizer 1988: 84–86].

In this research, the understanding of equivalence is based on the works of V. N. Komissarov and his model of equivalence, which represent one of the most authoritative approaches in contemporary translation studies.

In this study, we adopt V.N. Komissarov's definition of **equivalence** as **the maximum possible linguistic proximity of the translation text to the original text** [Komissarov 2002: 117]. This definition serves as the basis for our analysis.

V.N. Komissarov's multilevel theory of equivalence encompasses five distinct levels.

1. The level of the purpose of communication.

This term defines communication as the process of exchanging information, with the primary goal being to ensure the understanding of the information exchanged. For example,

- *That's a pretty thing to say. – Постыдился бы.*
- *May be there is some chemistry between us that doesn't mix. – Бывает, что люди не сходятся характерами.*

The first level of equivalence focuses on conveying the content of the original text using equivalent word combinations in the target language that carry the same semantic load. Therefore, this type of equivalence concentrates on conveying the general meaning of the original in such a way that the recipient understands the message, thereby facilitating successful communication.

V. Komissarov notes that the first level of equivalence is often encountered in cases where it is not possible to match the lexical composition and syntactic order of the source and target languages; there are no direct logical connections between the information in the original text and the translated text [Komissarov 2002: 54].

2. The level of the situation.

- *He answered the telephone. – Он снял трубку.*
- *We locked the door to keep thieves out. – Мы заперли дверь, чтобы воры не проникли в дом.*

This level of equivalence ensures that both the translation and the original text serve the same communicative purpose and reflect the same extralinguistic situation. It acknowledges significant structural and semantic divergences necessary to depict the same situation. V. N. Komissarov suggests using this level when direct lexical and syntactic matches are impossible. This level is used when vocabulary and structure cannot be linked through semantic or syntactic

transformations, maintaining the aim of communication and reference to the same situation [Komissarov 2002: 58].

### 3. The level of description of the situation.

- *That will not be good for you. – Это может для вас плохо кончиться.*
- *London saw a cold winter last year. – В прошлом году зима в Лондоне была холодной.*

This level in translation theory focuses on maintaining both the communicative intent and the depiction of the situation, albeit without direct lexical or syntactic parallelism between the source and target texts. This level is characterized by the impossibility of linking the structures of the original and translation through syntactic transformation. Despite this impossibility, translations on this level still preserve the general concepts that describe the situation in both versions [Komissarov 2002: 64]. This approach ensures that the translation faithfully reflects the essence of the original situation.

### 4. The level of syntax.

- *One thing troubled me along at first – the immense interest which people took in me. – Одно тревожило меня вначале – то необыкновенное любопытство, с которым относились ко мне все.*
- *I told him what I thought of her. – Я сказал ему свое мнение о ней.*

This level involves using similar syntactic structures, as demonstrated in the examples. Features of this level include not perfect, but substantial correspondences in lexical composition; the use of similar syntactic structures that best convey the meanings of those structures from the original [Komissarov 2002: 72].

### 5. Lexical level.

- *I saw him at the theatre. – Я видел его в театре.*
- *He was sure we should both fall ill. – Он был уверен, что мы оба заболеем.*

The fifth level of equivalence in translation is the lexical (and semantic) correspondence level. This level represents the closest possible semantic proximity between the original and the translated texts. Features of this type include a high degree of structural parallelism between texts and maximum correspondence of

vocabulary in the original and the translation. Additionally, this level preserves features of all previous types of equivalence [Komissarov 2002: 79].

Thus, V .N. Komissarov's theory of equivalence encompasses all possible relationships between the source and the target texts. The first three levels (the purpose of communication, the situation, the description of the situation) are applied in conveying the functional-situational content of the original, while the last two levels (the level of syntax, lexical level) deal with the semantics of linguistic units. This theory of equivalence serves as the basis for analyzing practical material in this study.

### **1.1.2. Studies of Translation Equivalence in Literary Translation**

Literary texts, filled with idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and the author's unique style, pose a significant challenge for translators aiming to achieve a high degree of equivalence. This is why the translation equivalence of literary works is a major focus of study for many linguists.

A. V. Fedorov notes that literary works possess unique characteristics that distinguish them from other types of written texts. A literary work can express its rich semantic content through various forms, expressive means and stylistic devices. The researcher also highlights that literary works often reflect the national specificities of their content and form. Thus, literature serves as a mirror of reality, shaped by historical and cultural contexts [Fedorov 2002: 279].

According to A.V. Fedorov, the complexity of translating literary texts lies in finding functional equivalents, especially when the target language does not allow for the simultaneous reproduction of both the semantic and stylistic functions of an element from the original [Fedorov 2002: 282]. This situation presents translators with complex creative challenges that require not only profound knowledge but also artistic intuition, and at times, the courage to seek unconventional solutions.

A. V. Fedorov emphasizes that language is the primary element of artistic creation. Thus, the translation process is not merely a task of accuracy, but an art that demands a creative approach [Fedorov 2002: 283]. The selection of the

optimal translation from among many possibilities becomes a crucial factor in successfully conveying the depth and diversity of meanings inherent in the original work. According to the researcher, factual information provides objective data about the world, plays a crucial role in disseminating knowledge and facilitating understanding by representing reality. Operative information is aimed at stimulating actions and reactions; it activates the appellative function of language. Emotive information communicates feelings and experiences, using language to deepen interpersonal communication. Aesthetic information, essential in artistic texts, appeals to the perception of beauty and emphasizes the art of words to evoke aesthetic sensations and profound experiences [Alexeeva 2008: 55].

The aesthetic function of literature is also noted by V.N. Komissarov in his definition of literary translation. The researcher says that it is one of the types of translation, where the work created in the target language aims to produce an artistic and aesthetic impact [Komissarov 1999: 9].

In the analysis of translation equivalence in literary translation, particular attention should be paid to the study of translation transformations.

In translation studies, several main approaches classify translation transformations (Barkhudarov 1975; Retsker 2007; Schweizer 1988). However, a classification proposed by V.N. Komissarov brings together some common features of all these classifications. His classification is based on three primary groups of transformations.

Lexical transformations describe the relationships between words and word combinations in the original and the translation [Komissarov 2002: 158]. These transformations include transcription, transliteration, calque (loan translation), and lexical substitutions (specification, generalization, and modulation).

Grammatical transformations include syntactic translation (literal translation), sentence partitioning, sentence integration, and grammatical substitutions (of word forms, parts of speech, or sentence components) [Komissarov 2002: 161-163].

Complex (lexical and grammatical) transformations include antonymic translation, explication, and compensation [Komissarov 2002: 164-165].

Thus, equivalence in a translation of a literary work refers not only to the functional but also to the aesthetic aspects of the text. It is possible to achieve equivalence through the use of translation transformations (lexical, grammatical, lexical-and-grammatical) suitable for the context being translated.

## **1.2. Linguistic Representation of Social Status and Communicative Role in Fiction**

### **1.2.1. Social and Role Relations in Fiction**

The relationship between linguistic forms and the social parameters of communicators and (or) the situation is ambiguous. There is no evidence of a direct and clear connection. However, many studies have been dedicated to exploring and refining this relationship (Larina 2009; Brown and Levinson 1987; Lee 1974; Leech 1983).

Although sociolinguistics maintains that the connection is ambiguous, writers still use various devices to denote the characters' social characteristics and communicative roles. These devices are understandable to the reader. Linguistic means, which represent the social status and communicative role relationships of characters, play an important role in literary works. It is because these means help the author convey the complexity of interpersonal interactions, social dynamics, and hierarchies within the society depicted in the work. The means include a range of linguistic and compositional techniques, such as the choice of vocabulary, the style of speech, dialects and sociolects, as well as the use of specific grammatical constructions and figures of speech.

In examining the social status and communicative role interplay of characters, it is essential to consider approaches to understanding social status in sociolinguistics.

L.P. Krysin notes that social status represents a relative position within a social system on a "higher-lower" scale, determined by various characteristics

specific to that system. He distinguishes between the concepts of “status” and “role”. In this case, the status addresses the question “who is the person?” while the role answers the question “what does he do?” Thus, role can be seen as the dynamic aspect of status [Krysin 1989: 134].

In literary texts that depict social interaction, roles are necessarily interrelated, much like in a drama where a role only makes sense in relation to the behaviors of other characters [Shibutani 1969: 45]. So, the role of a message sender is closely linked to that of its receiver. The receiver participates in the role-based communication depending on the specific situation.

In this study, we will discuss the linguistic means that signify a character's status and place in the social hierarchy, as well as the means that represent the role in communication within a specific situation. We will proceed from the fact that the social status and the communicative role of a character can be represented in one utterance. It appears necessary from a methodological standpoint to distinguish between these two perspectives.

When incorporating elements of social and role-based relationships into the narratives, writers primarily aim to fulfill their aesthetic intentions. V. A. Pishchalnikova notes that the goal of aesthetic speech is to adequately represent personal meanings. At the same time, the result of such speech is an artistic text. This text is a collection of aesthetic speech acts that reflect the author's system of concepts [Pishchalnikova, Sorokin 1993: 7].

Thus, social status and communicative role relationships between characters are crucial for conveying the artistic and aesthetic objectives of literary works. They reveal the diversity of characters under conditions set by the author. In literary works, social and role-based relationships between characters can serve as a tool to explore a wide range of themes, including gender issues, class relations, and political ideologies. Through the interactions of characters and their social roles, authors can reveal complex social and psychological issues from various perspectives.

Moreover, the depiction of social and role-based relationships is a crucial tool for developing the plot and the dynamics between the characters. The linguistic representation of these relationships shapes conflicts and interactions that drive the narrative forward.

For the purposes of a comprehensive analysis, direct speech should be considered separately, as it can reflect a character's social status and communicative role.

### **1.2.2. Characters' Speech as Linguistic Representation of Their Social Status and Communicative Role**

Characters' speech in literary works always contains a social context, since factors like social status, age, education, profession, etc. cannot go unnoticed. This applies not only to the words, phrases, and syntactic structures characters use but also to the voice, accent, pronunciation, and overall manner of speech. All of these characteristics signal the speaker's social identity. However, information about the voice, accent, pronunciation, and general speech manner is often conveyed to the reader through the author's descriptive remarks, which will be studied in part 1.2.3.

It is well-known that the artistic image in literature is created through words. The realities depicted by the author take on a tangible form; thus, in literary works, words are directly linked to life and the events occurring within it. S.A. Askoldov discussed the linguistic portrayal of reality. He noted that an action, when embodied in words, particularly in the verbal aesthetic reality, reveals its inner meaning. The word itself, by incorporating the reality external to it, becomes a unique action [Askoldov 1922: 73]. Therefore, authors choose words that may more precisely realize the desired portrayal of the world in the work.

It's important to note that in the study of characters' speech, linguists pay attention not only to direct speech but also to indirect, free indirect speech, and the forms that emerge from their combination. According to I.V. Arnold, direct speech is understood as a character's statements, whether made in writing or orally. Indirect speech is conveyed by third parties or the author. Free indirect speech, on



the other hand, appears in the internal dialogue when describing a character's thoughts, emotions, and evaluations of events [Arnold 1990: 203].

As individuals develop their personalities, much like characters in literature, they cultivate unique personal traits and absorb characteristics of social groups they belong to. This complex influence is reflected in each person's speech patterns. Ya. I. Retsker identifies certain collective linguistic characteristics such as the use of colloquialisms, dialects, jargons, slang, taboo language, professional languages, and archaisms. These linguistic elements act as markers of specific social groups [Barkhudarov, Retsker 1968: 94].

T. M. Dubakh observes the use of literary German in the corpus of prose by A. Schnitzler, an Austrian playwright and writer of the 19th and 20th centuries, with dialectal variations reflecting different social strata. Dubakh identifies three main social groups: the upper class (officials, officers, intellectuals, and aristocrats), the middle class (craftsmen), and characters of lower social status (uneducated and socially unsuccessful). The use of dialects marks the interplay between social statuses and communicative roles, showing whether characters condescend to their interlocutors or maintain their own linguistic plane, thereby defining social affiliations and interactions in Schnitzler's works [Dubakh 2014: 64].

T. N. Kolokoltseva examines expressive syntactic constructions in character speech, noting similar structures in the works of S. D. Dovlatov, M. A. Bulgakov, and V. N. Voinovich. In "The Master and Margarita," she highlights Dr. Stravinsky's frequent use of «славно» and its variations. This repetition reflects his speech strategy to harmonize relationships. Kolokoltseva concludes that such expressive syntactic statements vividly portray characters and are notable for their "high degree of expressiveness" [Kolokoltseva 2015: 92].

Therefore, a direct speech in a literary text represents a significant layer of information about characters' social status and communicative role. Through the choice of dialect, words, specific language use, and syntax, authors can subtly

convey a character's position in the social hierarchy, their views, and their level of education.

### **1.2.3. Author's Remarks and Characters' Comments about Each Other as Linguistic Representation of Social Status and Communicative Role**

Writers use **remarks** when they need to compensate for gaps in the perception of characters' interactions, and emphasize their internal states or relationships with each other. These brief notes complement the dialogue by describing the physical actions, gestures, and facial expressions of characters during their speech. Such remarks also show the emotional nuances in characters' voices, which are crucial for a full representation of status and role within a scene. This approach corresponds to T. G. Vinokur 's view that in literary texts, the author's commentary plays a significant role in conveying conversational speech [Vinokur 2007: 23].

E.P. Vasilieva studies speech characteristics of sympathy expressions from a gender perspective. The researcher notes how remarks about characters' behavior reflect social and role-specific information. E.P. Vasilieva cites an example from the play "The Square Root of Wonderful," which demonstrates how an author's remark can serve not just as an addition to dialogue but also as a tool for revealing relationships between characters. The remark "*John **gently** puts his arms around Mollie*" not only details a physical action but also conveys feelings of consolation and support that John wishes to express to Mollie. The use of "gently" emphasizes the tender nature of the gesture and its emotional depth, indicating the closeness and warmth of the relationship between the characters [Vasilieva 2013: 92].

We suppose that the social and role-related basis of this remark reflects the close communicative distance between the characters. The use of "**gently**" emphasizes this communicative closeness. It is also important to note that such a degree of communicative closeness must be permissible within the given society. Thus, communicative distance and social status and role are interconnected.

Social and role relationships are also reflected in **characters' comments about each other**. These comments can take various forms, including the use of nominative groups, impositive utterances, descriptive phrases, and direct remarks. Each of them carries specific information about the social position and public perception of the character.

Noun groups are a key element in expressing social status. They consist of phrases that name or describe a character, often highlighting their social affiliation and status, as well as the speaker's evaluation of that status [Kudrya, Magnes 2022: 66]. For example, the word «буржуйчик» in example (1) not only identifies the character but also instantly conveys his belonging to a certain social class and the speaker's attitude towards that class.

- (1) «<...> нянька в сад с пятилетним **буржуйчиком** гулять вышла <...>» [M. Zoshchenko, “Vor”; cited in: Kudrya, Magnes 2022: 68].

In another example discussed by L.S. Barkhudarov, the use of nominative groups as one character's description of another is evident:

- (2) «— А Мишка твой **езуит**, а Яшка —**фармазон!**» [M. Gorkiy, “Detstvo”; cited in: Barkhudarov 1975: 118].

Such nominative groups may include professions, titles, social and economic categories, and other markers of social status.

Author's remarks and comments from other characters prove to be effective tools in literature for revealing a character's social status and communicative role. Through these elements of a literary work, the author can highlight contrasts between different social layers, express criticism or approval of certain social phenomena, and demonstrate not only a character's social status but also the communicative distance between several interacting characters.

#### **1.2.4. Addresses, Titles and Speech Formulas as Linguistic Representation of Social Status and Communicative Role**

Linguistic elements, including forms of address, titles, and politeness formulas, act as indicators of social-role relationships.

**Forms of address and titles** primarily convey information about a character's social status, profession, age, or gender characteristics. The use of formal titles such as "Mr.," "Doctor," and "Professor" highlights the recognition of a character's social status. At the same time, these are markers of the communicative situation — typically one of formal interaction. Shifting to less formal forms of address may indicate closeness, friendship, or familial relations among the characters, rather than a lack of social status. Forms of address and titles are usually represented by singular nouns or nominal groups.

On the other hand, **speech formulas** are directed towards achieving a pragmatic goal — creating and maintaining connection among communication participants. According to functions of language, a theory proposed by Roman Jakobson, this purpose corresponds to the phatic function. R. Jakobson asserts that this function is realized through the exchange of standard phrases or even complete dialogues. Their primary and sole purpose is to sustain the process of communication [Jakobson 1975: 201].

The assertion that an utterance is formed considering the speaker's perceptions of the interlocutor's social status has been discussed by many sociolinguists. For instance, M. M. Bakhtin highlights the influence of the speaker's perception of the addressee as a primary factor affecting the linguistic composition of the utterance [Bakhtin 1996: 201].

M. M. Bakhtin's definition highlights the interconnection between sociocultural context and linguistic expression. The speaker, considering the addressee's apperceptive background, aims at creating an utterance that not only conveys information but also matches the expectations, understanding level, and cultural nuances of the listener. It is important to note that the apperceptive background mentioned by M. M. Bakhtin likely includes expectations from the specific communicative situation, i.e. the communicative and role structure of the particular dialogue.

Thus, the use of formal address in a literary text reflects the recognition of the characters' social status and is usually employed in formal communicative

situations. Such situations, in their turn, make it possible to convey characters' communicative roles. However, shifting to less formal titles can indicate a communicative closeness between speakers without diminishing the social status of the dialogue participants. Additionally, polite speech formulas are also aimed at creating and maintaining a connection between interlocutors.

### **1.2.5. Impositive Utterances as Linguistic Representation of Social Status and Communicative Role**

In linguistics, imposition is defined as a type of communicative impact associated with a potential threat to an individual's social status or "face" [Kozhukhova 2021: 32]. In this context, "face" refers to the social value that each individual claims during communication with others and which is acknowledged by the others [Goffman 1972: 5].

Studies focusing on impositive utterances in directive speech acts typically examine the functions of commands, requests, and invitations (Borovina 2017; Lee-Wong 1994; Martínez Flor 2009; Haddad 2019).

