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Nataliia DIACHUK

PhD in Psychology, Associate Professor, Associate Professor at the Department at the English Language and Applied Linguistics, Educational and Research Institute of Foreign Philology, Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, 40, Velyka Berdychivska St, Zhytomyr, Ukraine, 10008

ORCID: 0000-0002-5905-6813

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CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE TRANSLATION

The translation of children's literature presents a unique set of challenges that require careful consideration. While the fundamental principles of translation remain consistent, the specific demands of translating texts for young readers introduce unique complexities. This study delves into the intricate process of translating children's literature from English into Ukrainian, focusing on the preservation of genre-specific stylistic features. It explores the challenges and opportunities involved in adapting texts for a new linguistic and cultural context. The research examines key strategies employed by translators to maintain the aesthetic and cognitive impact of the original work on young readers. This study identifies strategies such as lexical adaptation, syntactic simplification, and cultural transposition by analysing specific examples from translated children's literature. It explores the role of the translator's cultural competence and linguistic creativity in shaping the target text. Thus, the research object of the study is children's literature in the context of translation. The subject is the features of translating children's literature into Ukrainian. The article aims at studying the specifics and effective methods of translating children's literature into Ukrainian. The study focuses on specific research objectives such as examining the concept of children's literature, defining children's literature and its role in society, identifying the qualities of a successful translation of children's literature and analysing the most effective translation techniques for children's literature into Ukrainian. This study is grounded in theoretical frameworks that view children's literature through a linguistic lens, particularly theories that explain the specific language and style of children's texts. The findings of this research contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities of children's literature translation and offer valuable insights for translators, educators, and scholars in the field.

Key words: children's literature, translation, genre, style, linguistic adaptation, cultural adaptation, target language, source language.

Наталія ДЯЧУК

кандидат психологічних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри англійської мови та прикладної лінгвістики Навчально-наукового інституту іноземної філології, Житомирський державний університет імені Івана Франка, вул. Велика Бердичівська, 40, м. Житомир, Україна, 10008

ORCID: 0000-0002-5905-6813

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ВИКЛИКИ ТА СТРАТЕГІЇ ПЕРЕКЛАДУ ДИТЯЧОЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ

Переклад дитячої літератури є особливим завданням, що вимагає ретельного підходу. Хоча фундаментальні принципи перекладу залишаються незмінними, специфічні вимоги до перекладу текстів для юних читачів створюють унікальні складнощі. Це дослідження вивчає тонкощі процесу перекладу дитячої літератури з англійської мови на українську, зосереджуючись на збереженні жанрово-стилістичних особливостей. Воно досліджує виклики та можливості, пов'язані з адаптацією текстів до нового лінгвістичного та культурного контексту. Дослідження вивчає ключові стратегії, які використовують перекладачі для збереження естетичного та пізнавального впливу оригінального твору на юних читачів. Стаття окреслює такі стратегії, як лексична адаптація, синтаксичне спрощення та культурна транспозиція, уході аналізу конкретних прикладів з перекладеної дитячої літератури. Наукова розвідка досліджує роль культурної компетенції та лінгвістичної креативності

перекладача у формуванні цільового тексту. Отже, об'єктом дослідження є дитяча література в контексті перекладу. Предметом дослідження є особливості перекладу дитячої літератури українською мовою. Мета дослідження полягає у вивченні специфіки та ефективних методів перекладу дитячої літератури українською мовою. Дослідження зосереджене на таких конкретних дослідницьких завданнях, як вивчення поняття дитячої літератури, визначення ролі дитячої літератури в суспільстві, ідентифікація якостей успішного перекладу дитячої літератури та аналіз найбільш ефективних методів перекладу дитячої літератури українською мовою. Теоретичною основою дослідження стали положення теорії літератури, зокрема теорії реценції та дискурс-аналізу, які дозволили розглянути дитячу літературу як продукт взаємодії автора, тексту та читача. Особлива увага була приділена лінгвістичним аспектам, таким як лексика, синтаксис та стилістика, що дозволило проаналізувати особливості мови дитячих творів та їх вплив на сприйняття читачем. Застосування цих теорій допомогло виявити специфічні риси української дитячої літератури та розробити ефективні стратегії її перекладу.

