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XII Халықаралық ғылыми конференциясының
БАЯНДАМАЛАР ЖИНАҒЫ

СБОРНИК МАТЕРИАЛОВ
XII Международной научной конференции
студентов и молодых ученых
«НАУКА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ – 2017»

PROCEEDINGS
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«SCIENCE AND EDUCATION - 2017»



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**PROPER NAMES TRANSLATION ANALYSIS
OF THE BOOK “HUNGER GAMES” BY SUZANNE COLLINS**

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In the XX-XXI centuries Literature: dystopias have gained incredible popularity. In terms of globalization, urbanization, technologization and all other modern “izations”, when the world is getting smaller with each day, and there is no time for face-to-face communication, dystopias are coming true and it is exciting to realize that the most incredible and bizarre predictions of Orwell, Huxley, Wells, Strugatsky brothers, that seemed impossible and insane are becoming an integral part of our reality and personality.

The most outstanding representatives of the genre were made into movies and still attract millions of loyal fans, and, consequently, millions of dollars. Among numerous novels, probably, the most popular story is the concept of Hunger Games, invented by an American writer Suzanne Collins. The trilogy became popular among both children and adults not only because of the original idea and a creative approach, taken by the author but also due to the twisted plot and deep message, conveying the principles and theories of social sciences. Indeed, the world of Hunger Games merges two different civilizations: Ancient Rome and post-apocalyptic USA, known as a fictional country Panem, but, in fact, that's a parody of every modern community and everyone can notice many links and implications. Thus, reading “Hunger Games” was made compulsory by some US high-schools and universities in the curricula.

There were many works, considering various sides and taking different approaches to the novel, such as etymology, storytelling, statehood, gender roles, cultural Literature: etc. In our article we would like to focus on a very important issue – translation of proper names, since many of descriptive names possess a figurative meaning and additional expressiveness, and it is of a great significance to transfer that symbolic representation into the target language of translation.

Some would argue the importance of adequate transferring of proper names, as they are just “labels” (Vendler, 1975)[5], or Sciarone (1967) who supports the idea, that proper names convey no meaning in themselves.

But, on the other hand, proper names translation might be viewed as a complex process and a tool of intercontextuality. Albert Peter Vermes (2003)[6] assumes that:

"The translation of proper names has often been considered as a simple automatic process of transference from one language into another, due to the view that proper names are mere labels used to identify a person or a thing. Contrary to popular views, the translation of proper names is a non-trivial issue, closely related to the problem of the meaning of the proper name."

Thus, proper names translation should resemble the original variant to support intertextuality and help interpretation without challenging processing effort.

We aim to compare proper names translations in 4 versions of the book: a) the original book “The Hunger Games” by Suzanne Collins b) its Russian translation “Golodniye Iгры (Голодные Игры) made by Alexey Shipulin c) “Los Juegos Del Hambre” translated into Spanish by Pilar Ramírez Tello d) its Italian translation “Hunger Games” made by Fabio Paracchini and Simona Brogli.

The concept of Hunger Games as a reality show is based on Roman gladiatorial combats, and shares their fundamental principle – death was considered the only outcome of combat. In order to create a proper setting, these “Roman” links are used, and can be observed everywhere throughout

the story, e.g. the common name used for all the adolescents who have to combat is tribute – lat. *tributum* in a meaning "tribute, a stated payment, a thing contributed or paid", emerged in Ancient Rome (*tributum ex censu, Tributum soli, Tributum capitis*), (33) the place where the events take place is called Arena. The games were often too violent and abusive, like the time when Caligula (37-41 A.D.) sent innocent people from the public to battle because the gladiators were being killed off too fast: the unfortunate had their tongues cut off so they could not yell for help. We can see a similar trend in the story: those, who stood up against the Capitol, got their tongues cut off. (44)

All this is complemented by Roman family names of the Capitol citizens – native *nomens* and *cognomens*, as well as women's names, following the Roman naming convention for females. There are a bunch of names that pop up frequently in the history of ancient Rome, particularly during the time of Julius Caesar (not to mention in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*). These include Cato, Portia, Octavia, and Flavia. These Roman names generally go with characters who are from the Capitol or the wealthy districts, in order to show their social standing.

The Roman-themed names play on author's critique of imperialism. Suzanne Collins has said that Panem is supposed to be like ancient Rome: "Panem itself comes from the Latin expression 'Panem et Circenses' which translates into 'Bread and Circuses'". This term refers to the techniques used by the Roman Empire to keep the masses happy and docile.