H. Haverkate makes a clear distinction between impositive and non-impositive directives. Impositive directives involve actions that, if performed by the listener, primarily benefit the speaker [Haverkate 1994: 73]. Conversely, non-impositive utterances suggest actions that benefit the listener. G. Leech also notes that making such distinctions involves a certain level of subjectivity [Leech 1983: 107].

In literary works, characters often find themselves at the center of a conflict of interests; it requires a specific form of communication to achieve their communicative goals. Authors use these moments to show the dynamics of relationships between characters. Here authors employ impositive utterances as a means for characters to influence each other's behavior and worldview. For instance, Arbain A. et al. explore various forms and functions of impositive utterances in the novel "Assassin's Creed: Renaissance". Examples include:

(3) *Silence my friends!* [Arbain 2022: 172].

(4) *Enough of your nonsense, grullo* [Arbain 2022: 172].

(5) *Let's see if you fight as well as you gabble!* [Arbain 2022: 173].

The authors note that example (3) expresses an order, example (4) expresses a prohibition, and example (5) expresses a challenge [Arbain 2022: 172-173]. The results of this study show that impositive statements predominantly appear in directives. Among the main functions of impositive statements, the authors single out an order, prohibition, challenge, advice, request, refusal and begging [Arbain 2022: 177].

However, imposition does not only manifest itself in institutional relationships, as in the examples above within the framework of military discourse. Imposition can also be found in relationships, for example, family ones. This way, A. M. Pacleanu notes the imposition in the following father-to-son addresses in Philip Roth's novel "Portnoy's Complaint":

(6) "**Turn around, mister**, I want the courtesy of a reply from your mouth".

(7) "And shoes, **Mister**, hard shoes".

(8) "Oh, you're riding for a fall, **Mr. Big**" [Pacleanu 2019: 144].

The researcher points out that the imperative "turn around" in example (6) serves as a marker of imposition. Additionally, the father's ironic use of "Mister," when addressing his son, illustrates a deviation in communicative role and an increase in social distance between father and son [Pacleanu 2019: 145].

Thus, impositive utterances serve as a tool for conveying social status and communicative role interplay in literature and demonstrate the dynamics of character interactions. They range from directive to declarative forms and perform various functions such as commands, prohibitions, and requests. These utterances shape characters' behavior and reveal their social statuses and mutual expectations. It highlights the complexity of their communicative impact and influence within the literary context.

A review of the literature shows that social status and communicative role interplay in literary works are expressed through direct speech, author's remarks, comments from other characters, forms of address and titles, and impositive

utterances. Key aspects of these relationships include the choice of vocabulary and syntax, the level of formality of speech, the use of dialects and sociolects, as well as specific linguistic constructions and stylistic techniques.

Fields such as sociolinguistics, pragmatics, discourse theory, and stylistics have extensively studied how speech conveys information about social status and role expectations. These characteristics in fiction influence the perception of characters and the dynamics of their interactions.

### **1.3. Research on Translation of Information about the Social Status and Communicative Role**

#### **1.3.1. The Role of Cultural Background in Conveying the Linguistic Representation of Social Status and Communicative Role**

An analysis of the literature on the topic shows that the translation of social status and communicative role relationships in character interactions should focus on the variety of methods and approaches used to convey complex cultural and social nuances. These methods range from transliterating individual words to translating text with consideration of the cultural and linguistic features of the target audience.

Understanding the cultural context of the original text and adequately reproducing it in the translation is essential for preserving the significance of characters' interpersonal relationships. This fact highlights the importance of a thorough examination of this aspect.

One of the main challenges in literary translation is the problem of conveying communicative distance between characters. For example, V. P. Golyshev notes that there is a sort of “cold veil” in the English language. People speak at a greater distance from each other there [Golyshev: 11:50]. **Social distance** in language to some extent reflects differences in status, age, profession, and other social parameters of characters. At the same time, **communicative distance** depends on the role-based relationships of characters in a certain dialogue. In typical everyday situations the perception of status, profession, gender,

age of the interlocutor, as well as communicative conventions are culturally conditioned. Communication always occurs within the conditions and against the backdrop of a specific culture (in the context of this study – the culture depicted by the author of the work), which ultimately is the source of translation difficulties.

Extensive research demonstrates interest in the phenomenon of communicative distance in linguistics and communication studies, as well as the diversity of ways to construct communicative distance depending on cultural factors (Larina 2009; Karasik 2012; Dontsov et al. 2014). Comparing Russian and English communicative cultures, T. V. Larina notes that interaction between people often occurs at a certain distance, which is subject to significant changes depending on various communicative contexts. These contexts include the interpersonal relationships of the participants, their status, age, and the situation, location, and time of communication, among other factors.

In her research, T.V. Larina discusses four types of distances introduced by E. Hall in 1959. Intimate distance is where people communicate very closely, such as when alone or whispering to each other. Personal distance is the space in which close individuals might stand in a public setting, conversing in half-voices. Social distance is the gap between colleagues, or between a seller and a buyer, where communication occurs in a normal speaking voice. Public distance is the space where loud speech is required, such as between a teacher and students, or a speaker and an audience [Larina 2009: 47].

While studying social distance in English-speaking cultures, it is important to recognize the significance of the politeness theory by P. Brown and S. Levinson. The theory serves as a key tool for understanding interpersonal communication and social dynamics. In the research, P. Brown and S. Levinson describe the concept of negative politeness as the foundation of respectful behavior [Brown, Levinson 1987: 129]. This concept encompasses a set of standard strategies aimed at demonstrating respect for the personal space and independence of the interlocutor. The strategies focus on maintaining social distancing and establishing communicative boundaries [Brown, Levinson 1987: 145]. These methods help



prevent excessive closeness and emphasize the distance between communicators, thereby expressing mutual respect.

According to this theory, people in their communication aim to reduce the threat to their interlocutor's "face," which researchers define as the emotional and social well-being of the communicator in the context of the conversation. "Positive face" reflects a person's desire to gain approval and positive evaluation in society, while "negative face" represents the need for autonomy and freedom of action. P. Brown and S. Levinson argue that politeness and social tact in communication are aimed at maintaining and protecting these two aspects of an interlocutor's "face" [Brown, Levinson 1987: 147].

It should be noted that P. Brown and S. Levinson based their conclusions on data collected within the English-speaking culture. Clearly, the distance of politeness is culturally conditioned, especially when compared to Russian. Research conducted by T. V. Larina has shown that in English-speaking communication, a strategy of non-imposition prevails. This strategy involves respecting the personal autonomy of the interlocutor and reflects a key characteristic of cultural communication [Larina 2009]. In Russian, on the other hand, strategies based on the principles of so-called "politeness of distance" or negative politeness are not as explicitly manifested. This highlights cultural differences in approaches to politeness and respect for the interlocutor.

G. Leech explored the issue of communicative distance through impositive utterances. The author noted that a high level of imposition can indicate an informal register. For example:

(9) "**Would you be so good** as to ask Mr. Lee to step out here please. I have a few words for his ears alone." [Leech 2014: 164].

(10) '...**Be a good boy and get us something to drink, will you, carino?**' [Leech 2014: 164].

Thus, the structure of these utterances suggests a lower level of formality and greater imposition.

To mitigate a face-threatening act into an impositive statement, the speaker can use indirect forms of expression, thereby reducing pressure and maintaining

respect for the interlocutor's autonomy. However, an overly polite, indirect request addressed to someone close can also feel threatening because it unexpectedly increases the distance. For example:

(11) «*Dorothy: Tim, would you like to come and brush your teeth. <pause> Please.*

*Tim: Not <-|-> yet» [Leech 2014: 136]*

The addition of the word “**please**” indicates that the speaker is actually framing her statement as a directive, which increases the distance between her and her son. Consequently, it is clear that understanding the social and role-based relationships that influence the choice of language tools calls for a more in-depth discussion of “register” in language, particularly in the context of translation.

L. S. Barkhudarov proposes defining five types of registers. Communication registers range from familiar (used for speaking with close ones using slang and idioms) to elevated (used for particularly ceremonial contexts, including archaic or poetic vocabulary to give solemnity to speech). Between these two types there are the informal (also casual, but less intimate than the familiar register), neutral (a universal register suitable for most situations), and formal (used in official and professional contexts with strict adherence to language norms) types of registers [Barkhudarov 1975: 111].

So, understanding and correctly applying different registers is crucial in translation, as it helps the translator not only adequately convey the factual information of the original text but also adequately reflect the aesthetic information, including the social context and relationships between the participants in the communication.

Thus, research on the translation of information about social status and communicative role emphasizes the complexity of transferring cultural and social nuances. Various methods, from transliterating words to translating with an awareness of the audience's cultural and linguistic features, are crucial for maintaining the integrity of characters' relationships in translations. One significant challenge is conveying the communicative distance that is influenced by cultural

contexts. Such distances, which reflect differences in status, age, profession, and other social parameters, vary significantly across cultures.

Recognizing and applying different linguistic registers is also essential, as it enables translators to not only convey information adequately but to also capture the social dynamics and cultural nuances that define interactions in literary works. This comprehensive approach ensures that the social roles and statuses of characters are effectively communicated, as well as the depth and richness of the source text in the translation.

### 1.3.2. Ways of Translating Social Status and Communicative Role in Characters' Speech

V. N. Komissarov notes that even a small number of social status markers in speech can adequately convey information about a character's position in society. For instance, the phrase "*He do look quiet, don't? D'e know 'oo 'e is, Sir?*" is translated as «*Вид-то у него спокойный, правда? Часом не знаете, сэр, кто он такой?*» Here, the translator aimed at compensating for the combination of grammatical (using "don't" instead of "doesn't") and phonetic features ('e instead of "he", 'e instead of "you", 'oo instead of "who") characteristic of the conversational style of common folk, by using the colloquial expression «Часом не знаете» in the translation [Komissarov 2002: 20].

As demonstrated in section 1.2.2., a character's social status and communicative role can be expressed through his or her direct, indirect, and reported speech. For example, A.D. Alimova studies free indirect speech and its translations. The researcher considers the following example:

- (12) «*Читатель, небось, усмехнется тут. А деньги, скажет. Деньги-то, скажет, курицын сын, получаешь? До чего, скажет, жиреют люди*» [M. Zoshchenko, "Strashnaya Noch"; cited in: Alimova 2021: 13].

In this example, the free indirect speech is similar in form to direct speech but is not punctuated as such and is interrupted by the speech verb "will say." The triple repetition of the verb adds emotion and expressiveness to the statement [Alimova 2021: 14].

In a similar way, O. A. Blinova examined the translation of indirect speech in the English-Russian language pair. Among her findings, she notes that translators often expand the range of synonyms by using multiple names for the same object or phenomenon, likely due to the Russian language's greater sensitivity to repetition. For example, the researcher considers the translation of journalistic works by Ernest Hemingway.

- (13) *«He's heard that most of the guns were **Wops - Dagoes**, that is. Most gunmen were **Wops**, anyway. A **Wop** made a good gun.*

*Он слышал, что большинство «стрелков», как, впрочем, и всегда, итальяшки. Вообще, большинство стрелков -итальяшки. Макаронники - хорошие стрелки» [E. Hemingway; cited in: Blinova 2018: 49].*

Substitution of the stylistic register is also one of the ways to translate the indirect speech, as notes O. A. Blinova. For example:

- (14) *“Yes, there were American **bump-off** artists in Ireland”*

*«Да, в Ирландии работают американские «мокрых дел» мастера» [E. Hemingway; cited in: Blinova 2018: 49].*

When rendering low colloquial speech, the Russian translator uses quotation marks, as noticed by the researcher.

Another method, noted by O. A. Blinova, involves replacing one form of speech presentation with another, specifically changing indirect speech to reported speech, or vice versa. For example,

- (15) *“**That** people would come and that people would have to pay what she asked”.*

*«Люди еще приедут и будут платить столько, сколько она запросит» [E. Hemingway; cited in: Blinova 2018: 50].*

In this case, the change in the type of representation occurs due to the disappearance of the subordination in the sentence and the omission of the conjunction "that" in the target text [Blinova 2018: 50].

A. D. Schweitzer also notices the expressiveness, which is characteristic of characters' direct speech. As an example from Russian literature, the researcher suggests the use of a tautological epithet by F. M. Dostoevsky:

- (16) *«...об заклад бьюсь, что он ездил вчера к нему на чердак и прощения у него на коленях просил, чтобы эта злая злючка удостоила сюда переехать»*

*"I'd bet he'd been to see him in his attic and begged his pardon on his bended knees so that this **spiteful little horror** should deign to move to his house".*

The researcher notices that in the English translation, expressiveness is conveyed through the combination of epithets "spiteful little horror". Meanwhile, in the Russian original, one character uses a tautological epithet containing the invective element «злая злючка» [Schweizer 1988: 149].

Thus, the translation of social status and communicative roles in characters' speech must carefully handle the linguistic nuances that depict these elements. Even minor social status markers in speech effectively communicate a character's societal position by translating grammatical and phonetic features into appropriate colloquial expressions. Types of speech, including direct, free indirect and reported speech, are used to convey nuanced information about characters' status and roles. Translators often expand the synonym range or alter speech forms to match the sensitivity of the target language to some stylistic devices and register used in the source language. This complexity is also visible when considering the emotional and social nuances of translating the characters' speech.

### **1.3.3. Ways of Translating Social Status and Communicative Role in Author's Remarks and Characters' Comments about Each Other**

A.D. Schweitzer emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between expressions originating from the text's author and those that belong to the characters within the story. The researcher provides the following example:

(17) *"How was she to bare **that timid little heart** for the inspection of those **young ladies** with their bold black eyes?"*

*"Как могла Эмилия раскрыть свое **робкое сердечко** для обозрения перед нашими востроглазыми **девицами**?" [W. Thackeray, "Vanity Fair"; cited in: Schweizer 1988: 148].*

Here, the use of ironic connotation in the English text — a mockingly positive description ("that timid little heart") — contrasts with the Russian translator's choice of a diminutive suffix: «робкое сердечко» [Schweizer 1988: 148]. This example demonstrates how authorial expression can be rendered in translation at the level of situational description, although the irony is not preserved. This highlights the challenges of maintaining the original tone and

emotional color in translation, especially when the expressions are connected with cultural subtleties.

In the discussion of the author's remarks, it is important to note Julian Bourne's work which analyzes the translation of the word "said" into Spanish in contemporary English literature. Bourne concludes that this remark can be used as a tool to control the illocutionary force of a statement [Bourne 2002: 252].

Therefore, translating literary works equivalently requires careful consideration of the differences in the words of the author and the surrounding characters to convey the illocutionary force and stylistic coloring of the original. Mistakes in this aspect can lead to distortions of the original authorial intentions and alter the perception of the narrative.

#### 1.3.4. Ways of Translating Social Status and Communicative Role in Addresses, Titles and Speech Formulas

A.D. Schweitzer points out an aspect of address in literary conflicts, which highlights the use of a series of epithets with negative connotations. He provides the following example.

- (18) *«И не стыдно, не стыдно тебе, варвар и тиран моего семейства, варвар и изувер! Ограбил меня всего, соки высосал и тем еще недоволен! Доколе переносить я тебя буду, бесстыжий и бесчестный ты человек!».*

*"Aren't you ashamed, aren't you ashamed of yourself, you cruel, inhuman wretch, you tyrant of my family, you, inhuman monster, you! You've robbed me of everything, sucked me dry, and you're still dissatisfied. How much longer am I to put up with you, you, you shameless and dishonest man!" [F. M. Dostoevsky "Idiot"; cited in: Schweitzer 1988: 149].*

Consequently, A.D. Schweitzer emphasizes that the translator's task is not merely the transfer of linguistic values but a deep immersion in the cultural and emotional context of the original. It requires not only language proficiency but also an understanding of literary traditions, character psychology, and the author's stylistic nuances.

The researcher also examines the translation of fixed speech formulas. The example given involves translating a formal, ritualistic expression used in legal contexts—the witness oath—from English to Russian.

(19) *“Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?”*  
*I do’*

*«— Торжественно поклянитесь говорить правду, только правду и ничего, кроме правды, да поможет вам бог!*

*— Клянусь»* [Schweizer 1988: 150].

This shift from interrogative to imperative reflects a cultural and procedural adaptation. The Russian language uses a more direct, command-like structure in this legal ritual, demanding an active confirmation ("Клянусь" – "I swear").

In this case, the translator opts for conventional linguistic means to maintain the solemnity and formality of the oath while adapting it to the cultural and stylistic norms of the target language.

The translation of speech formulas sometimes requires the translator to perform complex semantic and syntactic transformations. A.D. Schweitzer gives another example:

(20) *"Order in the Court! His Honor, the Court! Everybody please rise!"*  
*«Суд идет! Прошу встать!».*

In this case, the translator works at the level of the communication purpose, without preserving the syntactic structure (changing the subject of the action to the action itself: "His Honor, the Court!" is replaced by the functional equivalent of «Суд идет!») [Schweizer 1988: 150].

A.D. Schweitzer points out that translating stable expressions of speech etiquette, such as greetings or farewells, often requires translators to perform functional substitutions that go beyond simple word replacement. These phrases, known as "behavioral," include expressions like "See you later, Mary" or "Be seeing you, John," which convey specific nuances of relationships and the context of interaction in English.

When translating into Russian, such phrases might be rendered as «Пока, Мэри» or «Ну будь здоров, Джон». Here, as stated by Schweitzer, the choice of particular etiquette formulas depends not on the original text but on the context of communication and the relationships between the speakers. For instance, a simple «пока» in Russian can replace a more formal farewell, and that will be a marker of the informal communicative situation [Schweizer 1988: 150]. Therefore, the

translator must understand the context of the characters' interactions and be adept at finding formulas of expressions that suit the specific communicative situation, whether the setting is formal or informal.

### **1.3.5. Ways of Translating Social Status and Communicative Role in Impositive Utterances**

Impositive utterances, which reflect relationships of power and distance, are fundamental for understanding the dynamics between characters in a literary work. That is why such utterances pose a challenge for translators. One of the main challenges is connected with the target audience's expectations about the norms of politeness of the original audience [Hervey 1994: 192]. Consequently, occurrences of reduced illocutionary force in translated texts might indicate the translator's belief that the readers expect typical British middle-class characters to demonstrate conventional British middle-class politeness [Bourne 2002: 253].