Ключові слова: дитяча література, переклад, жанр, стиль, лінгвістична адаптація, культурна адаптація, цільова мова, вихідна мова.

Problem statement. The translation of children's literature presents a unique set of challenges that require specialized knowledge and skills. While the importance of accurate and culturally appropriate translations is widely recognized, the specific demands of translating children's literature often go beyond mere linguistic equivalence. This research **aims** to delve into the complex issues involved in translating English-language children's literature into Ukrainian, focusing on preserving the original text's linguistic, cultural, and aesthetic qualities.

Children's literature plays a crucial role in a child's development, shaping their worldview, language skills, and emotional intelligence. As such, it is imperative that translations accurately convey the intended meaning and impact of the original text. However, the linguistic and cultural nuances inherent in children's literature can pose significant challenges for translators.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. A comprehensive review of existing literature reveals that scholars such as O. Rebryi, A. Potapova, R. Zorivchak, R. Tabbert, G. Fermeijer, S. Marshak, N. Demurov, B. Zakhodr, Z. Shavit, E. O'Sullivan, G. Klingberg, K. Rice, Z. Shavit, M. Carta, T. Puurtinen, R. Tabbert, K. Landers, and R. Oittinen have made significant contributions to the field of children's literature translation. Their works have highlighted issues such as linguistic and cultural adaptation, the preservation of visual elements, and the ethical considerations involved in translating for young readers. By examining these challenges and opportunities, this research seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on children's literature translation and to provide insights into best practices for future translators.

The research methods are complex and encompass both general scientific theoretical methods

(generalisation, abstraction, deduction) and linguistic and specifically translation-oriented methods: stylistic analysis, the method of continuous sampling, structural-semantic analysis, and comparative analysis.

Presentation of the basic material. Children's literature is a unique genre designed to captivate young minds. These works, tailored to the specific needs and interests of children, often employ a variety of literary techniques, including poetry, fairy tales, fables, short stories, and novels (Vozniuk, 2019; Solovei, 2021). A key characteristic of children's literature is its inherent didactic value, as it seeks to instil positive values such as kindness, justice, and environmental awareness. Additionally, it serves as an invaluable tool for cognitive development, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and language acquisition (Vardanian, 2018; Zorivchak, 2007).

One of the most significant challenges in translating children's literature lies in preserving its linguistic and cultural nuances. The genre is rife with proper nouns, idioms, puns, neologisms, and diminutive forms, each carrying specific cultural and linguistic connotations. Translators must carefully consider the age-appropriate language and cultural references to ensure that the translated text resonates with the target audience (Kolodii, 2020).

Another crucial aspect of children's literature translation is maintaining a balance between fidelity to the source text and readability. While it is essential to accurately convey the author's original intent (Kryvoruchko T. V., Diachuk N. V., Biliuk I. L., Svyrydiuk T. V., 2024), translators must also adapt the text to suit the linguistic and cultural preferences of the target audience. This delicate balancing act involves making informed decisions about word choice, sentence structure, and cultural

references, ensuring that the translated text is both engaging and comprehensible.

Ultimately, a successful translation of children's literature requires a deep understanding of both the source and target languages, as well as a keen awareness of the cultural nuances that shape the text. By carefully considering these factors, translators can create translations that not only preserve the original meaning but also captivate young readers and inspire a lifelong love of reading.