Regarding the translation, due to the common European history, and because some of these names are still used in modern Italy and Spain, obviously, the translators kept the original names, and in order to translate these names into Russian, Alexey Shipulin applied well-known equivalents, used ubiquitously in historical books (Tsezar - Цезарь, Katon – Катон, Portsiya – Порция, Tsinna – Цинна etc).

On the other hand, characters from the poor, depleted districts are named after plants or other earthy items, which highlights the natural goodness of the books' heroes(1). The names of plants and flowers play a special role in the text, and as we have noticed, most of the translations found their equivalents, while the others were done quite freely, perhaps in order to follow the principles of euphony. We would like to consider the following examples, transformed in different ways:

English	Russian	Italian	Spanish
Katniss	Kitniss (Китнисс)	Katniss	Katniss
Catnip	Kisskiss (Кискисс)	Catnip	Catnip
Primrose	Primrose (Примроуз)	Primrose	Primrose
Rue	Rutah (Рута)	Rue	Rue
Clove	Mirta (Мирта)	Clove	Clove
Buttercup	Lyutik (Люттик)	Ranuncolo	Buttercup

Regarding the name of the main heroine, Katniss is an edible aquatic plant that grows in District 12, known more commonly as *Sagittaria* or in Latin "of the arrow," which readers know is Katniss's weapon of choice as an expert archer. Both meanings (the plant and the arrow) are extremely important, but in all these 3 translations they were fully omitted. Though, in English the semantics is not on the surface either, the word "Katniss" or "Kitniss" in translations possesses no semantic value at all, and for an average reader would sound like a borrowing from English with an ambiguous message, resulting in considerable loss in meaning. Perhaps, the loss was unavoidable, because changing the name of the protagonist would require further transformations throughout the whole text. Furthermore, there are no adequate equivalents in target languages, only the Latin *Sagittaria*, mentioned above, or the Russian *Strelolist*, which can hardly qualify for a female name.

Also, one can find successful and unsuccessful use of onomatopoeia in translation into Russian. We believe, that the variant "Katniss – Catnip" and "Kitniss – Kisskiss" transfers the meaning from one language into another, and at the same time keeps the sounding and form similar to the original. From the story we know, that the best friend of Katniss uses a nickname while referring to her, and that is "Catnip". When he met her for the first time, he misheard her name, and thought, for a while, that it was Catnip, as a name of a herb, also known as "catwort" or "catmint", and, probably, was not surprised as most of the names of the people from District 12 were flower or

nature inspired. So, the names catnip and catmint are derived from the intense attraction most cats have towards them. On the other hand, in the Russian language this species doesn't have a name that would fully express the idea of the author, and, moreover it doesn't sound similar to "Katniss" (Kotovnik Koshachiy), but Kisskiss does, and in Russian this onomatopoeic unit is used to beckon a cat. This way, both the meaning and the sounding are translated.

Another interesting example is Rue. Her name is derived from a medicinal shrub and also brings to mind the word rue, meaning sorrow or regret, and it fits her story perfectly, because the death of a 12-year-old tribute, who became Katniss's friend, indeed, was shrouded by sadness and moaning. Though, this nuance is completely lost in Russian Rutah, which conveys only a meaning of a plant. In the Italian and Spanish variants, due to the use of the original form both meanings are missing.

In case of the name "Clove" Alexey Shipulin came up with an occasional equivalent and its hyperons – Mirta, (Myrtle in English) as the spice clove belongs to the myrtle family. The motives are quite unclear; perhaps, the variant Mirta was used in order to keep the length of the word, as Gvozdika is rather long, and not to overload it, since in Russian it has two meanings, such as clove and dianthus. But, on the other hand, the name of the character might have been misunderstood by the translator, as there is also a version that it comes from the verb to cleave – to split, cut up, divide, hack, chop up, which has several variants of the past forms – cleft, cleaved or, finally, clove. We firmly believe, this was the original message of the author, as a participant from District 2, together with her fellow-tribute Cato (a Roman name) were from a district close to the Capitol and quite devoted to it. That was a wealthy district, where youngsters fought for an opportunity to become a tribute, they craved for fame and show, were ready to kill and trained from an early age. During the parade of all tributes they both wore Roman armor. Moreover, her preferred weapon was a throwing knife and she killed several tributes with them, mocking them after, as a result of what was killed by Thresh, another tribute from District 11. In this context, such variant as Myrtle seems a bit awkward, because of the misinterpretation. Her origin, temper and story require a more adequate name that has something in common with knives or splitting.