As noted by I. Mason and M. Stewart, literal translation can alter the impact of an utterance, as languages vary in how they convey politeness [Mason, Stewart 2001: 56]. Also, A. Wierzbicka notes that for English-speaking cultures, the use of an imperative is seen as violating personal autonomy. That is why imperatives are perceived as more offensive than obscene and invective language [Wierzbicka 1996: 57]. This sensitivity to the use of imperatives or reduction of some other politeness markers reflects cultural norms and expectations about interpersonal interactions and power dynamics. Impositive utterances in literary works emphasize the importance of using translation techniques and strategies to maintain the social and communicative roles depicted in the same way as in the original work.

A special attention in such translations should be paid to the elements of impositive utterances when the culture of the target language is predominantly non-impositive. In this case, the study of S. V. Kudrya and N. O. Magnes is of particular interest. As pointed out by the researchers, distortions in translation of imposition leads to mistakes in details, misrepresentation of characters'



worldviews, and their interactions with each other. The main theme of the work also gets distorted as well [Kudrya, Magnes 2024: 153]. The variations in how much imposition is acceptable between the cultures of the original and translated texts are crucial for achieving high-quality literary translations.

Another key element in translation of imposition is verbs. In literary dialogues, the illocutionary force extends beyond the characters' direct speech to how their speech is reported. This includes modifications to report verbs and, often, alterations to politeness markers within the speech act, reflecting the nuanced ways imposition can manifest, notably in the author's remarks.

J. Bourne notes that the Spanish original fiction has a richer variety of report verbs than its English translations. The researcher also notes that in literary translations the translator aims to control the interpretation of the reader of the target text while maintaining the propositional content of the source text [Bourne 2002: 252]. Therefore, verbs are a key element in translation of imposition. They are used for stylistic and pragmatic effects, such as adding variety, enhancing precision, and specifying the illocutionary force of an utterance. The analysis of verbs and other components of imposition in characters' speech, makes it possible to talk about their social statuses and communicative roles.

Thus, in translation studies, works that examine the social status and communicative role type of relationships involve analyzing and adapting the ways in which various social statuses, roles, and interactions are portrayed in the original text and how they should be conveyed in translation to achieve functional equivalence. The main challenges include the adequate translation of hierarchies, rendering of communicative distance between speakers, their forms of address, degrees of formality, and contextual features associated with their social roles. It is recognized in translation theory that each culture has unique norms and expectations regarding social and communicative roles, and translators must strive to reflect these aspects as fully as possible.

## Summary of Chapter 1

The analysis of theoretical literature revealed that literary translation is a type of translation activity where a work created in the target language should have an artistic and aesthetic impact. Research into social status and communicative role interplay in translation highlights the complexity of achieving equivalence between the original text and the translation. Equivalence itself represents the closest possible linguistic similarity of the translation to the original text, achieved through lexical, grammatical, and lexical-and-grammatical transformations.

The levels of possible equivalence of translation include the following: the purpose of communication, the situation, the description of the situation, the syntax, and the lexical levels.

Although the connection between linguistic forms and social parameters of speakers is neither straightforward nor transparent, the use of specific vocabulary (formal/colloquial), register (familiar/elevated), dialects, and grammatical structures (complex/simplified) allows authors to effectively mark the characters' social status, as well as their communicative roles.

The review of theoretical literature also shows that social status and communicative role interplay in works of fiction are reflected through the direct, indirect, and reported speech of characters, author's remarks, comments from other characters, addresses, titles, and impositive utterances. Thus, information about characters' social statuses and communicative roles has various linguistic representations: noun phrases, terms of imposition, impositive utterances,

The next chapter of the study will explore how these theoretical aspects are applied in practice in the analysis of translation decisions in the works of M.M. Zoshchenko and M.A. Bulgakov.

## Chapter 2. Analysis of Translation Solutions in Translations of Works

by M. M. Zoshchenko and M. A. Bulgakov

As noted by J. Hicks, the translator of M. Zoshchenko stories, “*translation is always an attempt to minimize losses and fail better*” [Zoshchenko 2000: 22]. This understanding of translation is at the basis of this research, since the study focuses on the levels of equivalence at which social and role relationships can be rendered.

As discussed in the theoretical part, specific lexical choices, syntactic structures, and stylistic nuances are crucial in depicting a character's social identity and hierarchy. The findings of the theoretical part show that the ways of status and role representation are found in the following categories: 1. Vocabulary that designates social groups. 2. Vocabulary that denotes impositive actions. 3. Impositive utterances.

In this analysis of how linguistic realizations of social status and communicative role are rendered from Russian into English, we will distinguish between lexical and pragmatic aspects. Lexical units form the building blocks of language and carry implications for portraying social status (and, in some cases, communicative role) through specific terms like various names of social groups, titles, forms of address. At the same time, pragmatics, which examines the role of context in shaping meaning, captures how speakers manage social interactions and relationships, given their social status and communicative role.

By analyzing these categories separately, it is possible to more accurately assess how translation helps to represent the social dynamics. The analysis provides insights into both the challenges of translating lexemes and the subtler complexities of conveying appropriate social dynamics in a different cultural context.

## 2.1. The Artistic Originality of the Works by M. M. Zoshchenko and M. A. Bulgakov

M. M. Zoshchenko and M. A. Bulgakov stand as seminal figures within the panorama of 20th-century Russian literature, each carving distinct niches through their idiosyncratic narratives and profound socio-cultural critiques.

M. M. Zoshchenko, born in 1894 in Saint Petersburg, emerged prominently in the early Soviet period, renowned for his satirical depictions of the absurdity and struggle inherent in Soviet life. Zoshchenko himself once said that the themes of his stories were imbued with a naive philosophy that was just right for his readers [Zoshchenko 1928: 10].

M. Zoshchenko employed his writings to satirize the Proletkult authors. These authors aspired to indoctrinate the masses with a rigid ideology and model the behaviors of what they considered a "true proletarian" or an "ideal citizen of the great country" [Chudakova 1979: 22]. M. Zoshchenko's work, however, was not mere mimicry but a parody that rendered his texts both humorously absurd and provocatively paradoxical. His works expose the inadequacy of the ideological thinkers' claims to literary prominence and working-class heroes' claims to societal leadership.

As noted by J. Hicks, the power of M. Zoshchenko's storytelling is rooted in his use of colloquial language (especially familiar and low colloquial) that mirrors the speech of everyday people. This method is known as the *skaz* narrative style. Through *skaz*, M. Zoshchenko masterfully blends parody and stylization, giving his narratives a unique flair [Hicks 2000a: 3]. J. Hicks' observation highlights how this approach not only vitalizes M. Zoshchenko's characters but also sharpens his satirical critique, making his insights into societal norms both poignant and relatable to a wide readership.

Another scholar, M. O. Chudakova, provides further insights into M. Zoshchenko's distinctive use of *skaz*. As was found, the writer sharpens the personal elements of *skaz*, ultimately attributing these narratives to a voice that,

while seemingly unskilled in literary technique, resonates with the authority of a professional literary author [Chudakova 1979: 64].

Thus, in M. Zoshchenko's stories, social roles are a primary target of his satire. Against the backdrop of societal upheavals, where some roles vanish and others are profoundly reevaluated, M. Zoshchenko's characters adapt to and help shape the new social realities. They attempt to master new social roles, rights, and responsibilities, while also determining the place of other individuals and groups within the social hierarchy.

Similarly, M. A. Bulgakov explores themes of social transformation and role redefinition in his works. M. Bulgakov, born in 1891 in Kiev, presents a contrasting yet equally compelling literary vision. His works contain sharp political satire that dared to critique Soviet authority. According to M. M. Bakhtin, satire is described as a metaphorical rejection of contemporary reality in its diverse aspects, which inherently comprises, in one form or another and with varying levels of explicitness and detail, a positive element of endorsing a superior reality [Bakhtin 1997: 15]. M. Bulgakov's narrative style blends fantasy, the grotesque, and realism, offering a complex reflection on the human condition and the chaotic social and political landscape of his time.

Following the Russian Revolution and during the early Soviet era, there emerged the ideological language. This language, often characterized by its bureaucratic jargon and politically charged vocabulary, was part of the Soviet government's attempt to reshape societal thinking and behavior according to socialist principles. As noted by M.O. Chudakova, M. Bulgakov's response to the newly emerging language was different from Zoshchenko's. While M. Zoshchenko's characters and narrators readily adopted this language in the early 1920s, even claiming to understand words that were actually unclear to them, M. Bulgakov's early narrators and characters deliberately emphasized their lack of understanding. M. Bulgakov's character practically learns the language of this everyday life, memorizes it, but continues to misunderstand it [Chudakova 1979: 108].

Thus, Mikhail Bulgakov's characters distinctly reflect the Soviet social hierarchy, often revealing the oppressive dynamics of their society through their interactions. Their social statuses and communicative roles not only highlight individual struggles but also critique systemic injustices. Through this, Bulgakov offers a sharp commentary on how societal structures affect personal and collective lives. Thus, he illustrates the absurdity and often the harsh realities of the Soviet system.

The artistic originality of M. Zoshchenko and M. Bulgakov's works poses challenges for translating. It becomes particularly interesting to analyze how translations render the depiction of social roles, distance, and communicative behaviors that are central to these authors' texts. Works by M. A. Bulgakov and M. M. Zoshchenko focus on the establishment of new social roles in post-revolutionary Russia.

Both M. Bulgakov and M. Zoshchenko use unique artistic techniques to portray characters striving to assert themselves during the 1920s. For instance, both authors bring to the forefront characters whose communicative behavior is marked by assertiveness. These characters are depicted as defending their positions and exerting communicative pressure. Those are two dominant communicative strategies of the era. The linguistic representations of these strategies become aesthetic objects within the artistic space of the works. These representations highlight the complex interplay between language, social dynamics, and narrative technique.

Thus, this exploration sets the stage for an analysis focused on how translations handle the nuances of social status and communicative roles. Key areas for this research include the translation of lexical representations of social groups, the conveyance of terms for impositive practices, and the rendering of impositive utterances. These elements are crucial for understanding how linguistic choices influence the portrayal of social dynamics across different languages.

## 2.2. Translation of Social Status and Communicative Role Through Lexical Representations of Social Groups

Our translation analysis of vocabulary will be based on the broad binary division of vocabulary into formal and informal (colloquial). This division was established in lexicology (see e.g. Arnold 1986), and has proved its efficiency for description of lexical items in connection with their functioning in communication. At that, the analysis will focus on informal (colloquial) vocabulary in Zoshchenko and Bulgakov's writing, since this vocabulary is a primary means of portraying characters and narrators, both as social actors and communicators. This layer of vocabulary is especially difficult for translation from Russian into English, as reported by translators (see e.g. J. Hicks's notes in Zoshchenko 2000).

We will also look at the functioning of formal vocabulary such as learned words, loan sociopolitical terms, official vocabulary in molding the portraits of the characters. As noted by the translators, misuse of official and loan words, mixture of words of different styles, malapropisms, are often used to depict the communicative competence of characters in Zoshchenko and Bulgakov's writing.

Finally, we will discuss a series of words combined on a basis of functional proximity: such as terms denoting social groups, titles, forms of address. All these lexical means provide cues about social and communication dynamics between characters; therefore it is important to analyze the strategies of their translation.

We will begin with names of social groups in the narrators' or characters' direct speech.

(1) «<...> нянька в сад с **пяилетним буржуйчиком** гулять вышла» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 180].

“<...> the nanny had come out into the garden to go for a walk with the **five-year-old bourgeois toddler**” [Hicks 2000: 28].

The noun phrase «**пяилетний буржуйчик**» used in the original depicts the social group the narrator refers to («*Буржуй, (разг.). Презрительное или бранное обозначение буржуа*» [TSU]). This indicates that the child in this context is perceived as belonging to a higher social class.

The narrator's mocking tone, represented by the Russian diminutive suffix

«-чик» in «*буржуйчик*», indicates his critical attitude towards the upper class status of the child. Moreover, the narrator dissociates himself from the group of «буржуи» by using the name of the social status («*буржуйчик*») to describe the child. Thus, setting the child apart from “ordinary” children. It reflects an outsider's view, especially from a lower social stratum, looking in at the affluent classes with a mix of criticism.

Also, the narrator's lower social status is shown through the choice of vocabulary (given that «*буржуйчик*» is a colloquial word, intensified by the diminutive suffix «-чик»).

The translation solution reflects an attempt to maintain the critical and mocking tone of the original. The narrator still refers to a certain social group by saying “*five-year-old bourgeois toddler*”. However, in the original, the use of “*буржуйчик*” implies a critical stance towards the child's bourgeois background, which is rooted in the Russian meaning of the word «буржуй». Thus, the narrator's attitude to the social group he is referring to is not clear in the translation.

The component “*toddler*” in this noun phrase aims at capturing the Russian diminutive suffix «-чик» in «*буржуйчик*». The word “*toddler*”, however, refers to a child between one and three years old in English [MWD]. Its application to a five-year-old introduces a semantic inconsistency, which seems illogical in terms of age appropriateness. By using “*bourgeois toddler*”, the translator sought to express at least one of the meanings: young child raised in a bourgeois social environment.

However, the noun phrase “*five-year-old bourgeois toddler*” is in line with the translation strategy selected by the translator. This way, the utterance manifests the narrator's low linguistic competence, which implies his own low social status.

The translation “*five-year-old bourgeois toddler*” is done at the **level of the situation**, where the primary focus is on ensuring that the translation refers to the same real-world situation described in the original text, even though using different language.

Let us consider another example of a noun phrase related to characters



perceived as socially different from the narrator.

- (2) «А я *этаким* гусем, *этаким* буржуем *нерезанным* вьюсь вокруг нее» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 527].

*“And strutting like a peacock, like one of those bourgeois bastards we didn’t manage to finish off, I was hovering around her”* [Hicks 2000: 43].

In the original Russian, the term «*буржуй*» inherently carries an invective connotation, as evidenced by dictionary definitions: «*Буржуй* -я, м. (*разг. презр.*). То же, что буржуа» [TSO]. This low colloquial invective is embedded in this sociopolitical term and recognized by Russian speakers without additional context. Moreover, the word «*этакий*», which is repeated in the parallel construction «*этаким гусем, этаким буржуем нерезанным*», is also colloquial («*Этакий* -ая, -ое, мест. указат. и определит. (*разг.*)» [TSO]). Thus, such use of colloquialisms shows the narrator as someone with a low social status.

Also, the word «*этакий*» emphasizes the narrator's dissociation from the bourgeois group. This choice of words, especially when paired with invective terms, highlights the social divide and reinforces the narrator's position as an outsider.

In the translation, the invective component of the word «*буржуй*» is explicitly conveyed through the addition of the derogatory, low colloquial word "*bastard*" (marked as “offensive” in CED), so the noun phrase becomes “*bourgeois bastards*”. Similarly, the epithet «*нерезанный*» is translated via explication by the predicative phrase "*we did not manage to finish off*". This approach does not translate the narrator’s phrase per se, but rather a common expression of the era, "*недорезанный буржуй*" [TSK]. which the narrator implies but fails to adequately reproduce, saying «*нерезанный*». This subtlety in M. Zoshchenko's writing, which shows the narrator's poor command of the language, is lost in translation.

In the translation, the narrator still dissociates himself from the bourgeois by using “*one of those*”, which corresponds to «*этакий*» in the original.

Notably, the translation also introduces the first-person plural pronoun "*we*", absent in the original, which functions as a marker of the narrator’s identification

with the social group that opposed the bourgeois. This solution enhances the invective element of the utterance "*one of those bourgeois bastards we didn't manage to finish off*" and effectively conveys the negative attitude toward the bourgeois class.

This translation is performed at the **level of description of the situation**. In this case, the translation retains the purpose of communication and the identification of the same social situation.

Continuing the exploration of how the narrator expresses his dissociation from a certain class or social group in translation, let us analyze another example:

- (3) «У них, у буржуазных иностранцев, в морде что-то заложено другое» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 657].

*"All of them, all of those bourgeois foreigners, they've got something different in ugly faces of theirs"* [Hicks 2000: 149].

As was mentioned above, the term «*буржуй*» inherently carries an invective connotation, as evidenced by dictionary definitions. Similarly, the adjective «*буржуазный*» reflects a closely related sentiment. Embedded within the socio-political discourse of post-revolutionary Russia, «*буржуазный*» carries a distinctly pejorative undertone, often used to critique and marginalize those perceived as part of the capitalist class or embodying capitalist values. This word, too, is understood by Russian speakers as inherently negative, encapsulating disdain for the bourgeois class and its values without the need for further explanation. This usage is a direct reflection of the social tensions and class struggles that were prominently featured in the literature and public discourse of the time.

Besides, the Russian expression «*буржуазные иностранцы*» breaks the normative collocation of words, illustrating the narrator's linguistic clumsiness, which implies his low education level and low social class associated with it. At the same time, «*буржуазные иностранцы*» emphasizes the narrator's desire to distance himself from this social group.

The clumsiness of the narrator's speech is maintained in the translation "*bourgeois foreigners*". However, the translation loses the potent negative

connotation of the word "**bourgeois**," and its significance as a marker of the narrator's attitude towards this social group. The idea of dissociation is also intensified by the pronoun "*those*".

This translation is performed at the **level of the purpose of communication** as a whole. While the parts of the sentences are arranged well, the derogatory meaning contained in the noun phrase is not fully conveyed due to connotative differences between the source and target languages.

Speaking of language representations of foreigners, let us consider the following example:

(4) «**Немчик** головой лягнул, дескать, битте-дритте, пожалуйста, заберите, об чем разговор, жалко, что ли» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 437].

*"The German shook his head as if to say, Bitte-dritte, please have it, it's yours and you're welcome"* [Hicks 2000: 115].

The suffix «-чик» in Russian often serves as a diminutive and familiar form that can either express endearment or belittlement. In this context, «**немчик**» conveys a derogatory undertone, indicating the narrator's possibly patronizing or dismissive attitude toward the German. This usage hints at an informal and condescending social stance by the narrator, who sees himself in a position to diminish the foreign character's status through language.