Particular difficulties arise when translating proper nouns, names, place names, dialects, neologisms, and figurative language (Vozniuk, 2019). Often, there are no direct equivalents in the target language, or the equivalents may be unfamiliar to child readers. Moreover, the translator must consider the cultural context of both the source and target languages, ensuring that the translation remains culturally appropriate and meaningful for the intended audience (Solovei, 2021). A translator, therefore, must possess an extensive vocabulary and a deep understanding of idiomatic expressions and proverbs. For instance, consider the translation «Mirkwood» (Tolkien, *The Hobbit*). The initial translation «Чорний ліс» («Black Forest») by O. Mirovolskiy is relatively close to the original, as «mirk» signifies «darkness». One can speculate that the translator chose «чорний» over «темний» (dark) because the former sounds more like a real-world place name, whereas the latter is more suggestive of an epithet (consider the Ukrainian phrase «ой, в лісі, лісі темному...»). However, the second translation, «Морок-ліс» (*Mork-forest*) by O. O'Lir, reveals a deeper understanding of the source text. While the primary meaning of «морок» is indeed «darkness», it also carries a secondary, allegorical meaning of «something dismal, hopeless, or sad», thus imbuing the place name with greater evocative power.

Humour is an indispensable element in any work of children's literature. A successful translation must effectively convey the wordplay and nonsensical elements that contribute to the comedic effect. Only creative and skilled translators can successfully navigate this complex task (Kukovynets, 2021; Rebrii, 2012).

Consider the translation of Roald Dahl's *Matilda*. The translator of Roald Dahl's *Matilda* faced a unique challenge when translating the name «Eric Ink». While the translator generally used a practical transcription approach to render proper

names phonetically, the pun inherent in the name «Ink» presented a specific problem. In the original English text, the name «Ink» is used humorously, playing on the literal meaning of the word and its association with writing. The tyrannical Miss Trunchbull's reaction to the name highlights this comedic effect.

The translator wisely chose to adapt the name to the Ukrainian context. Instead of a literal transcription, which might have lost the intended humour, they opted for the Ukrainian equivalent, «Чорнило» which is directly translated to «ink». This choice successfully preserves the pun while maintaining the overall meaning of the passage. By adopting the name in this way, the translator demonstrates a keen understanding of the cultural and linguistic nuances involved in translating humour. They have effectively conveyed the comedic intent of the original text while remaining faithful to the core meaning.

“My name is Eric Ink, Miss Trunchbull,” he said. – “Eric what?” the Trunchbull shouted. – “Ink,” the boy said. – “Don't be an ass, boy! There's no such name!” – “Look in the phone book,” Eric said. “You'll see my father there under Ink.” – “Very well, then,” the Trunchbull said. “You may be Ink, young man, but let me tell you something. You're not indelible. I'll very soon rub you out if you try getting clever with me.”

Dahl playfully uses the similarity in sound between the common word “ink” and the boy's surname to create a humorous moment. Miss Trunchbull's incredulous reaction underscores the comedic effect. Recognising that a direct translation of “Ink” as «Чорнило» would diminish the humour, the translator opted for a more creative solution. By using the Ukrainian equivalent, «Чорнило» which also means “ink”, the translator successfully preserved the pun while ensuring the translation remains comprehensible to the Ukrainian audience. This decision showcases the translator's skill in balancing accuracy with cultural adaptation. They have effectively conveyed the intended humour of the original text while considering the specific needs of the target language and readership.

The primary difficulty in translating fairy tales is capturing the rich imagery that these works are known for. A translation is insufficient and does not adequately represent the original text if it either misses the vibrant, emotive imagery of the original

or replaces tangible images with more intricate, abstract ones. Each detail of the original, including the language used, the actions of the protagonists, and the unique aspects of their daily lives, exhibits national specificity (Vardanian, 2018). As folk tales are the most vivid and powerful expression of a nation's distinct essence, this is especially true of works strongly associated with folklore. Since fairy tales are a form of folklore, maintaining their national individuality is a tough task.

A contemporary trend in translation is to preserve as much of the source language context as possible, increasing the use of transcription and transliteration for proper nouns and, whenever feasible, fully conveying the cultural and linguistic context. This approach also highlights children's literature's educational and enlightening function more effectively.