Considering the other names and nicknames, the line Buttercup – Lyutik – Ranuncolo can be viewed as fully successful, because its direct equivalents fulfill the semantic and grammatical roles, except when the translator keeps the English form, as it happened in Spanish.

In the other richer districts, more devoted to the Capitol, where fashion rules, food is plentiful and fighting in the Hunger Games is an honor, the names are similarly extravagant, it can be seen throughout the trilogy: Cashmere, Glimmer, Marvel, Gloss and Brutus. Though, we found some differences in meanings, while analyzing the translations. Such name as Glimmer is an example of antonymic translation. It acquired new meanings and associations in Russian (Diadem) and Italian (Lux), those of luxury, royalty, sophistication, though its original meaning is rather poor: a grey, obscure, twinkling light, that doesn't shine continuously, therefore it's quite the opposite.

English	Russian	Italian	Spanish
Seam	Шлак	Giacimento	Veta

Interestingly, the nickname of District 12 acquires an additional meaning in its Spanish translation, that of "vetar" – to veto, to prohibit or to impede, it gives a reader food for thought, and in combination with the setting makes him think of a rogue community: indigent, oppressed, anguished but unswerving and struggling till the end.

On the other hand, in Russian the given association, and therefore impression are completely opposite. The word "Shluk" means a by-product of metal processing, the leftovers that go to waste. Moreover, in slang it stands for "nonsense, baloney, trash". It tells us nothing about the potential heroism or destiny of its citizens.

Among the descriptive names the most salient one is Effie Trinket. Trinket – a small ornament or item of jewelry that is of little value. This last name indicates the role of the character – a background personage, playing a role of a pawn in the Hunger Games of the Capitol, being a host

of the main show of the country for the poorest district. In the Russian text it's compensated by means of onomatopoeia. "Bryak", literally imitating a sound of a falling object, gives her an image of a plain character. Probably, this is a successful example of pragmatic adaptation that helps general understanding. But in terms of translation, the main part of the meaning is missing, the image is not complete, it lacks that association of a constantly yapping character, that is (or maybe just seems) beautiful and attractive on the surface, but empty inside. Maybe, other onomatopoeic units would fit better here, e.g. "Dzzink", "Ding" or even "Trink" or "Trrin" that are closer to the original form and convey a meaning of annoying noises.

In addition to occasionalisms, such variant as "Foxface – Lisa – La Faccia di Volpe – La Comadreja" pops up. The question is why the Spanish translator decided to turn a fox into a weasel, as in two other languages there was no problem with direct translation. First of all, the definitions of both animals are quite close, highlighting such traits as agility, small size, cunningness. And the problem is not with their habitat, as both animals are wide-spread in Europe and North America. Another speculation is connected to the improper connotation of the word "Zorra" in Spanish, as in slang it literally means a prostitute, a woman of an obscene behavior. This interpretation would obviously distract a Spanish reader, perhaps, that's why such an option as Comadreja was introduced. Though, there is a slight discrepancy between these animals. Weasels are known to be active aggressive predators, that can attack animals that are several times bigger, but in the story Foxface resembled a fox not only because of appearance, but also because of her habits: hiding, stealing food and weapons, avoiding face-to-face combats. But, probably, if a reader doesn't go too deep in his speculations, the translation might be seen successful. This is a background tribute, after all.

Another moment is translation of toponymic units. This process can be called substitution (Vermes 2003:93). It is used in those cases where the source language name has a conventional correspondent in the target language. This applies to a large number of geographical names. In such a case when there is a conventional correspondent available in the target language, this would seem to be the translator's first and natural choice: the one that comes to mind almost subconsciously, and I could almost say that the translator, in an ordinary translation situation, is more or less obliged to use this conventional correspondent in the translation. As an example of such equivalents, we can draw the following translations: Appalachia – gli Appalachi – los Apalaches – Appalachi (Аппалачи); The Rockies – Montagne Rocciose – las Rocosas – Skalistiye (Скалистые). Undoubtedly, no second thoughts will be needed in these cases.

In conclusion, we would like to state, that, unfortunately all translations, especially those with the same script, namely Spanish and Italian, are abundant with borrowings (Thresh, Glimmer, Rue etc.), that hinder adequate understanding and associations. Among 21 proper names that we considered for this paper, approximately 10% were translated into Russian without any pragmatic adaptation when needed, 43% into Spanish and 33% into Italian, causing difficulties and loss in understanding. It goes without saying, that proper names are a challenge both for professional and novice translators and they must be treated carefully, and the process itself deserves proper attention from researchers in fields of intercultural communication and translation studies.

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