It is also worth noticing that the narrator uses colloquialisms like «**лягнул**», «**дескать**», «**об чем**», all of which are associated with the lower social status, since they belong to the low colloquial words.

The translation "*the German*" loses the informal and diminutive connotations of «**немчик**». The English "*the German*" elevates the social status of the German character in the narrator's eyes, presenting him more respectfully. Consequently, the narrator's communicative role shifts from being patronizing to being neutral and formally distant in this part of the sentence.

The dynamics between the characters becomes less about social or cultural superiority and more about a straightforward factual statement of action (considering that the translator also uses a neutral language for the familiar «**лягнул**», which elevates the style even further). This loss of nuance alters the

relationship dynamics depicted in the source, making it appear less colored by social prejudices or cultural perceptions.

Moreover, the social status of the narrator himself is not fully conveyed, since the target text does not contain any lexemes belonging to low colloquial vocabulary.

This translation is done at the **level of the situation**, as it maintains the main participants and processes of the scene. However, the significant changes in vocabulary and style should be noted.

When speaking of lexical representation of social groups, the notion of «**ИНТЕЛЛИГЕНЦИЯ**» should be mentioned. This noun presents a significant translation challenge due to the absence of a directly corresponding class in the English-speaking world. This term, deeply rooted in Russian social and historical contexts, refers to a specific group characterized by intellectual engagement and cultural influence, which does not have an exact equivalent in many other cultures. The word is defined in Ozhegov dictionary as: «*Люди умственного труда, обладающие образованием и специальными знаниями в различных областях науки, техники и культуры; общественный слой людей, занимающихся таким трудом*» [TSO].

This complexity is further illustrated in the following examples, which contain terms semantically related to «**ИНТЕЛЛИГЕНЦИЯ**».

(5) « <...> поедет туда какой-нибудь **дряхлый интеллиантишка**, а назад приезжает и не узнать его» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 386].

*“I mean, some **decrepit old intellectual** goes there, and when he comes back you can barely recognize him”* [Hicks 2000: 102].

In the original, Zoshchenko’s narrator uses the noun phrase «**дряхлый интеллиантишка**» to refer to a representative of another social group. The diminutive «**интеллиантишка**» and the adjective «**дряхлый**» suggest a dismissive attitude towards the social group. The narrator regards them as ineffective or insignificant.

The narrator clearly dissociates from the group not only because he uses the derogatives, but also because he refers to the group using the pronoun

«какой-нибудь». This implies that the narrator is an outsider. Moreover, the derogatory language in «дряхлый интеллигишка» and this critical perspective suggest that the speaker himself has a social status that is either lower than or opposed to the group.

In translating the term «интелигишка», the translator opts for specification, using the noun “*intellectual*” meaning “*a very educated person who is interested in complicated ideas and enjoys studying and careful thinking*” [CED]. However, the translator could not but omit the narrator's negative attitude towards this group contained in this word. While «дряхлый» is aptly conveyed by “*decrepit*” (“in very bad condition because of being old, or not having been cared for, or having been used a lot” [CED]), the translation misses the derogatory nuance expressed through the suffix «-ишк-».

This Russian suffix «-ишк-» reflects on the narrator's social status and communicative role as conveyed through language use. The original Russian uses the diminutive affix in «интелигишка» to signal the narrator's dismissive view of certain social groups, here specifically the intellectuals regarded as weak or ineffectual. By omitting these nuances, the translation fails to fully communicate the narrator's critical stance and the dynamics of social stratification and critique inherent in the narrative.

The adjective «интелигентный» poses a challenge for translators, too, as it necessitates maintaining the social opposition between the narrator and those he is referring to. The translator of M. Zoshchenko works, J. Hicks, himself notes the ambiguity of «интелигентный» in the comments to his text, describing the adjective as a vague term that suggests being well-mannered, holding the correct cultural values, and having a connection to “intelligent,” which refers to a member of the intelligentsia [Zoshchenko 2000: 200].

The translation of the adjective “интелигентный” requires translators to employ specification depending on which semantic element is most relevant in the context, according to the translator's interpretation. This approach involves adding elements to the text that emphasize the contrast between the narrator and the

"intelligent" character. For instance, in the following translation, the semantic element meaning "educated" is explicitly brought out:

(6) «Или принесет телеграммку до *какого-нибудь интеллигентного работника*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 390].

“<...> *some worker who fancied himself as an intellectual*” [Hicks 2000: 104].

In the original, the narrator is referring to the group via the expression «*какого-нибудь интеллигентного работника*». Besides the adjective «ИНТЕЛЛИГЕНТНЫЙ», the indefinite pronoun «*какого-нибудь*» suggests a dismissive and indifferent attitude towards the group. The narrator does not identify with this group and instead speaks about these workers in a detached manner.

In this translation, the addition of "*who fancied himself as*" suggests that the character does not actually possess the qualities of an "intellectual", and this nuance is not found in the original. This specification helps to establish a sense of distance that the narrator sets between himself and the so-called "intelligentsia" class. By questioning the intellectual abilities of this group, the English version highlights the narrator's superiority. This technique effectively conveys the narrator's attempt to dissociate himself from the members of a different social group.

The next example employs the meaning of "civilized", while translating the adjective «ИНТЕЛЛИГЕНТНЫЕ»:

(7) «Зарботки, говорит, не велики, но которые *интеллигентные больные* <...> *норовят непременно в руку сунуть*» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 632].

“*The wages are not good but your more civilized patients* <...> *still manage a contribution*” [Hicks 2000: 58].

The Russian descriptor «*интеллигентные*» implies not only a certain level of education or cultural refinement but also suggests a social class, a group distinguished by more decorous and considerate behavior.

The translation uses "*more civilized*" to describe the subgroup of patients, which introduces a comparative aspect that was not explicitly present in the original. The word "*civilized*", when applied to people's description, means that

someone is “polite and behaves in a calm and reasonable way” [CED]. Hence, the narrator states that the patients are different from him.

This choice suggests that these patients are not only cultured but also show well-mannered behavior more so in comparison to others. This way the translator manages to convey the perceived social dissociation and emphasizes a higher regard or expectation placed on this group by the narrator.

Thus, translations in examples (5), (6), and (7) are conducted at the **level of the situation**. Each translation preserves the essential contextual and situational details necessary for understanding the narrative’s events and character dynamics, despite shifts in emotional or colloquial nuances.

Another social group name that presents difficulty for translation is «аристократ». During the post-revolutionary era, the term «*аристократ*» carried a sharply negative connotation, as this class was toppled by the revolution. It is possible to find the following meaning in dictionaries: «*белоручка (разг. ирон.) [TSU]*».

(8) «*Аристократка*» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 526].

“*Classy Lady*” [Hicks 2000: 42].

Thus the protagonist’s attitude to the lady he calls «*аристократка*» is quite negative, considering the definition given in the dictionary.

At the same time, when translating the title of the short story called «*Аристократка*», the translator avoids using the English equivalent “aristocrat”, which would not evoke the necessary associations in the English-speaking audience (“*aristocrat – a person of high social rank who belongs to the aristocracy*” [CED]). Instead, the translator opts for a more nuanced approach, employing explication and specification techniques by choosing the collocation “*classy lady*”. The word “classy” in English conveys elegance and style (“stylish or fashionable” [CED]), reflecting high personal behavior standards without carrying the derogatory undertone familiar to Russian speakers. Instead, “classy” presents a neutral image of an elegant lady.

This shift in the semantic meaning affects the portrayal of the social status of

the aristocrat group and the narrator's critical attitude towards them. The English translation "*classy lady*" fails to convey the narrator's disdain, since it softens the social critique embedded in the original Russian word «*аристократка*». This loss impacts the reader's understanding of the narrator's lower social status and the dissociation from the aristocracy.

Speaking of gender specific names for social groups, it is possible to identify some other idioethnic Russian terms.

(9) «*Пуцай и баба свободу узнает <...> Такой же она человек, как и я*» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 701].

*"Let the woman know freedom <...>. She's got the same rights as me"* [Hicks 2000: 65].

The original Russian utterance mocks a call for gender equality, using the familiar and illiterate words «*пуцай*», «*баба*». In the Russian source, «*баба*» and «*человек*» are juxtaposed to convey not only the familiar tone of the conversation, but also the self-determination of the character in relation to this gender group. In this context, the speaker acts as a master in relation to a subordinate person, since «*Баба — 1. В устах «господ» (прежде) и в крестьянском быту — замужняя крестьянка*» [TSU]. Also, «*баба*» is often used as a vulgar word in a pejorative sense to refer to a woman — «*вообще женщина (разг. вульг.)*» [TSU].

This use of language indicates the speaker's perception of the woman as belonging to a lower social or respectability level. Thus the satirical effect is achieved due to the conflict between the referential content of the utterance «*Пуцай и баба свободу узнает*» and its lexical content. The irony manifests through the conflict between the referential content (a call for equality) and the use of the word emphasizing inequality («*баба*»).

The English translation, while adequately conveying the call for gender equality, smooths out these colloquial and derogatory nuances. By choosing "*Let the woman know freedom*", the translation adopts a more respectful and neutral tone, losing the original's layer of condescension and the complex interplay of familiarity and derogation present in the original utterance «*Пуцай и баба свободу узнает*». This alteration changes the dynamics conveyed. It rather



presents the advocacy for gender equality without the original's patronizing overtone. Moreover, the translation loses the satirical effect, where the narrator advocates for women's rights using a derogatory term «баба» to denote those women.

This translation is performed at the **level of description of the situation**, as it adequately conveys the real-world situation described in the original text — the speaker's expression about women's freedom. However, it loses the purpose of communication (mocking calls for equality), and this is a distortion.

The omission of the derogatory component is also employed in the following example:

(10) «Гляжу, стоит такая **фря**» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 526].

*“I saw some **personage** standing there”* [Hicks 2000: 42].

The low colloquial lexeme «**фря**» contains semantic components that denote both a high social status of the individual and at the same time disapproval of that individual by the speaker («**фря** — (*прост. ирон. бран.*). *Особа, важная персона*» [TSU]).

The word «**фря**» in the source text marks the social status and communicative role of the narrator and the character he refers to. The use of «**фря**» not only establishes the individual's high status but also implies the narrator's critical and mocking stance toward this status.

The narrator dissociates himself from this group. He positions himself as someone who, while recognizing the social prestige of the individual, also challenges this social prestige through language.

In contrast, the English translation portrays the narrator as merely observing rather than critiquing or undermining the social hierarchy. The translator chose to omit the ironic and derogative aspects of the noun «**фря**». In the translation, the word "**personage**" is used – a word applicable to high-ranking individuals but devoid of derogatory connotations. For instance, according to the Cambridge English Dictionary, "**personage**" typically refers to an important or famous person [CED].

This translation is performed at the **level of description of the situation**. While the basic parameters of the situation are described correctly (the narrator saw a high-status individual who is standing), the specific social confrontation added by the original word «*фря*» is not fully preserved.

Certain words that denote culturally specific groups are handled in translation through transliteration. These transliterated terms are either italicized or capitalized in the translated text to signal their specific cultural content.

However, while this approach preserves the unique identity of the terms, the translation loses the nuances of disapproval, condemnation, and alienation associated with the terms «*мещанин*» and «*нэпман*» in the original Russian.

(11) «<...> я бывший *мещанин* города Кронштадта» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 521].

“<...> *I am a former meshchanin of the town of Kronstadt*” [Hicks 2000: 39].

(12) «Это будет рассказ про *нэпмана*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 422].

“This is a story about a **Непман**” [Hicks 2000: 111].

The class correlation with the narrator is not conveyed in the following example as well:

(13) «На днях поперли со службы старого почтового *спеца*, товарища Крылышкина» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 389].

“*The other day an old post-office specialist, Comrade Krylyshkin, got the sack*” [Hicks 2000: 104].

In Russian the term «*спец*» referred to experienced professionals from the intelligentsia during the early Soviet years («*спец — в первые годы советской власти: опытный специалист из интеллигенции (разг.)*» [TSO]). Moreover, the term itself is marked as colloquial in the dictionary, which means that the narrator himself belongs to a lower social class.

In the translation of the low colloquial word «*спец*», which is marked with connotations of undesirable class distinction, it is replaced with the evaluatively neutral term "*specialist*". On the other hand, the term "*specialist*" in English denotes “*someone who has a lot of experience, knowledge, or skill in a particular subject*” [CED], the term is not low colloquial and does not convey the idea of

dissociation from the group.

This translation fails to convey the underlying class dynamics and the narrator's social status and communicative role as embedded in the original text. The term «*специст*» in Russian carries a layer of class-based distinction that "*specialist*" in English does not, thus neutralizing the social critique inherent in the original text. This translation solution diminishes the complexity of the social interaction depicted, and as a result, the speaker's role as a critical observer of class distinctions within Soviet society is less pronounced in the translation.

The translation is performed at the **level of the situation**. While the translation maintains the factual basis of the situation, it simplifies some of the specific evaluative and class implications of the term «*специст*».

When addressing others, M. Zoshchenko's narrator also uses vocabulary denoting social groups. Let us consider the examples.

(14) «Откуда, — говорю, — **ты, гражданка?** Из какого номера?»  
[Zoshchenko 2008a: 526];

“Where are **you** from, **citizen?**” I asked, “What number?” [Hicks 2000: 42].

The term «*гражданка*» carries a formal tone in Russian, but its juxtaposition with the informal "**ты**" makes the word «*гражданка*» sound like mocking. The narrator is clearly unable to use the forms of address appropriately, he is clumsy with his words, which implies low level of education associated with a low social status. He is trying to be politically correct but fails.

The translation contains an equivalent of «*гражданка*», so the same social group is referred to in both texts. Therefore, the translation is performed at the **lexical level**. However, the narrator's social status is not rendered through the omission of the second person singular «**ты**».

When addressing those who belong to an "in-group" rather than an "out-group", M. Zoshchenko's narrator usually uses familiar colloquial «*братцы*». However, in the English translations this group name is rendered differently. Let us consider the following examples:

(15) «- *Нельзя ли, - говорю, - **братцы**, галошу заполучить обратно?»*  
[Zoshchenko 2008b: 505].

"Would there be any chance *lads*,' I said, 'of getting my galosh back?" [Hicks 2000: 124].

The use of «*братицы*» is familiar colloquial and it denotes a sense of camaraderie and casual affiliation with the people being addressed. It conveys a leveling of social hierarchies, placing the narrator on a similar social footing with those he is speaking to. The term typically evokes a friendly, brotherly intimacy that implies the narrator views the audience or the group he is addressing as equals.

The English word "*lads*" closely mirrors the camaraderie and informality of «*братицы*», since it belongs to the familiar colloquial speech [CED]. The term is often used among equals and carries connotations of friendliness and straightforwardness, effectively maintaining the narrator's role as depicted in the Russian text.

This translation fits the **lexical level**. The semantic properties of camaraderie, informal tone, and peer relationship are well preserved in the translation.

However, sometimes the translator uses the word "*comrade*", thus increasing the communicative distance between the characters. Let us consider the following examples:

(16) «Я, *братицы мои*, не люблю баб, которые в шляпках» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 526].

"*Comrades*, I can't stand women in hats" [Hicks 2000: 42].

(17) «- Ну, - говорю, - ничего не пропишешь. Кажись, *братицы*, надо домой ползти» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 417].

'Well,' I said, 'what action can I take? Looks like I'll have to go home, *comrades*' [Hicks 2000: 107].

The term «*братицы*» denotes a shared identity or solidarity, potentially placing the narrator as an equal within the group rather than as a superior. Example (16) includes the possessive «*мои*», which significantly reduces social distance and establishes an informal, friendly interaction.

The English translation in both examples uses "*comrades*", which is a sociopolitical, institutional term that describes "a friend or trusted companion, especially one with whom you have been involved in difficult or dangerous

activities, or another soldier in a soldier's group" [CED]. The English term "*comrades*", while effective in indicating a non-hierarchical relationship, lacks the informal, personal touch conveyed by «*братцы*» in Russian. Thus, implications of closeness and personal belonging are diluted.

The translator himself states the following: "*I have preferred 'comrades' in certain contexts, which though it corresponds to the more formal Russian term tovarishchi, at least encourages the reader to see the specific and dissimilar aspect of Soviet culture of the 1920s*" [Zoshchenko 2000: 22]. Therefore, the translator uses the term "*comrades*" as a universal tool to invoke a "Soviet" ambiance for English-speaking audiences to highlight the distinctive features of post-revolutionary Russian culture and its historical context.

Thus, both translations (16) and (17) operate at the **level of the situation**. They retain the general situation and the communicative intent of the original while preserving the speaker's inclusive address to his peers. However, the translations convey formal, institutional forms of address "*comrades*", thus, increasing the social distance between the narrator and his peers.

Let us consider the following example, concerning the social group that is of importance for M. Zoshchenko's narrator.

(18) «*беспартийный грузчик*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 363].

"*non-Party porter*" [Hicks 2000: 98].

In Soviet Russia, being «*беспартийный*» meant not being a member of the only approved and ruling entity — the Communist Party («*не состоящий членом ВКП(б)*» [TSU]). This status often implied a lower social and political status, as party membership was associated with privilege, influence, and loyalty to the state.

For English-speaking readers, "*non-Party*" indicates a lack of political affiliation without the implications of exclusion and marginalization, as in the original «*беспартийный*». Although the word "*Party*" is capitalized, it only shows the importance of the Communist Party as the central and dominant political entity in Soviet Russia.

Some forms of address represent the narrator's linguistic creativity within the framework of a familiar colloquial speech. Such linguistic representations are usually translated adequately, for example:

(19) «*Эй, говорю, который тут мне порции подавал, неси мне, куриная твоя голова, лимонаду*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 421].

*“Oi,” I said, “you who gave me the food, bring me some lemonade, you bird-brain”* [Hicks 2000: 110].

The speaker uses low colloquial language to address the waiter, which illustrates a casual disregard for the service person's role. The use of «*Эй*» as an interjection to catch attention, followed by a non-specific descriptor «*который тут мне порции подавал*», indicates that the speaker has no idea of the position of the waiter in society. The low colloquial idiom «*куриная твоя голова*» emphasizes the waiter's foolishness or lack of intelligence, further demeaning the waiter's status from the speaker's perspective.