A significant issue in the study of children's literature translation is the rendering of proper nouns in the target text. Anthroponyms, toponyms, and zoonyms occupy a prominent place in the system of artistic expression in children's literature (e.g., *the Cheshire Cat*, *March Hare* from "*Alice in Wonderland*," *Carrock* from *J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Hobbit or There and Back Again"*) (Britannica, 2024)

In literary works, certain proper nouns serve not only to identify characters or settings but also to underscore significant aspects of a character's personality or convey hidden meanings. Consequently, pre-translation analysis, which involves delving into the literary world of the text to uncover the author's underlying meanings and allusions, becomes critically important.

The most effective method for rendering realities (specific proper nouns) in children's literature combines transcription (a tool for creating ethno-specific flavour) with a simultaneous explanation. This is known as "combined renaming" (Zorivchak, 2007). In the novel "*Molly Moon's Hypnotic Time Travel Adventure*" by J. Bing, the author often provides explanations for transcribed (transliterated) realities: "...a *bindi*, a red holy dot, was painted on her forehead" – «...на чолі виднілася намальована червона священна цяточка – бінді».

When translating real-world names and titles, the widely accepted translation techniques of transcription and transliteration are

commonly employed. For instance, most proper nouns in *Rudyard Kipling's «The Jungle Book»* are translated using transcription (e.g., *Mowgli*, *Shere Khan*, *Seeonee hills*, *Bagheera*, *Baloo*) and transliteration (e.g., *Waingunga*, *Akela*, *Kaa*, *Gidurlog*, *Bandar-log*).

However, the translation of evocative names, where the author has embedded hidden meanings, presents a more complex challenge. Simply transferring the graphic or phonetic form of such a name into the target text would leave it incomprehensible to the child reader and impoverish the literary work. In such cases, a component-by-component translation of the proper noun can be employed, which not only identifies the characters but also highlights their distinctive traits. For example, *Cinderella* (*Aschenputtel*, meaning «*little ash girl*», who was forced to sleep on ashes), and *Snow White* (*Sneewittchen*, associated with *white snow*) (Britannica, 2024).

When translating proper nouns, it is important to note that children with a certain reading experience may already be familiar with common foreign names such as *John*, *Hans*, *Greta*, *Mary*, *Petro*, and *Danylo*. However, a Ukrainian-speaking reader may not perceive "*Hansel*" and "*Gretel*" as diminutive forms of "*Hans*" and "*Greta*". This onomastic feature must be taken into account during translation.

When adapting literary works into a different language, translators may deliberately choose not to domesticate certain elements to preserve the original's foreignness or to better align it with the target culture. This is often the case when translating proper nouns. The degree of domestication or foreignisation depends on the age of the target audience and the translator's individual decision.

Children's literature frequently features puns, which pose significant challenges in translation. Consider this example from the Ukrainian translation of *Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland"*:

"*You had got to the fifth bent, I think?*" – "*I had not!*" – *cried the Mouse, sharply and very angrily.* – "*A knot!*" – *said Alice, always ready to make herself useful, and looking anxiously about her.* – "*Oh, do let me help to undo it!*"

«*Вибачте, будь ласка, – сумірно сказала Аліса. – Ви вже, мабуть, чи не на п'ятій звивині зі слів?*» – «*На п'ятому з ослів! – лютю крик-*

нула Миша. – На н'ятому з вузлів? – спантеличено перепитала Аліса. – Ой, дайте, я допоможу розплутати!.. (Вона завжди готова була стати комусь у пригоді.)»

When rendering puns in translation, it is often insufficient to merely convey the original meaning in a new linguistic form. The original form itself – both phonetic and graphic – must also be re-expressed. Moreover, it is sometimes necessary to replace the original pun with a new one if it cannot be preserved, as the expressive

form may prove more important than the content (Kukovynets, 2021).

Conclusion. It is noteworthy that in translating children's literature, the most common translation transformations employed include concretization, addition, omission, modulation, or semantic development. Methods such as transcription and transliteration are most frequently used when translating onomastic realities, that is, proper names and geographical names that cannot be rendered into another language using any other method.

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