

THE "FALSE FRIENDS OF TRANSLATORS" IN ENGLISH AND THEIR FORMATION

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Abstract: This article discusses about the translator's false friends and their origin, varieties and how to identify them in time and thus avoid mistakes and confusing situations.

Keywords: internationalisms, translation, borrowing, terms, similar, extra, source language, target language, opposite meaning, dictionary meaning

About: FARS Publishers has been established with the aim of spreading quality scientific information to the research community throughout the universe. Open Access process eliminates the barriers associated with the older publication models, thus matching up with the rapidity of the twenty-first century.

It's no secret that in English, as in any other language there are words-internationalisms (information, period, secret, text). Thanks to them, we understand a lot even in the most complex English texts. They often help us like real friends.

However, you need to be prepared for the fact that in English there are words with a completely different meaning than similar words in their native language. They are called "false friends of the translator".

Where do the word – "false friends of the translator" comes from?

Every language is evolving constantly, taking in new information, expressing a shifting world, and borrowing terms from other languages.

The borrowed word can come to another language with exactly the same meaning (as marketing, fitness, hot dog, which came into Russian from English). It can take an extra meaning, a different shade, or completely change from its original meaning. This causes several problems in translation.

The term 'translator's false friends' was introduced by the French theorists of translation M. Koessler and J. Derocquigny in 1928. This term means a word that has the same or similar form in the source and target languages but another meaning in the target language. Translators' false friends result from transferring the sounds of a source language word literally into the target language.

Both closely related and distantly related languages have false friends. Often, in related languages, they have not so much a different, but an opposite meaning.

False friends of a translator in English with examples

There are several groups of translator's false friends, depending on how much their meaning differs from consonant words in their native language.

The first type includes words that have a completely different meaning. Every Russian student who is learning English confused the word magazine with магазин in Russian, and family with фамилия.

The most common examples of false friends of the translator from this series are given in the table:

English	Translation	Incorrect translation	English
Accurate	Точный	Аккуратный	Tidy, smart
Balloon	Воздушный шар	Баллон	Cylinder, container
Brilliant	Отличный, блестящий	Бриллиант	Diamond
Cabinet	Шкафчик	Кабинет	Study, office
Camera	Фотоаппарат	Камера	Cell, chamber
Cartoon	Карикатура, мультфильм	Картон	Cardboard
Cater	Организовывать застолье или питание	Катер	Motorboat
Chef	Шеф-повар	Шеф	Boss, manager
Clay	Глина	Клей	Glue
Concourse	Общий зал, скопление	Конкурс	Competition, contest
Decoration	Орден, награда, знак отличия; украшение	театр. Декорация	Scenery, decor
Fabric	Ткань	Фабрика	Factory, plant
Herb	Лекарственное растение, целебная трава	Герб	Coat of arms
Liquidize	Превращать в жидкость	Ликвидировать	Eliminate
List	Список	Лист	Leaf (of tree), sheet (of paper)
Lunatic	Сумасшедший, безумец	Лунатик	Sleepwalker
Multiplication	Размножение, умножение	Мультипликация	Animation
Paragraph	Абзац	Параграф	Article, section
Prospect	Перспектива	Проспект	Avenue
Pretend	Делать вид, притворяться	Претендовать	To try to get
Repetition	Повторение	Репетиция	Rehearsal
Replica	Точная копия	Реплика	(театр. Cue; юр. Reply; remark)
Resin	Смола	Резина	Rubber

Similar but not the same: pay attention to the letters!

A variation of the second type can be considered words that are very close, but have a slightly different spelling.

English	Translation	Incorrect translation	English
Beacon	Маяк	Бекон	Bacon
Beckon	Кивок	Бекон	Bacon
Bucket	Ведро	Букет	Bouquet

Council	Собрание, совет	Консул	Consul
Data	Данные	Дата	Date
Desert	Пустыня	Десерт	Dessert
Doze	Дремота, дряблость; дремать	Доза	Dose
Intelligence	Ум, интеллект	Интеллигенция	Intelligentsia
Heroine	Героиня	Героин	Heroin
Lack	Недостаток, нужда; отсутствие чего-либо	Лак	Lacquer
Liquor	Крепкие алкогольные напитки	Ликёр	Liqueur
Pasta	Макаронные изделия	Паста	Paste
Photograph	Фото	Фотограф	Photographer
Racket	Ракетка	Ракета	Rocket
Silicon	Кремний	Силикон	Silicone
Stationery	Канцелярские принадлежности	Стационарный, неподвижный	Stationary

The third type includes words that coincide in only one meaning:

English	Coincide meaning	Additional meaning
Abstract	Абстрактный	Реферат, краткий обзор
Accent	Акцент	Ударение
Accessory	Аксессуар	Соучастник преступления
Activity	Активность	Занятие; деятельность
Aggressive	Агрессивный	Настойчивый, энергичный
Angina	Ангина	Стенокардия
Argument	Аргумент	Спор, ссора
Article	Артикул	Статья; вещь, изделие
Artist	Артист	Художник, скульптор
Authority	Авторитет	Власть
Bachelor	Бакалавр	Холостяк
Bass	Бас	Окунь
Compass	Компас	Циркуль

The fourth type includes words that belong to the same thematic group, so it is difficult to establish their difference from the context.

Here is the biggest risk that you will make a mistake in the translation and will take them for real friends. It is better to remember them.

English	Translation	Incorrect translation	English
Academic	Преподаватель или научный сотрудник вуза	Академик	Academician
Ammonia	Аммиак	Аммоний	Ammonium
Anecdote	Случай из жизни (особенно: из жизни знаменитостей); интересное происшествие	Анекдот	Joke; funny incident

Antarctica	Антарктида	Антарктика	the Antarctic (regions)
Benzene	Бензол	Бензин	(брит. Petrol, амер. gasoline)
Biscuit	Сухое печенье	Бисквит	Sponge cake
Brunette/ brunet	Шатенка/шатен	Брюнетка/брюнет	Black-haired
Decade	Десятилетие	Декада	10 days
Marmalade	Апельсиновый джем	Мармелад	Fruit jellies
Stool	Табуретка	Стул	Chair
Velvet	Бархат	Вельвет	Corduroy

Only context and vocabulary can help to establish the correct translation. At the slightest discrepancy, look up the word in the dictionary. This is the only way to dispel all doubts!

Try to memorize the word not only in its first meaning, look through the entire dictionary meaning, you will definitely give the correct translation.

As a conclusion, when translating foreign texts, the ignorance of false friends can distort the meaning of the sentence, confuse, and put you in an awkward situation. It is not always worth relying on the initial meaning of the word. If the word has several translation options, it is not difficult to figure it out, because we, as a rule, meet the word in a coherent speech.

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