The translation captures the low colloquial tone with "*Oi*" and "*you who gave me the food*", maintaining the casual and dismissive manner of addressing the waiter. The low colloquial expression "*bird-brain*" (meaning "*stupid person*" [CED]) preserves the derogatory implication, adequately reflecting the speaker's belittling attitude.

The translation is performed at the **lexical level** of equivalence. It successfully transfers both the literal and connotative meanings of the original text while preserving the structural, situational, and communicative elements inherent in the source.

Let us consider the situations when addresses may clash with speakers' ideology.

(20) «— *Вы, господа, напрасно ходите без калош в такую погоду, – перебил его наставительно Филипп Филиппович. <...>*

— *Во-первых, мы не господа, – молвил, наконец, самый юный из четверых, персикового вида*” [Bulgakov 1995: 102].

*“— You ought not to go out in this weather without wearing galoshes, gentlemen,' Philip Philipovich interrupted in a schoolmasterish voice. <...>*

*— Firstly, we're not gentlemen,' the youngest of them, with a face like a peach, said finally”* [Glenny 1989: 27].

There is clearly a boundary of misunderstanding between the speakers: the professor used the word «*господа*» as a usual, polite form of address to several people, as stated in dictionary: «*Вежливое обращение к нескольким лицам (к мужчинам или к мужчинам и женщинам вместе; дореволюц.)*» [TSU].

His interlocutor perceived the appeal as classifying him among representatives of a class alien to him, so the word «*господа*» was understood in the meaning of «*человек, по внешнему виду принадлежащий к привилегированному сословию*» [TSU].

It should be noted that after the October Revolution, the word «*господа*» was used to denote obvious or hidden internal and external enemies of the new government [Vasiliev 2008: 88]. This, on the one hand, reflects the degree of proficiency of the speakers in speech etiquette, and on the other hand, indicates an already formed attitude towards the professor – a person living in a seven-room apartment.

On the one hand, the reason why the character “*with a face like a peach*” resists the address «*господа*», is because it is connected with the opposing social group. Another reason for such an attitude towards this address is the fact that this character is a woman. So, she simply cannot be one of «*господа*», among men.

The form of address “*gentlemen*” in English broadly conveys respect and politeness (“*a polite way of talking to or referring to a man*” [CED]). At the same time, it denotes “*a man who is polite and behaves well towards other people, especially women*” [CED].

“*Gentlemen*” surely does not carry the same historical and cultural connotation as «*господа*» in the Soviet-era context, it only helps to convey the same gender identity intrigue (because the character “*with face like a peach*” appeared to be a woman).

Thus, the form of address “*gentleman*” does not fully capture the implications of class and privilege of «*господа*». The semantic shift affects the portrayal of both Philip Philipovich’s authority and the young man’s dissociation by changing the focus from social class and privilege to behavior and manners.

However, the central message of the episode is still conveyed. The translation of «*zocnoda*» as “*gentlemen*” maintains the social and gender-related nuances. The term “*gentlemen*” conveys the rejection of a specific social status and, at the same time, addresses the gender identity intrigue from the original.

Thus, this translation is performed at the **level of description of the situation**. The translation of «*zocnoda*» as “*gentlemen*” preserves the communicative intent and situation itself, maintains social dynamics, and conveys the irony (connected with the gender intrigue) of the episode.

Another example of a narrator using a noun for identification of a social group is the following one:

(21) «*Я не позволю в моей квартире с вождями разговаривать...*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 735].

“*I will not have people talking with **leaders** in my apartment...*” [Hicks 2000: 152].

The term «*вожди*» in Russian carries historical and cultural connotations that go beyond the simple idea of leadership. Ozhegov dictionary provides the following description: «*Общепризнанный идейный, политический руководитель масс*» [TSO]. It is often associated with powerful, almost tribal or traditional authoritative figures, conveying a sense of commanding respect or reverence. The word itself belongs to socio-political, journalistic terminology, which is striking in such inept narrator’s speech.

On the other hand, “*leaders*” is a more neutral term that generally refers to a “*person in control of a group, country, or situation*” [CED]. The term “*leaders*” does not inherently convey the same depth of charismatic **ideological** authority, historical reverence, or the cult of personality. “*Leader*” is a more sanitized and universally applicable term that focuses on the function of leading. It has to do more with group dynamics than with ideology.

Thus, the translation fits the **level of description of the situation**. However, the loss of the nuances in translating «*вожди*» to “*leaders*” affects the full depth of cultural and authoritative implications intended in the original.

As it is seen from the analysis, conveying information about status and role



relationships in translation presents several challenges. In the translation of nouns and noun phrases denoting **social groups**, the following parameters are of importance: the social group referred to, the narrator's attitude to the referred group, the narrator's dissociation from the group or solidarity with it, social status of the speaker.

The following results are obtained. The translations generally **maintain the identification of social groups** from the original texts. For instance, «пятылетний буржуйчик» — “*the five-year-old bourgeois toddler*”; «Немчик» — “*The German*”; «баба» — “*woman*”; «гражданка» — “*citizen*”; «братцы» — “*lads*”.

However, in some cases the reference to the social group is lost. For example, «интеллигентшица» — “*intellectual*”; «Аристократка» — “*Classy Lady*”; «фря» — “*personage*”; «мещанин» — “*meshchanin*”; «вожди» — “*leaders*”. Thus, these are the words that are recognized only in case of understanding the cultural background of the original text.

In the rendering of the narrator's **attitude** towards a social group, **the derogatory component is mostly lost** («буржуазных иностранцев» — “*those bourgeois foreigners*”; «дряхлый интеллигентшица» — “*decrepit old intellectual*”; «беспартийный» — “*non-Party*”). However, the following techniques are employed to retain derogatory nuances in some cases. For example, translators use explication («буржуи» — “*bourgeois bastard*”) and addition («интеллигентный работник» — “*worker who fancied himself as an intellectual*”).

In most cases the narrator shows the **dissociation** from the referred group; this aspect is mostly **conveyed** in translations. For example, «у буржуазных иностранцев» — “*those bourgeois foreigners*”; «которые интеллигентные больные» — “*more civilized patients*”; «до какого-нибудь интеллигентного работника» — “*some worker who fancied himself as an intellectual*”.

The narrator's lower **social status**, often indicated by the use of colloquial and derogatory terms, is frequently **lost** in translation («головой лягнул, дескать,

*бумме-друмме*» — “*shook his head as if to say, Bitte-dritte*”; «*нуцай*» — “*let*”; «*баба*» — “*woman*”; «*фря*» — “*personage*”). The communicative role of the narrator also changes in some translations: the familiarity and closeness of the original is replaced by a greater sense of distance. For example, «*братцы*» — “*comrades*”.

The notion of roles, rights, and privileges among characters is pivotal in M. Zoshchenko and M. Bulgakov’s works, yet despite its importance, this information often gets distorted in translation. The omission of key components of social status and communicative role interplay in translation distorts the artistic and aesthetic goals of the original work. It is connected with losing cultural and derogatory nuances, changing the social distance between the speakers.

As for the level of translation, the analysis shows that the most frequently encountered level of equivalence is **the level of the situation**. This prevalence is due to its focus on maintaining the basic constituents of the plot – that is characters and their actions.

On the other hand, the **lexical level**, which requires a close match in lexical units and their meanings, is achieved less frequently. For instance, «*Откуда, — говорю, — ты, гражданка?*» — “*Where are you from, citizen?*”; «*- Нельзя ли, - говорю, - братцы <...>*» — “*Would there be any chance lads <...>*”.

The next step in the research will be concerned with the translation of linguistic representation of social status and role in terms of impositive practices.

### **2.3. Translation of Social Status and Communicative Role Through Terms for Impositive Practices**

In this section of the analysis, we will consider translations of a special type of vocabulary with impositive semantics. The semantics of imposition are of interest because the presence or absence of imposition in an utterance serves as a cue for understanding the social status and communicative roles of the speakers. Impositive language reflects power dynamics, hierarchical relationships, and social expectations, making it an essential area of study. Furthermore, translating terms

for impositive practices is particularly challenging due to cultural variations in the permissible degree of imposition. Different cultures have varying norms for what is considered acceptable in communicative situations [Larina 2009: 12]. Thus, words denoting impositive actions often pose significant translation problems.

Let us begin with the **nouns** denoting impositive speech actions.

(22) «— На человека и животное можно действовать только **внушением!**» [Bulgakov 1995: 123].

“*Humans and animals can be influenced only by **suggestion!***” [Bouis 2016: 39].

“*Animals and people can only be influenced by **persuasion***” [Glenny 1989: 47].

In the Russian language, the lexeme «**внушение**» has two main semantic vectors, which are reflected in dictionary definitions: «1. Воздействие кого-чего-н. на волю; влияние, подчиняющее себе волю кого-н. (книжн.). 2. Совет, наставление» [TSU]. Thus, the use of the word «**внушение**» in the original Russian text suggests a character who occupies a dual role, blends elements of both effect on one’s will and teaching. This nuanced usage positions the character as someone who can both teach and control the other person’s will. Therefore, he has a complex social status that straddles the lines between advisor, guide, and authoritative figure

The English translations of «**внушение**» — “**suggestion**” (Bouis) and “**persuasion**” (Glenny), like the Russian word, can also denote a verbal effect on someone. The word “**suggestion**” is described as “*communication of an idea without stating it directly*” [CED]. Therefore, it does not necessarily carry the idea of submission to one’s will. Neither does it contain the idea of «**наставление**» (teaching). Therefore, “**suggestion**” implies a considerably milder and less authoritative form of communicative behavior. It is connected more with a gentle or implying rather than a forceful imposition.

The word “**persuasion**” generally involves more assertiveness or effort to convince than “**suggestion**”. “**Persuasion**” implies a greater degree of engagement and possibly pressure, suggesting a higher level of imposition, associated with reasoning: “*persuade — to make someone do or believe something by giving them*

*a good reason to do it or by talking to that person and making them believe it*” [CED]. Therefore, none of the translations preserves the ambiguity that is present in the original.

Given the nuances in the translation of «*внушение*» to “*suggestion*” and “*persuasion*”, the appropriate level of equivalence is the **level of description of the situation**. The word “*suggestion*” leans towards a looser semantic similarity, as it softens the potentially authoritative connotations of «*внушение*». Using “*persuasion*” is closer to the intent of the original (influencing one’s behavior), but it contains the idea of “reasoning”, which is absent in the original.

Another noun with an impositive meaning that poses a challenge for translation from Russian is «*замечание*».

(23) «— Благодарю вас, доктор, — ласково сказал Филипп Филиппович, — а то мне уже надоело **делать замечания**» [Bulgakov 1995: 171].

*“Thank you, Doctor,” Filipp Filippovich said gently, “I’ve got tired of **correcting** him”* [Bouis 2016: 82].

*“Thank you, doctor,” said Philip Philipovich gratefully. “I simply haven’t the energy to **reprimand** him any longer”* [Glenny 1989: 95]

In the original the word combination used by Filipp Filippovich, «*делать замечания*», plays a crucial role in his self-presentation. In the Russian context, «*замечание*» typically means a comment or a note that can imply criticism or a directive, often used in an educational or corrective sense. As it is stated in the dictionaries: «3. Выговор, наставление» [TSU]. «2. Указание на ошибку; выговор» [TSU]. This usage defines the professor's role not just as a medical professional but as a moral and social guide. Professor sees himself as a mentor for Sharikov and assumes a patronizing line of conduct in communication.

The translations convey this semantics only partially. The choice of the word “*correcting*” focuses on the aspect of pointing out mistakes: “*to point out usually for amendment the errors or faults of*” [MWD]. Thus, the meaning of the word narrows down to “indicating errors”. It frames Filipp Filippovich's remarks as more didactic.

In contrast, the word “*reprimand*” suggests a more formal (marked in CED)

and severe form of criticism, typically used in official contexts: “*to express to someone your strong official disapproval of them*” [CED].

These differences in translation reflect on how Filipp Filippovich’s social status and communicative role are perceived. In the original, his remarks are part of everyday attempts to socialize Sharikov. The word “*correcting*” is connected with a more routine activity, not reflecting the notion of authority. The translation “*reprimand*” however, elevates the formality of these interactions and increases the perceived social distance between Filipp Filippovich and Sharikov. As we mentioned earlier, according to dictionaries, the word “*reprimand*” especially, suggests a more hierarchical relationship, positioning Filipp Filippovich in a more distinctly authoritative or even bureaucratic role compared to the more mentor-like persona in the original.

It is worth noting that the speech act of «*замечание*» is atypical in English-speaking culture. According to T. V. Larina, «*замечание*» made to others about their behavior is uncommon in English-speaking cultures unless there is a clear communicative inequality. The researcher explains that such remarks can damage the “negative face” of both parties involved. For instance, in English-speaking cultures, passengers on public transport typically do not comment on each other’s behavior [Larina 2009: 290].

Therefore, these translations best fit within **the level of description of the situation**. They successfully convey the situation referred to — Filipp Filippovich expressing fatigue from having to continually correct or discipline Sharikov — but the nuanced meaning of «*замечание*» as a routine, non-formal act of guidance is only partially captured.

The following example contains the noun «*просьба*», which is also quite difficult to render into English.

(24) «*Я переехал к Преображенскому, по его **просьбе**, и ночью в приемной с Шариком*» [Bulgakov 1995: 148].

*“I’ve moved into Preobrazhensky’s at his **request** and I sleep in the reception room with Sharik”* [Bouis 2016: 61].

*“I have moved in with Preobrazhensky and sleep in the waiting-room with*

*Sharik*” [Glenny 1989: 72].

The Russian word «*просьба*» carries connotations of appealing to someone who might have greater capabilities or resources, which inherently suggests a certain level of dependency or humility. The dictionaries state the following definitions: «1. *Обращение к кому-н., склоняющее кого-н. удовлетворить какие-н. нужды, исполнить какое-н. желание того, кто просит. Вот он с просьбой о подмоге обратился к мудрецу. Пушкин. Просьбой лишней не надоем. Лермонтов*» [TSU].

«1. *Обращение к кому-н., призывающее удовлетворить какие-н. нужды, желания*» [TSO]. This implies that even someone in a position of authority, like a professor, can display a more common aspect by asking for something rather than commanding.

It is also important to note that the Russian «*просьба*» is often used in a context where the speaker acknowledges the recipient's ability to fulfill the need. In M. Bulgakov's narrative, the use of «*просьба*» by Bormental indicates his recognition of Preobrazhensky's authority and expertise, yet it also humanizes the professor by showing his willingness to ask rather than demand; **it shortens the hierarchical gap between them.**

The word "*request*" in English carries a formal and institutional connotation. The definition, given by the Cambridge Dictionary, says: "*the act of politely or officially asking for something*" [CED]. So, the English usage of "*request*" denotes formal petitions, typically in official or semi-official situations. This translation shifts the perceived relationship dynamics, portraying them as **more formally regulated rather than personally negotiated.**

Thus, the word "*request*" stands in stark contrast to the purpose of the episode. Apparently, in order to avoid such an effect, translator Michael Glenny not only avoids the word "*request*", but also avoids trying to find an equivalent noun with the same semantics.

The level of equivalence achieved here is the **level of the situation**. While the basic situational facts are translated, the deeper relational and social nuances

encoded in «*просьба*» are not fully realized in the English “*request*”.

Let us consider the following example, which contains the noun «*совет*».

(25) «<...> и вы в присутствии двух людей с университетским образованием позволяете себе <...> подавать какие-то **советы**...» [Bulgakov 1995: 176].

“<...> and you, in the presence of two people with a university education, permit yourself <...> to offer **advice**...” [Bouis 2016: 86].

“<...> yet you allow yourself in the presence of two university-educated men to offer **advice**...” [Glenny 1989: 101].

In Russian, «*совет*» is defined as «наставление, указание, как поступить в том или ином случае» [TSU]. So, the word involves instruction that expects compliance, implying imposition over the interlocutor. This usage not only informs us about the speaker's intention to influence an addressee's behavior but also about their perceived position of expertise or seniority. When Preobrazhensky uses «*совет*», it characterizes his remarks as more than casual suggestions; they are directives expected to be considered seriously due to his medical and moral authority in the narrative.

The word «*совет*» is translated as “*advice*” in both English variants. “*Advice*” usually conveys suggestions without the didactic undertones present in the Russian «*совет*», since “*advice — an opinion that someone offers you about what you should do or how you should act in a particular situation*” [CED]. The English term corresponds to a recommendation that the addressee is free to accept or reject, lacking the imperative meaning that «*совет*» implies. This semantic shift alters the directiveness of Sharikov's behavior as it is depicted by Preobrazhensky. It is very important for the episode since it is Sharikov's didactic mannerism

Indeed, the original use of «*совет*» positions Sharikov as a figure of authority who expects his guidance to be followed, reflecting a hierarchical relationship totally opposite to the actual one: Sharikov here is presented as a mentor. The translation to “*advice*” (meaning “expressing opinion”) transforms this communicative role and presents a more egalitarian interaction where Sharikov's behavior is less didactic. This changes the severity of the conflict.

These translations fall under the level of **description of the situation**. This

level ensures that the translation and the original reflect the same situational context (Preobrazhensky offering guidance to Sharikov) but does not fully capture the method of describing the situation or the deeper communicative intents encoded in the term «СОВЕТ».

Another impositive noun that poses a challenge for translation is the word «хамство». For example, V. Nabokov struggled to fully convey the meaning of «хамство» to his American students [Dovlatov 2005: 323]. Let us consider the following example:

(26) «*Хамство, - подумал Шарик*» [Bulgakov 1995: 129].

“*Rudeness,*”: *thought Sharik*” [Bouis 2016: 44].

“*Beasts,*” *thought Sharik*” [Glenny 1989: 54].

The noun «хамство» is defined as «хамское поведение (*разг.*)» [TSO]. Thus, the word itself is colloquial and culturally loaded. Research shows (Khimik 2013; Rozina 2018), «хамство» conveys a behavior deeply frowned upon in Russian society: an uncouth communicative behavior whereby the speaker shows superiority over the interlocutor by challenging communicative norms and expectations. When Sharik the dog (who has not yet turned into human), thinks of «хамство», it reflects his perception and judgment of the behavior displayed towards him as violating human social norms. This creates an ironic effect in the original.

The translations of "хамство" vary significantly in their approach. “*Rudeness*” is “*the quality of being offensive or not polite*” [CED], so it falls short of conveying the full cultural weight and negative connotation of «хамство». “*Beasts*” is a more dramatic departure from just the lexical translation, because it opts for a metaphorical expression – “*an unpleasant, annoying, or cruel person*” [CED]. It dramatically shifts the perspective, framing the behavior not just as socially inappropriate but almost sub-human, which might exaggerate the sentiment to a different style than intended in the original.

Considering the levels of equivalence:

“*Rudeness*” falls under **the level of description of the situation**, where the



basic situational context (Sharik's judgment of human behavior) is adequately translated, but the depth of cultural connotation and emotional intensity specific to «ХАМСТВО» is not fully captured.

"*Beasts*" is performed at the **level of the purpose of communication**, as it only renders the general purpose of the episode: a dog judging human beings for inhumane behavior. Thus, the translator managed not only to save the irony of the original, but also to enhance it.

Impositive meanings can also be expressed by **adjectives**. For example:

(27) «<...> сразу сделался *очень важным и представительным* [Bulgakov 1995: 96].

“<...> *thereby becoming very important and imposing*” [Bouis 2016: 17].

“<...> *immediately looked extremely dignified and important*” [Glenny 1989: 20].

The word «*важный*» is defined as «*величественный, имеющий вес*» [TSU], which implies an impression of being very important and authoritative or distinguished. At the same time, «*представительный*» means «*внушающий почтение, солидный, видный, почтенный*» [TSU], which conveys an air of formality, respectability, and an impressive demeanor. It often suggests that the individual not only holds a significant position but also embodies it in a manner that is visually or behaviorally impressive.

The English translation “*very important*” (Bouis) maintains the original's emphasis on the character's significant status. The adjective “*imposing*” is defined as “*having an appearance that looks important or causes admiration*” [CED]. It suggests a physical or emotional influence that the individual exerts over others, potentially creating a more authoritarian or forceful image than “*представительный*” typically would.

In MG's translation, the word “*dignified*” refers to someone “*controlled, serious, and calm, and therefore deserving respect*” [CED]. Thus, this translation emphasizes the respectability aspect of “*очень важный*” more than its impressive or commanding connotations. The modifier “*extremely*” intensifies this attribute,

highlighting a profound level of respect derived from personal conduct rather than authority alone.

Both translations fit into the category of the **lexical level** of equivalence because they successfully convey the semantic content of the original.

**Adverbs** convey the information about imposition as well. Let us consider the following examples:

(28) «– Успевает всюду тот, кто никуда не торопится, – **назидательно** объяснил хозяин» [Bulgakov 1995: 120].

“He who never hurries always arrives everywhere on time,” **explained** his host” [Bouis 2016: 36].

“One can find time for everything if one is never in a hurry,” **explained** his host **didactically**” [Glenny 1989: 44].

The word «**назидательно**» in the original context renders the meaning «**Поучительный, могущий послужить уроком, назиданием**» [TSU], suggesting that the speaker is not merely sharing information but is imparting wisdom or a lesson in a somewhat authoritative or moralizing tone.

In the translation by AWB “**explained**”, the instructional (Russian equivalent, e.g. поучительный, урок) nuance implied by «**назидательно**» is **omitted**, as it removes the emphasis from the manner of speech delivery. This choice makes the statement appear more as a general expression of observation rather than a didactic instruction.

On the other hand, MG’s translation incorporates the word “**didactically**” to reflect «**назидательно**» more explicitly. Cambridge Dictionary defines the word “**didactically**” as “in a way that is **intended to teach**, especially in a way that is **fixed and unwilling to change**” [CED]. This choice successfully captures the original's instructive tone. The semantic component “**fixed and unwilling**” indicates the fact that the professor is imparting an ethical lesson. By choosing the adverb “**didactically**”, the translator highlights the educational intent behind the host's words, aligning more closely with the original's suggestion that the advice is not merely practical but is intended to shape the listener's attitude or behavior. Thus, the latter translation managed to render the author’s remark in the original.

Therefore, the translation by AWB («назидательно» – “*explained*”) is done at the **level of the purpose of communication**. On the other hand, MG’s translation («назидательно» – “*didactically*”) is performed at **the level of description of the situation**.

Some instances of translation are successful with their use of adverbs and their impositive meanings. Let us look at the following example:

(29) «<...> **внушительно** сказал Филипп Филиппович» [Bulgakov 1995: 103].

“<...> *Philip Philipovich said **imposingly***” [Bouis 2016: 23].

“<...> *said Philip Philipovich **imposingly***” [Glenny 1989: 28].

The adverb «**внушительно**» stems from verb «**внушать**» which means to inspire or instill certain thoughts, feelings, or beliefs in others, often carrying an undertone of authority and influence («*воздействуя на волю, сознание, побудить к чему-н., заставить усвоить что-нибудь*» [TSO]). In this context, Philip Philipovich’s speech is delivered asserting his authority over others and ensuring his words are taken seriously.

Both English translations offered use the word "***imposingly***" to translate «**внушительно**». This choice captures the essence of the original adverb well, as it conveys a sense of authority and impressiveness (“*in a way that looks important or causes admiration, fear, or nervousness*” [CED]). The term "***imposing***" suggests that the manner of speaking is not only influential but also dominant, reflecting a person who commands respect and attention.

The use of «**внушительно**» and its translation to "***imposingly***" both enhance the portrayal of Philip Philipovich as a character of high authority. This translation supports the notion that he is not merely participating in a conversation but leading it, with the intent to influence or control the other participants of the conversation. This approach in speech aligns with his role as a senior medical professional and a debater who is accustomed to being heeded and respected. The communicative style indicated by this adverb inherently suggests a social distance where Philip Philipovich positions himself above others in the hierarchy, reinforcing his role as a leader and an authority figure.

This translation is performed at the **lexical level** of equivalence. The translations maintain the semantic richness of «*внушительно*» preserving all the semantic components of the original Russian adverb.

In the domain of **verbs**, the verbs denoting impositive, face-threatening actions are of significance for our study.

(30) «Два гражданина **нападают** друг на друга. Один замахивается бутылкой. А другой обороняется балалайкой» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 563].

“Two citizens were **setting about** each other. One was swinging a bottle about, and the other defending himself with a balalaika” [Hicks 2000: 135].

The verb «*нападают*» in Russian means «*наброситься с целью произвести насилие; атаковать кого-что-н*» [TSU]. This verb connotes a direct, aggressive action typically used in the context of physical or metaphorical attacks.

Translation “**setting about each other**” captures the mutual engagement in the fight, the meaning of the phrasal verb includes “*to attack someone*” [CED].

Both the original and the translation describe a chaotic and somewhat humorous fight scene where the combatants use unusual items as weapons. The core elements of the situation—two people fighting, one with a bottle, the other with a balalaika—are faithfully preserved.

The communicative goal to portray a fight scene with unconventional weapons and a possibly humorous undertone is achieved in both languages. Thus, this part is translated at the **level of the purpose of communication**. The translation ensures that the audience understands the nature of the conflict and the context in which it occurs.

(31) «Прямо между ними **встревает** и **запрещает** драться [Zoshchenko 2008b: 563].

“He was **pushing right in between them** and **trying to stop them fighting**” [Hicks 2000: 135].

The verb «*встревает*» is defined as «*(прост.). Вмешиваться не в свое дело*» [TSO]. It is worth noting that this verb is marked as low colloquial, which shows the narrator as someone with a low level of education. Thus, it also marks the character’s low social status. The verb «*запрещает*» — «*не позволить,*

возбранить что-н. делать» [TSU], therefore, it carries the meaning of prohibiting and making an authoritative command to stop a particular behavior, in this case, fighting. This combination highlights a decisive and assertive intervention aimed at halting physical violence, suggesting a role of authority or peacemaker.

The original Russian text positions the intervenor as someone with the authority or responsibility to enforce rules and maintain order, reflecting a higher social status or an accepted role as a mediator or leader in the context. The decisive nature of the verbs suggests that this person is recognized and respected enough to enforce behavioral norms.

The English uses "*pushing*" and "*trying to stop*" to describe these actions. The translation "*pushing*" reflects a sense of physical effort (as in «*всереваем*»), and does not have the colloquial sense of «*всереваем*». At the same time, "*trying to stop*" reflects an attempt rather than the direct imposition of authority implied in the original «*запрещаем*».

The English translation portrays the intervenor as less authoritative («*запрещаем*» – "*trying to stop*"), focusing more on the physical act of intervention rather than the authority to enforce peace. The use of "*trying*" implies that the outcome is uncertain, lowering the effectiveness of the intervenor in terms of command and control.

The translation is performed at the **level of description of the situation**. The translation captures the basic actions but does not entirely preserve the original's implications of authority and control, somewhat diluting the communicative power and social dynamics of the intervenor.

(32) «— Да так — он свяжется, а после на него же жители *косо* будут *глядеть*, дескать, разыгрывает начальство» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 563].

*"If he gets involved, he'll **get funny looks** from the locals afterwards. They'll say he's trying to pretend he's the boss"* [Hicks 2000: 135].

The phraseological dictionary of the Russian literary language defines the word combination «*косо глядеть*» as «относиться к кому-либо с недоверием, настороженно (обычно выражая это отношение взглядом)» [Fedorov 2008:

316]. Consequently, the original fragment contains the meaning of distrust.

At the same time, “*a funny look*” is defined as follows: “*if you give someone a funny look, you look at them in a way that shows you think they are behaving strangely*” [LDCE]. Thus, the translation contains the meaning of disapproval, to some extent, the meaning of condemnation is assumed. However, unlike the Russian expression «*косо глядеть*», there is no semantics of distrust.

This translation primarily reflects the attempt to provide a translation of «*косо глядеть*» **at the level of description of the situation.**

(33) «— *Вы издеваетесь, профессор Преображенский!*» [Bulgakov 1995: 103].

“*You are **mocking us**, Professor Preobrazhensky*” [Bouis 2016: 23].

“*Are you **making fun of us**, Professor Preobrazhensky?*” [Glenny 1989: 28].

This verb «*издеваться*» means «*зло и оскорбительно высмеивать кого-что-н*» [TSO]. Thus, it implies more than just making fun. It carries connotations of ridicule or even torment, suggesting a demeaning or belittling attitude.

The two English translations choose slightly different verbs to convey «*издеваетесь*». “*Mocking*”, marked as formal, means “*to laugh at someone, often by copying them in a funny but unkind way*” [CED]. So it closely matches the harsher tone of the original. This choice conveys an accusation of a serious and hurtful nature, implying that the professor’s behavior is not just inappropriate but intentionally demeaning.

“*Making fun of*”, while similar, means “*to make a joke about someone or something in a way that is not kind*” [CED]. It carries a lighter, less aggressive connotation, suggesting behavior that might be inappropriate but less malicious than “mocking”. This choice softens the perceived severity of the professor’s actions, portraying the situation as potentially less hostile.

The use of «*издеваетесь*» and its translations directly influence how social dynamics are perceived between the characters. The original Russian verb, combined with the formal “*вы*”, emphasizes the dynamics where the accuser, despite feeling belittled or ridiculed, still maintains a level of formal respect or

distance in addressing the professor. This suggests that Professor Preobrazhensky holds a higher social status, and the form of address reflects a conflict where hierarchical respect is still observed despite the emotional tension.

Thus, the translation by AWB («издевается» — “*mocking*») achieves equivalence at the **level of description of the situation**, since it preserves the ridiculing nature of the original «издевается». The translation by MG («издевается» — “*Are you making fun of us?*”) fits into the category of the **level of the purpose of communication**. It conveys the general intent but with a milder tone.

(34) «<...> *умерить* вокальные порывы наших граждан» [Bulgakov 1995: 118].

“<...> *to moderate* the vocal outbursts of our citizens” [Bouis 2016: 35].

“<...> *the job of moderating* the vocal outbursts of our honest citizenry” [Glenny 1989: 43].

The verb «*умерить*» is highly impositive, as it means «ограничить степень, силу проявления че-то-н» [TSO]. So it implies an action aimed at tempering, restraining something that is considered excessive. In this context, the verb speaks to curbing the emotional or loud expressions of citizens, and suggests a need for regulation in public conduct.

The translations both choose the word “*moderate*”, but with slightly different framing. Both translations effectively convey the concept of reducing or controlling intensity [CED], with “*moderate*” being a suitable lexical choice for «*умерить*».

The phrase structure in the second translation, referring to the action as a “*job*”, frames the authority as an official duty, perhaps connected to a governmental or managerial role, reinforcing the distance between the governing entity and the populace.

Given the analysis, the translations are done at the **lexical level**. Both translations maintain the meaning and the stylistics of the original, effectively transmitting the notion of authority and responsibility entailed in moderating public behavior.

(35) «<...> пока Вы не **усмирите** этих певцов!» [Bulgakov 1995: 118].

«<...> until you **quieten** these singers!» [Bouis 2016: 35].

«<...> until you can **make these people stop** talking claptrap!» [Glenny 1989: 43].

In the original, the verb «**усмирить**» conveys a strong action of bringing someone under control, often implying a forceful or assertive intervention. Derived from «**смирный**» («**кроткий и спокойный, покорный, тихий**» [TSU]), this verb involves actions such as taming or subduing with an emphasis on establishing control over unruly or disobedient subjects. In the given context, the verb suggests not just reducing noise or activity, but imposing discipline or order on those who are disruptive — in this case, the singers.

"**Quieten**" in the first translation focuses on "*reducing noise or calming down*" [CED], which is a milder interpretation of «**усмирить**». While it captures the aspect of reducing disturbance, it does not fully convey the authoritative and forceful connotation of subduing or imposing order that the original verb implies in Russian.

"**Make these people stop talking claptrap**" in the second translation takes a different approach by focusing on stopping certain behavior, specifically the speaking of nonsense. This translation shifts the original focus from singers to people speaking foolishly, introducing an element of judgment about the content of the speech, which is not explicitly present in the original phrase. The directive "**make them stop**" aligns more closely with the controlling aspect of «**усмирить**».

Both translations reach the **level of description of the situation**, as they capture the general intent of controlling disruptive behavior but do not entirely maintain the original's emphasis on the method and authority inherent in the act of the verb «**усмирить**».

Thus, terms for impositive practices may be represented by nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs. It is evident that translators frequently struggle to capture the intensity of imposition inherent in the original Russian terms.

The intensity of imposition is milder as compared to the source in many



instances: e.g. «внушение» — “*suggestion*”/“*persuasion*”; «советы» — “*advice*”; «хамство» — “*rudeness*”/“*beasts*”; «издеваемесь» — “*making fun of*”; «усмирить» — “*quieten*”/“*make them stop*”.

In the majority of cases, the imposition is perceived as milder due to a stylistic shift, whereby the situation in the translation is presented as formal (or more formal) as opposed to informal in the source. For instance, «замечание» — “*reprimand*”; «просьба» — “*request*”; «издеваемесь» — “*mocking*”. In other cases the imposition is milder because the emphasis from the manner of speech delivery is omitted («назидательно объяснил» — “*explained*”), or because the translation does not render colloquial meanings of impositive words from the original («встревает» — “*pushing in between them*”).

Thus, 7 out of 13 translations achieve the level of description of the situation, as noted in the frequency of this level among the examples. This level conveys the situation referred to in the original (participants, general ideas of actions) but fails to fully express the nuanced impositive force. Also, the corresponding social and communicative dynamics intended in the original text become omitted.

Having explored how the translation of terms with impositive semantics impacts the depiction of social status and communicative roles, it is now possible to examine how these dynamics are further articulated through impositive utterances.

#### **2.4. Translation of Social Status and Communicative Role in Impositive Utterances**

In this part of the study, we will consider how the rendering of impositive communicative acts affects the power of the imposition and, as a result, the impressions of the characters' relationships, their communicative roles and social status.

In the works under consideration, the three typical scenarios were identified where impositive statements of varying intensity play a significant role. The

scenarios include: 1. Violation of communicative role, 2. Re-education; 2. Aside-comment.

### 1. Scenario “Violation of Communicative Role”.

The imposition in this scenario is realized via violating the norms of communicative behavior in customary verbal interactions. Such impositive utterances are face-threatening, since normally they exclude the possibility for the addressee to respond, e.g. leave no choice but going along with the changed communicative roles. Let us consider the following example.

(36) «— *Вы,— говорит,— будьте добры, осторожней тут ездите*»  
[Zoshchenko 2008b: 169].

*“I hope,” he said, “you’ll travel carefully round here* [Hicks 2000: 87].

In this scenario, interlocutors are posited as equals — strangers who are also fellow travelers. In the original, the speaker employs conventional markers of politeness, including the formal address «**Вы**» and the courteous entreaty «**будьте добры**». Despite these markers, the utterance remains face-threatening due to its pragmatic function: enforcement of institutional norms in public transport. Here, the speaking passenger assumes a role typically reserved for agents of institutional communication, such as an inspector, driver, or police officer, who are entitled to make such requests. This appropriation of an institutional role by a non-institutional actor disrupts the expected logic of communicative roles, which results in a very impositive statement (in spite of the seemingly cautious word choice «**Вы**», «**будьте добры**»). The aesthetic purpose of this impositive utterance is to highlight the character's communicative incompetence, which is associated with a low educational level and low social class.

In translation, the use of the predicate "**hope**" modifies the hierarchical relationship between the speaker and the listener by merely expressing the speaker's personal expectation rather than conveying an authoritative, institutional recommendation. The translated utterance is worded as an **indirect recommendation** (as compared to the request «**будьте добры**») but still it is very

impositive. Nonetheless, the phrase "*I hope you will*" still establishes an asymmetrical relationship between the interlocutors, albeit in an indirect manner.

So, the English translation retains the aesthetic impact of the character's linguistic incompetence, but does so by altering the role dynamics. This strategy adapts the original text's pragmatics to the target culture's norms and subtly shifts the inherent power dynamics. Given this, the translation is done at the **level of the purpose of communication**.

(37) «*Подавись этим стаканом. Бери его*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 186].

*"I hope you choke on the glass. Have it"* [Hicks 2000: 90].

In the original Russian text, the communicative context suggests a stark inequality between the interlocutors: the speaker is a hostess, and the listener is the guest. Conventionally, a hostess would demonstrate hospitality and positive regard towards a guest; however, the directive «*подавись*», despite its expressive intent, starkly deviates from this norm. It functions primarily to convey the speaker's intense irritation, and intensifies the literal semantics of inducing physical harm.

The English translation "*I hope you choke on the glass*" introduces a nuanced shift in the dynamics between the characters. The addition of "*I hope*" suggests a less direct form of expression, potentially widening the social distance between the speaker and the listener by framing the curse as a wish rather than a directive. This subtle modulation in translation not only alters the perceived immediacy of the curse but also reflects a cultural adaptation where direct expressions of hostility are mitigated in favor of a more circumlocutory phrasing.

Thus, while the essential elements of a curse and expressive negativity are preserved («*подавись*» — "*I hope you choke*"), the translator's approach suggests a greater social distance and a milder communicative impact, adjusting the translation to English-speaking norms where overt confrontational language is less acceptable. This translation strategy shifts the aesthetic effect from the absurdity of the situation as portrayed in Zoshchenko's narrative to a **subtler** form of satirical expression, where the severity of the hostess's reaction is underplayed. Yet the

asymmetry of the relationship remains palpable, adding a layer of irony to the interaction that resonates with an English-speaking audience.

The most fitting level of equivalence is the **level of the situation**, since the speech act “*curse*” in the original is rendered milder in the translation. For example, the addition of the actor provides this effect.

(38) «– А, - говорит,- заходи, друже, заходи... **Поздравляй** нас...»  
[Zoshchenko 2008a: 700].

“Ah,” he said, “come on in my friend . . . **Aren’t you going to congratulate us then?**” [Hicks 2000: 65].

The original «**поздравляй**» is an imperative form, which directly commands and invites the interlocutor to congratulate the speaker. This form is quite straightforward and carries an idea of enforcing customs. This imperative form is in conflict with the characters’ shared understanding of the situation, where the expectation of congratulations is implicit and understood without the need for direct enforcement.

The English translation “**Aren’t you going to congratulate us then?**” transforms the direct command into a question. This changes the dynamics of the interaction significantly: the contrast (conflict) with the situation is less prominent. The interrogative form in English makes the command **milder**, so it seems more like a prompt for the interlocutor to consider congratulating rather than a straightforward directive. It introduces an element of choice or at least the illusion of it, suggesting that the interlocutor has the agency to decide whether to congratulate or not. This form is less about enforcing customs and more about seeking engagement or confirmation from the interlocutor.

The use of a direct imperative form in the original establishes a **minimal communicative distance**, creating an environment where authority or familiarity presumes compliance without room for negotiation, thereby positioning the interlocutor in an entirely subordinate role. This directness makes the utterance highly impositive: it signals a level of intimacy or authority that expects unhesitant participation.

Conversely, the English translation introduces a question, **expanding the communicative distance** by softening the directive into a prompt that allows for the possibility of refusal, thus acknowledging the interlocutor's agency and participation in the dialogue. This shift not only alters the tone, making it more aligned with English norms of polite communication, but also redefines the social dynamics at play, moving from a straightforward expectation to an interaction that suggests and invites the interlocutor's response.

The translation corresponds to **the level of the situation**. The translation changes the direct command into a question, reducing the imposition. This shift acknowledges the interlocutor's agency, which corresponds to English norms of politeness.

- (39) «– **Обожди, тетка**, – сказал милиционер, – не **тебя** ведь пихнули...  
Спросят **тебя**. **Вали** помалкивай.  
– А хотя бы и не меня...  
– Тс... **Вас** пихнули? – спросил милиционер потерпевшего» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 508].

*“Wait a minute woman,” said the militiaman, “it wasn’t you who was shoved... We’ll speak to you later... Just be quiet for a moment.”*  
*“So what if it wasn’t me...”*  
*“Shush... was it you who was shoved?” the militiaman asked the victim [Hicks 2000: 33].*

The exploration of social and role dynamics in M. M. Zoshchenko's narratives gains particular prominence within institutional settings, such as interactions in police stations, public transport, and other public places like public offices. In Zoshchenko's works, these settings often highlight a marked disparity in social statuses and communicative roles, as exemplified by the use of directive language by authoritative figures. In the original, a militiaman employs bare imperative verbs («**обожди**», «**вали**») to assertively instruct a witness to depart from the scene, thereby not only reinforcing his authority but also delineating the hierarchical relationship between himself and the civilian.

The communicative role adopted by the militiaman is characterized by the issuance of commands. However, the choice of the low colloquial vocabulary and forms of address (e.g. «**ты**», «**тетка**») as in «*обращение к пожилой женщине*

(*простореч.*)» [TSU]), and low colloquial dismissals like «вали», in the militiaman's communicative role constitutes a face-threatening act. Such linguistic choices enhance the imposition of authority but simultaneously puts the witness to a reduced social standing within this interaction, emphasizing the power imbalance.

In translation, the introduction of the discourse particle "**just**" significantly modulates the illocutionary force of the original utterances, since it has the following function: "*used to reduce the force of a statement and to suggest that it is not very important*" [CED]. This adjustment reduces the level of imposition, which is more appropriate for English-speaking communities.

Moreover, the imposition is further mitigated because there is no distinction between informal and formal "**you**" in English, as compared with «ТЫ»/«ВЫ» in the original. Also, all colloquial terms are translated into standard literary English («тетка» — "woman"; «обожди» — "wait a minute"; «вали помалкивай» — "*just be quiet*"), which further reduces the severity of the commands.

The translation is done at the **level of the situation**. At the same time, the purpose of communication is destroyed: the militiaman insults the witness in the original (besides giving her the instructions), using the low colloquial words. However, in the English translation this aspect is not conveyed.

(40) «— *Съезжай*,— говорит,— с квартиры» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 652].

"You **can** move out **if you want**," she said" [Hicks 2000: 61].

The original text contains a direct and imperative command, represented by the directive «*съезжай*». This imperative form is an unambiguous instruction that leaves no room for interpretation and choice. Considering that this is what one neighbor tells to another, here the **violation of communicative roles** can be noted, since usually neighbors are not entitled to evict each other. This violation of the role makes the utterance **highly impositive** in the Russian source.

The English translation considerably **mitigates** the impositive nature of the original by introducing elements of choice and personal volition. By incorporating "*if you want*", the translator transforms a firm command into a suggestion or an

option, which significantly alters the interpersonal dynamics between the speaker and the listener. This not only changes the level of authority and imposition but also shifts the emotional and social weight of the interaction.

Thus, the translation is performed at the **level of description of the situation**. It successfully communicates the general idea that the listener is being told to leave the apartment, but it does not preserve the imposition.

(41) «— *Мамаша!*— говорю я гражданке.— Гляди, пакет унесут. *Убери на колени*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 87].

*“Oi, madam,” I said to the woman, ‘watch out, or someone will nick your package. At least put it on your lap’* [Hicks 2000: 82].

In the original Russian text, the speaker uses the colloquial «*мамаша*» when addressing a woman in public transport. Such an address is not standard for the speaker’s communicative role — passenger, since he is not in the right to use commands speaking to other passengers. The word «*мамаша*» carries **familiar colloquial** connotations, according to dictionaries: «употр. при обращении к пожилой женщине в знач. тетушка, гражданка (фам.)» [TSU]. The use of this word shows the speaker as tactless and disrespectful. The command «*убери на колени*» shows imposition in a way that the speaker provides his own understanding of the situation as the only one possible.

The use of «*мамаша*» paired with commands (e.g. «*убери*») establishes the dynamics where the speaker assumes a position of informal authority, akin to advising someone familiar and socially subordinate. The familiar colloquial vocabulary («*мамаша*», «*гляди*») suggests a close social distance but also implies a kind of hierarchical familiarity where the speaker feels entitled to give direct orders.

The English translation, on the one hand, uses the word “*madam*”, which is “*a formal and polite way of speaking to a woman*” [CED]. The noun carries a higher degree of formality and respect than «*мамаша*». However, the translator balances this out by using the interjection “*oi*”, which is informal and often used “*to grab attention in an abrupt and even rude manner*” [CED]. The translation maintains the advisory nature of the warning about the package but changes the

imperative tone by adding “*at least*”, which **mitigates** the command to a suggestion.

In the English translation, the usage of “*oi*” and “*madam*” create more complex social dynamics. This manifests his low linguistic performance; he is trying to be careful with his word use in English, but fails. In Russian, he is not clumsy; but rather just rude. However, the absence of the second person singular form of the verb («*убери*») in English is compensated by bare imperatives “*put it*”, “*watch out*”, which indicate a close communicative **distance** between the speaker and the hearer.

This translation achieves **the level of the purpose of communication**, as it adequately conveys the action of warning about the potential theft and advising precaution. However, it does not fully capture the original's nuances of familiarity and informal authority.

(42) «— *Докушуйте*, — говорю, — гражданка. *Заплачено*» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 529].

“*You may finish it, I said, 'citizen. It's paid for*” [Hicks 2000: 44].

The original utterance with the imperative «*докушуйте*» carries a distinctly impositive tone, compelling the listener to continue eating with the **justification** that the meal has already been paid for. This command is impositive, since it is represented by a low colloquial verb «*докушуйте*», meaning «*(простореч.). Доесть или допить (обычно в обращении к кому-н.)*» [TSU]. Thus, the speaker whose speech is low colloquial imposes his “norms” on the interlocutor.

The English translation shifts significantly in tone by using “*may*”, which softens the directive into a permission. This alteration not only reduces the forcefulness of the command but also changes the humorous juxtaposition of a casual command with an inappropriate financial justification («*заплачено*»). By converting a command into a permission (or even invitation), the translator changes the implication of «*заплачено*». In Russian it means “*you are obliged to finish it because it is prepaid*”. In English it is more of an invitation: “*you are*



*allowed to finish it, it is pre-paid anyway*". This approach presents the action as optional rather than obligatory, and thus the impositive aspect is **lessened**.

This translation belongs to the **level of description of the situation**. The imposition of norms and behavioral expectations found in the original is lost.

- (43) «— Слабая тара. **He пойдёт. Сымай обратно**» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 421].  
“— *The packaging's loose. **We can't accept it. Take it back***” [Hicks 2000: 159].

In the original dialogue, the interaction between a postal worker and a customer is informal, as the worker uses familiar colloquial expressions «**не пойдёт**» and «**сымай**». This use of informal language in a professional setting not only breaches the typical norms of formal institutional communication but also imposes an unexpected level of familiarity on the customer. The customer, reliant on the postal services, is in a position where it is impossible to avoid this informal interaction, despite the potential discomfort it may cause. Moreover, in Russian, «**не пойдёт**» describes the situation as an objective, inevitable fact. It is impersonal and does not assign responsibility to anyone specifically, which makes the refusal harsher.

The English translation aims at conveying the same basic message but does so using without colloquial words. This translation results in a shift in the relationship dynamics between the postal worker and the customer, presenting a more formal interaction than the original implies. However, the command “**take it back**” in an institutional setting is expected to have a courtesy adverb “**please**” in it, so the expression can be actually used in the institutional discourse. The absence of “**please**” maintains some level of familiarity, and, therefore, some aspects of the original imposition are preserved.

The difference in how refusal is expressed in the original Russian and the English translation also highlights an important aspect of communication style. The English translation “**we can't accept it**” softens the refusal «**не пойдёт**» by including an explanation and implying a responsible entity. The use of “**we**” suggests that there is a responsible party, which the customer can appeal to.

The translation aligns with the **level of the situation**. It preserves the essential communicative act of refusing the package (*“take it back”*). However, by omitting colloquial language and using a less direct refusal, the translation shifts the interaction to a more formal register, **mitigating the imposition** (*“we can’t accept it”*).

Thus, in the Scenario **“Violating the Communicative Role”**, translations regularly soften the imposition and adjust face-threatening utterances to correlate more closely with English-speaking cultural norms. This adjustment is particularly relevant when the original text features interactions where communicative norms are significantly violated (e.g. *«обожди»*, *«тетка»*, *«вали помалкивай»*).

As it is seen from the analysis, **imposition** is made **milder** in most translations. It is softened by the use of mitigated directives (e.g., *«будьте добры, осторожней тут ездите»* — **“I hope you’ll travel carefully”**; *«подавись»* — **“I hope you choke”**; *«убери на колени»* — **“at least put it on your lap”**; *«поздравляй»* — *“Aren’t you going to congratulate us?”*). Translations also include modals that make the imposition milder (*«докушуйте»* — **“You may finish it”**; *«Съезжай»* — **“You can move out”**).

However, the imposition can be achieved in translations by adding informal lexical units (*«Мамаша!»* — **“Oi, madam”**) and omitting the expected in English communication politeness marker **“please”** (*«Сымай обратно»* — *«Take it back»*).

These translation choices often **increase social distance** by acknowledging the interlocutor’s agency and using a more formal address, reflecting English norms of politeness.

Thus, 4 out of 8 translations are performed at **the level of the situation**. While the translations often maintain the general situational context and actions, they do not always preserve the exact impositive force, leading to shifts in the social status and communicative roles of the characters.

## **2. Scenario “Re-Education”.**

In this scenario, imposition is achieved through an attempt to impose new norms of behavior or values on the interlocutor. The utterances are face-threatening because they communicatively present the interlocutor's norms as worthy of censure, particularly in the presence of other listeners.

(44) «— *Довольно*, — говорит, — *вам неловко в таком отвлеченном виде в театры ходить*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 416].

“*Don't you feel embarrassed,*’ she said, ‘going to the theatre in such an abstract state?’” [Hicks 2000: 107].

The original utterance is impositive because it challenges the listener's behavior directly, suggesting that they should feel embarrassed about their appearance in the theater. It has a high level of imposition and contains a face-threatening act, since the speaker comments on the interlocutor's appearance in front of other people in a reproachful manner. The use of the adverb «*довольно*» (meaning “quite”) enhances the imposition by emphasizing the degree of embarrassment the speaker expects the listener to feel.

The English translation employs a rhetorical question “*Don't you feel embarrassed...?*” that introduces a more interactive and less impositive approach. By framing the statement as a question, the translation inherently invites the listener to consider their feelings about their appearance rather than receiving a reproach from the speaker. While still authoritative, posing a question rather than making a statement decreases the level of direct control or command exerted over the listener. It suggests that the listener has the agency to agree or disagree, potentially reducing the distance between the speaker and the listener.

By converting the direct reproach into a question, the translation modifies the dynamics of the interaction, placing less social pressure on the listener. The speaker still imposes the supposed norms of conduct, but does so by prompting introspection rather than reproaching.

This translation fits with the **level of the situation**. It captures the general situation and the topic of embarrassment in a public setting. However, it changes the force and the nature of the imposition.

In the works of M. Zoshchenko, the re-education scenario is often depicted through sequences of statements characterized by normativity, which critique inappropriate social behaviors and call for their correction. For instance:

(45) «— *Ежик-то*, уважаемая Марья Васильевна, промежду прочим, *назад положьте*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 271].

“By the way, most esteemed Marya Vasilyevna, *would you mind putting that scourer back*” [Hicks 2000: 95].

The original utterance is impositive because it directly instructs the listener to perform an action. The imperative verb «*положьте*» is a direct command, which inherently carries a high level of imposition.

It is important to note that in addition to the imperative form of the verb «*положьте*», the original utterance includes additional markers of imposition, such as «*промежду прочим*» and the particle «*-то*» (in «*ежик-то*»), which are used for semantic emphasis. These markers are low colloquial, illiterate forms («*промежду прочим — нареч. разг. -сниж.*» [TSE]), so they help to reduce the communicative distance between the speaker and listener. They also mark the low educational level of the speaker, which, in its turn, is associated with the low social status. At the same time, the address «*уважаемая*» belongs to a formal register, which increases the distance between the interlocutors. The blend of formal and colloquial language elements creates a comic effect, portraying a character who is unable to keep to one register and appears ridiculous as he tries to establish new rules of communication.

In translation, however, there remains distance, which is a characteristic of English communication. The translator employs the modifier “*would you mind*”, which syntactically functions as a question directed at the listener. This softens the impositive nature of the statement by implying that the speaker is considerate of the listener's reception to the proposed action. This modification effectively transforms the command into a request.

However, the comedic aspect is lost in the translation. The conventional interrogative syntax of “*would you mind*” eliminates the stylistic contrast found in

the Russian version, and with the loss of colloquial markers, the aesthetic impact of the impositive statement is also lost. The markers of illiterate speech are lost, too.

This translation is performed at the **level of the situation**, as it communicates the basic factual content, but fails to preserve the form of expressing the situation. Particularly the linguistic nuances that convey the speaker's authority, social status and the comedic tension between formal and informal registers.

(46) «А *ежли*, говорит, по делам, то *прежде, может быть, пропуск надо взять. Потом наверх соваться*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 604].

“Well if you’re on official business, *then, first of all, you might just need a pass. Then you can go poking your nose in upstairs*” [Hicks 2000: 141].

The original utterance uses low colloquial elements: «*ежли*» («(устар. и простореч.). Если» [TSU]) and «*соваться*» («лезть, устремляться куда-н.» (разг.). [TSU]). The utterance lays out a sequence of actions expected of the listener, framed within a presupposition — if the listener is there on official business. The utterance «*пропуск надо взять*» is impositive, presenting a necessary bureaucratic step. The speaker indicates that the rules are violated but does so in an inappropriately rude manner. This rudeness and low colloquial vocabulary intensify the imposition.

The English translation contains the informal element in the speech through “*poking your nose*” (“*informal. to show too much interest in a situation that does not involve you*” [CED]). The use of colloquial language in both the original and the translation suggests a conversational tone that reflects informality appropriate to the context or the characters' relationship. The directive nature of the speech, laying out what must be done to proceed, establishes the speaker's role as an informer, able to set his own rules and, at the same time, violate the interlocutor's “negative face”.

The translation achieves **the level of the situation**, since it effectively captures the situational context, informal tone, and procedural instructions of the original.

Thus, the scenario of “Re-Education” is aimed at changing the interlocutor’s worldview and behavior, claiming his own as wrong. In translations, it is clearly seen that this kind of impositive utterances need to be reformulated in English

The original Russian utterances typically indicate a close social distance and high imposition, using direct commands («положите», «пропуск надо взять») and low colloquial elements («Ежик-то назад положите», «ежли», «совать»»). This mix creates a comedic effect, emphasizing the speaker's lower social status and communicative incompetence.

In translations, the **imposition** is often **mitigated**. It is made milder through the alteration of syntax («Довольно вам неловко» — “Don't you feel embarrassed?”; «назад положите» — “would you mind putting that scourer back”) and the addition of modality («Потом наверх совать» — “Then you *can* go poking your nose in upstairs”).

Translations **increase social distance** by using politer or mitigated language and transforming commands into questions, resulting in a more egalitarian interaction. The loss of low colloquial markers («положите» — “putting”; «ежли» — “if”) diminishes the comedic effect and the depiction of the speaker’s low social status.

Thus, the translations primarily achieve the **level of the situation**. They capture the general situational context and actions but often fail to preserve the linguistic nuances and impositive force of the original. This modification leads to an increased social distance and a reduction of the “re-education” (e.g., “Would you mind putting that scourer back” instead of «положите»; “Don't you feel embarrassed” instead of «довольно»; “first of all, you might just need a pass” instead of «прежде, может быть, пропуск надо взять»).

### 3. Scenario “Aside Comment”.

In this scenario, imposition is achieved through a special rhetorical construction of the statement: the speaker addresses imaginary listeners who are not present in the actual communication situation. The statement is **face-threatening** because the rhetorical remark criticizes the position of the actual

interlocutor, portraying the interlocutor as one against the imaginary audience which upholds this normative behavior).

(47) «–*Вот теперь проходи. А то прет без пропуска. Этак может лишний элемент пройти* [Zoshchenko 2008b: 605].

“– *All right then, now you can go in. Trying to go barging in without a pass. If we allowed that kind of thing, an unwanted element could get in*” [Hicks 2000: 141].

In the original Russian utterance, the speaker imposes a restriction on the listener. The command «*Вот теперь проходи*» and the reprimand «*А то прет без пропуска*» establish an authoritative tone. The final utterance «*Этак может лишний элемент пройти*» reinforces the idea that strict control is necessary to prevent undesirable individuals from entering.

The imposition in Russian is enhanced through the use of informal language. The words «*теперь*», «*прет*», and «*этак*» are marked as low colloquial in dictionaries [TSU]. Thus, the speaker is depicted as someone who has a low social status, and at the same time uses the authoritative tone. This language choice indicates the speaker's control over the situation and emphasizes the imposition.

The speaker's comment in English, “*trying to go barging in without a pass*”, implies that there is an unspecified group that represents societal norms or rules (intensified by “*we*” in the translation of the next sentence). This broader audience is not explicitly present but is implied. The implicature invoked through the narrative emphasizes the importance of following rules.

The Russian verb «*переть*» and the English phrasal verb “*barge in*” both denote movements that are socially or contextually inappropriate but differ in intensity and cultural connotations. «*Переть*» means «*идти, двигаться (неодобр.)*» [TSO], impacting the communicative role by portraying the subject as aggressive or oblivious to social norms. In contrast, “*barge in*” in English means “*to walk into a room quickly, without being invited*” [CED], heightening the sense of imposition and the speaker's authority in censuring such behavior.

Both expressions serve to enforce social norms by highlighting unacceptable behaviors. The idea of violation of personal space is more directly expressed in the

dictionary definitions. In the Russian definition we see the assessment «неодобр.»; in English it is explicit “*without invitation*”.

Therefore, **the level of description of the situation** is the primary one in this translation. The utterances “*Trying to go barging in without a pass. If we allowed that kind of thing, and unwanted element could get in*” perform both a directive function (instructing and warning the immediate listener) and a regulatory function (reinforcing rules and consequences to a broader, imaginary audience).

(48) «*Что нардон, то нардон*» [Zoshchenko 2008a: 422].

“*I’m sorry, I’m very sorry*” [Hicks 2000: 161].

The Russian «*что нардон, то нардон*» uses a repetition of «*нардон*» («*Простите, извините (разг.)*» [TSU]), which is familiar colloquial and light-hearted. It suggests an apologetic tone but retains a casual, irreverent attitude. The redundancy of the phrase in Russian adds a layer of self-aware or humorous undertone to the apology, downplaying the imposition of the apology to some extent.

On the other hand, the English “*I’m sorry, I’m very sorry*” shifts the tone significantly from the original Russian. Adding the modifier “*very*” amplifies the sincerity and seriousness of the apology, making it sound more earnest than the original. It is worth mentioning that it is the tone that indicates the social identity of the speaker.

The translation is performed at **the level of the purpose of communication** because it successfully conveys the essential communicative act of apologizing, aligning with the primary purpose of the original text. However, this translation leans towards a more formal and serious apology, possibly altering the light-hearted, casual nuance present in the Russian version. The playful, self-mocking tone of the original is lost, replaced by a straightforward expression of regret.

(49) «*Таким,— говорит,— гостям прямо морды надо арбузом разбивать*» [Zoshchenko 2008b: 185].

“*Guests like that,’ he said, ‘ought to get their faces smashed in with a melon*” [Hicks 2000: 90].



The original Russian utterance presents a stark and graphically violent proposition against undesirable guests. The Russian «морды» («лицо (вульг.) [TSU]) is a vulgar term for “faces”, carrying a derogatory connotation. This word, combined with impositive directive «*надо арбузом разбивать*», conveys a very high level of imposition. This expression is not just a statement of disapproval but an extreme hypothetical retaliation against those who are deemed unacceptable by the speaker.

This aside comment signifies a strong imposition in terms of social interaction — it is a declaration of what the speaker feels should happen to the guests, suggesting a breakdown or a severe strain in social norms that typically govern hospitality and guest interactions. Therefore, the speaker practices the communicative role of someone imposing harsh punishment.

The translation captures the aggressive tone; however, the low colloquial language of the original is not conveyed, especially with the word «морды» translated as “*faces*”. The modality of “ought to” introduces a sense of obligation, which softens the imposition slightly compared to a direct command but still maintains strong disapproval and hypothetical violence.

The modality of “*ought to*” introduces presupposition, which softens the imposition slightly compared to the original but still maintains the strong disapproval and hypothetical violence. The translation conveys the aggressive judgment and the speaker's emotional stance, maintaining the imposition of moral judgment while keeping it within the bounds of an informal comment rather than a direct threat.

The translation is performed at **the level of the situation**. It captures the overall context and intended meaning of the original, preserving the speaker's strong disapproval and the suggested violent action towards the guests. It retains the directive nature through the modality of “*ought to*,” similar to the original “*надо*,” which introduces a sense of obligation without being a direct command.

In terms of aside comments, it is worth noting that some utterances, on the contrary, deny the speaker's impositive intentions. Let us consider an example:

(50) «*Хотите – идите, не хотите – не надо, – за волосы вас не потащим*»  
[Zoshchenko 2008a: 701].

“*You can come too if you like, but you don’t have to, we’re not forcing you*”  
[Hicks 2000: 65].

The original Russian utterance «*хотите – идите, не хотите – не надо*», particularly in the context of an invitation. The imposition is conveyed through the indifferent and dismissive attitude of the speaker. The utterance «*хотите – идите, не хотите – не надо*» conveys not so much an acknowledgment of the guests' right to accept or decline, but rather a direct preference for a negative response («*за волосы вас не потащим*»). This demonstrates the speaker’s disinterest in accommodating the guests, hinting at a socially detached or self-serving character.

The translation, on the other hand, employs a variety of lexical units typically used to convey non-impositive intentions: the modal verb “*can*” suggests permission, while the negative forms of “*have*” (“*don’t have to*”) and “*force*” (“*not forcing*”) communicate the absence of coercion. However, some of this nuanced indifference and potential antisocial characteristics of the speaker are lost in translation due to the choice of language more aligned with strategies of negative politeness. The translation thus reduces the imposition by framing the choice more neutrally and less dismissively.

This translation primarily achieves **the level of the situation**. It adequately conveys the situational context — the suggestion that guests join the hosts in dining out instead of expecting home-cooked meals.

Thus, in the scenario “**Aside Comment**”, imposition is conveyed when the speaker addresses an imaginary audience not present in the actual conversation. This creates face-threatening acts, as the speaker criticizes the actual interlocutor's position while addressing the remarks towards an imaginary audience.

The translations often convert directives into more indirect, polite forms. They maintain the **imposition** but in a **milder** manner. The mitigation of imposition is achieved by omitting the low colloquial vocabulary (e.g. «*прет*» — “*barging in*”; «*этак*» — “*if*”; «*пардон*» — “*sorry*”; «*морды*» — “*faces*”), introducing an explicit agent («*Этак может лишний элемент пройти*» — “*If*

*we allowed that kind of thing*”; «Что pardon, то pardon» — “*I’m sorry, I’m very sorry*”). Moreover, the translation uses lexical means compatible with a negative face strategy, ensuring that the imposition is mild. For instance, verbs “can”, “don’t have to”, “not forcing” (e.g. «Хотите – идите, не хотите – не надо» — “*You can come <...>, but you don’t have to, we’re not forcing you*”).

The **social distance** between the speakers is generally **increased** in the translations. The original often shows a close social distance with low colloquial language, while the translations use more formal language, creating a more polite and distant interaction (e.g. «прет» — “*barging in*”; «за волосы не потащим» — “*we’re not forcing you*”).

The most common level of equivalence achieved in these translations is the **level of the situation**. The translations capture the general context and intended meaning of the original utterances but often fail to preserve the full impositive force and the nuances of the social and communicative dynamics.

Thus, impositive utterances include such types of communicative scenarios as “**Violating the Communicative Role**” (translations often moderate the level of imposition and adapt face-threatening statements to better suit English-speaking cultural preferences for more indirect communication); “**Re-education**” (translations often incorporate modality or altering the sentence type to make it less confrontational); “**Aside Comment**” (translation involves subtly conveying the implied criticism and the speaker’s alignment with an unseen normative consensus, which subtly manipulates the interlocutor to conform).

## Summary of Chapter 2

**The artistic originality** of M. M. Zoshchenko and M. A. Bulgakov's works, with their intricate depictions of social roles and communicative behaviors, presents significant challenges in translation, particularly in conveying the social dynamics of post-revolutionary Russia where new social roles were being established.

Both authors employ unique artistic techniques to highlight characters whose assertive communicative behaviors symbolize the dominant strategies of the era, such as exerting imposition. These narrative elements not only shape the literary characters but also become parts of the aesthetic information within the text.

The challenge of adequately translating information about social status and communicative role **through lexical representation of social groups** often involves nuanced adaptations, as observed in the translations of nouns and noun phrases that denote specific social groups. Translations generally maintain the identification of social groups adequately («Немчик» — “*The German*”; «баба» — “*woman*”; «гражданка» — “*citizen*”; «братцы» — “*lads*”). However, in many cases (e.g. «Немчик» — “*The German*”; «баба» — “*woman*”) such translations lose the diminutive, pejorative and informal connotations of the source nouns; thus the narrator's communicative role shifts from being patronizing to neutral.

Some translations lose the specific cultural nuances associated with the social groups («интеллигентшишка» — “*intellectual*”; «Аристократка» — “*Classy Lady*”; «фря» — “*personage*”; «мещанин» — “*meshchanin*”; «вожди» — “*leaders*”).

While some translations attempt to retain derogatory nuances through techniques like explication («буржуи» — “*bourgeois bastards*”) and addition («интеллигентный работник» — “*worker who fancied himself as an intellectual*”), many lose the critical tone of the original («буржуазных

иностранцев» — “*those bourgeois foreigners*”; «дряхлый интеллигентшишка» — “*decrepit old intellectual*»; «беспартийный» — “*non-Party*”).

The social distance and the narrator's dissociation from the groups are mostly conveyed («у буржуазных иностранцев» — “*those bourgeois foreigners*»; «которые интеллигентные больные» — “*more civilized patients*»; «до какого-нибудь интеллигентного работника» — “*some worker who fancied himself as an intellectual*”), but the translations frequently lose the idea of lower social status indicated by colloquial and derogatory terms. It changes the narrative («головой лягнул, дескать, бимте-дримте» — “*shook his head as if to say, Bitte-dritte*”; «нуцай» — “*let*”; «баба» — “*woman*”; «фря» — “*personage*”).

The most common level of equivalence found in the translations is the level of the situation. The lexical level is less frequently achieved («гражданка» — “*citizen*”, «братцы» — “*lads*”).

The rendering of **terms related to impositive practices** poses challenges for translators as well. Imposition in translations often becomes milder due to various factors. Translators struggle to capture the intensity of the original Russian terms («внушение» — “*suggestion*”/“*persuasion*”; «советы» — “*advice*”; «хамство» — “*rudeness*”/“*beasts*”; «издеваются» — “*making fun of*”; «усмирить» — “*quieten*”/“*make them stop*”). This is primarily due to a shift towards a more formal situation of communication in translations («замечание» — “*reprimand*”; «просьба» — “*request*”; «издеваются» — “*mocking*”), and omitting the emphasis on the manner of speech delivery («назидательно объяснил» — “*explained*”).

Most translations reach the level of description of the situation.

Translation of social status and communicative role in **impositive utterances** suggests 3 communicative scenarios:

1. “*Violation of the Communicative Role*”.

The imposition is realized via violating the norms of communicative behavior in customary verbal interactions. The face-threatening utterances here exclude the possibility for the addressee to respond. In this scenario, imposition is

milder in most translations (e.g., «будьте добры, осторожней тут ездите» — “**I hope** you’ll travel carefully»; «подавись» — “**I hope** you choke”; «убери на колени» — “**at least** put it on your lap”; «поздравляй» — “Aren’t you going to congratulate us?”). Modal verbs become the tools of mitigating imposition («докушывайте» — “You **may** finish it”; «Съезжай» — “You **can** move out”).

## 2. "Re-education" .

In this scenario, imposition is achieved through an attempt to impose new, often non-existent norms of behavior or values on the interlocutor. The utterances are face-threatening because they communicatively present the interlocutor’s norms as worthy of censure, particularly in the presence of other listeners.

In translations, the imposition is often mitigated through the change in syntax («Довольно вам неловко» — “Don’t you feel embarrassed?”; «назад положьте» — “would you mind putting that scourer back”) and the addition of modality («Потом наверх соваться» — “Then you **can** go poking your nose in upstairs”).

The loss of low colloquial markers («положите» — “putting”; «ежли» — “**if**”) diminishes the comedic effect and the depiction of the narrator’s low social status.

## 3. "Aside Comment".

Imposition is achieved through a special rhetorical construction of the statement: the speaker addresses imaginary listeners who are not present in the actual communication situation. The statement is face-threatening because the rhetorical remark criticizes the position of the actual interlocutor, portraying the interlocutor as one against the imaginary audience which upholds this normative behavior.

The translations often convert directives into more indirect, polite forms. The mitigation of imposition is achieved by omitting the low colloquial vocabulary (e.g. «нрет» — “barging in”; «этак» — “**if**”; «пардон» — “sorry”; «морды» — “faces”), introducing an explicit agent («Этак может лишний элемент пройти» — “If **we** allowed that kind of thing”; «Что пардон, то пардон» —

*“I’m sorry, I’m very sorry”*). Moreover, the translation uses lexical means compatible with a negative face strategy, ensuring that the imposition is mild. For instance, verbs “can”, “don’t have to”, “not forcing” (e.g. «*Xotume – idume, ne xotume – ne надо*» — “*You can come <...>, but you don’t have to, we’re not forcing you*”).

In all three scenarios the most frequent level of equivalence is the level of the situation. The social distance between the speakers is generally increased in the translations. The source texts often show a close social distance with low colloquial language, while the translations use more formal language, creating a more polite and distant interaction.

## Conclusions

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the ways in which linguistic expressions of social status and communicative role are translated from Russian into English without losing the meaning, nuance, and voice of the original text.

According to the theoretical results of this study, literary translation aims at recreating a work in the target language with the same artistic and aesthetic impact as the original. This research on social and role relations in translation reveals specific complexities of achieving equivalence between the original and the translated text.

Thus, the analysis revealed that the difficulties in the translations include the loss of specific cultural nuances in vocabulary that denotes social groups; the omission of derogatory connotations; the frequent elevation of the narrator's social status due to untranslated colloquialisms; the illusion of greater communicative distance due to more formal language; and the mitigation of imposition.

In terms of the levels of translation equivalence, the most frequent one is the level of the situation (18 translations out of 50). This predominance is due to the translators' focus on maintaining the overall context and actions of the original text, ensuring that the basic situational dynamics are conveyed accurately. This level allows for the preservation of the general narrative flow and the main events, which are crucial for understanding the plot and character interactions.

Conversely, the least frequent level of equivalence is the lexical correspondence level (6 translations out of 50). This infrequency is because achieving a direct lexical match that also captures the nuanced social and cultural connotations of the original terms is particularly challenging. The complexity of accurately translating specific terms with their original intensity and cultural implications often leads to a reliance on broader situational equivalence instead. This approach, while maintaining the storyline, often omits the precise linguistic and cultural nuances of the original text.



The results of this research can serve as a framework for a comparative evaluation of the strength of imposition conveyed through face-threatening acts and the translation of social status and communicative role relations. This can be done conducting parallel psycholinguistic experiments in the source and the target cultures.

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### **List of Abbreviations Used**

Sources in Russian:

1. TSE — Tolkovyi slovar Efremovoy.
2. TSK — Tolkovyi slovar Kuznetsova.
3. TSO — Tolkovyi slovar Ozhegova.
4. TSU — Tolkovyi slovar Ushakova.

Sources in English:

1. CED — Cambridge English Dictionary.
2. LDCE — Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English.
3. MWD — Merriam-Webster Dictionary.