

Title: Problems of translating cultural elements in the texts of Ukrainian and Polish contemporary literature (on the example of Oksana Zabuzhko's novel *The Museum of Abandoned Secrets* and Ignacy Karpowicz's novel *Sonka*)

The purpose of this dissertation is to select cultural realities and analyze the techniques and strategies of translation, including ways of preserving certain features of the original, in selected literary works, such as the novel by the Polish writer Ignacy Karpowicz *Sońka* (2014) and its translation into Ukrainian by Ostap Sływyński (*Сонька*, 2016) and *Музей покинутих секретів* (2009) by Ukrainian writer Oksana Zabuzhko, translated into Polish by Katarzyna Kotyńska (*The Museum of Abandoned Secrets*, 2012).

In selected literary texts, there are many cultural elements belonging to Ukrainian or Polish culture. These elements contain the worldviews of language users, reflecting the specificity of their mentality.

In contemporary Ukrainian literature, as well as in Polish, novels depicting complex developments of the 20th century that have not received sufficient attention have gained popularity. The texts pose questions important for the original culture: issues of memory and identity; private stories different from official narratives; exposing fates that were taboo from a different perspective (e.g., topics of collaboration; consensual sexual relations between women and occupiers during the war); these novels also aspire to give participants the opportunity to tell their own stories.

Artistic texts are part of the discourse of war memory; they serve as a tool for its transmission and restoration, thus influencing the next generation. Oksana Zabuzhko's novel *Muzeum porzuconych sekretów* and Ignacy Karpowicz's *Sońka* fit into this thematic trend; these works are also deeply rooted in culture.

In my research work, I analyzed the transfer of cultural elements from one culture to another, as well as the role and impact of cultural proximity on translation and the possible reception of selected texts by the reader of the target and source cultures, as well as the translator's tasks in this process; I compared the proposals of translation theorists and the application of the theory in practice by translators; I examined the impact of translation decisions on changing the image of culture in the translated text. In order to carry out the analysis, I provided definitions of culture, cultural realities, and techniques and strategies (domestication and exoticization) of translation. I called attention to the issues of cultural memory in works of belles-lettres, the cultural translatability and untranslatability of the text, and the influence of the concept of the dominant text on the choice of strategy and technique by the translator. I subjected selected novels to a cultural analysis and analyzed the issues of cultural memory in selected works; I also distinguished their postmodern features.

The work consists of a theoretical and analytic part, which have been divided into an introduction and six chapters.

The introduction describes the purpose of the dissertation, the tasks and methods of research, as well as the role of literature in the process of cultural communication. In the first chapter, *Subject and Objectives of the Research*, criteria for selecting authors are given, common features of selected literary works are discussed, and their analysis against the background of Ukrainian and Polish novels about (post)memory is discussed. Attention was paid to the role of

translation in filling gaps in literature, as well as to the mutual influence of Polish and Ukrainian belles-lettres.

The second chapter, *Theoretical Assumptions and Basic Definitions*, presents theoretical assumptions about the role and tasks of the translator, cultural elements and their division into groups, strategies, translation techniques, and basic definitions: cultural reality, allusion, strategy (domestication and exoticization), technique, etc. This chapter contains an overview of publications on the translation of cultural elements, which offer theoretical and practical solutions to translation problems, and scientific texts, which also served as inspiration and showed possible ways of systematizing the studied material. The division of cultural elements by the representative of the Russian school of linguistics, Vieniedikt Vinogradov, and the translation techniques proposed by Krzysztof Hejwowski and Roman Lewicki became the basis for the analytical part. Understanding these theoretical approaches, including the tasks and role of the translator and the relationship between translation dominance and strategy, helped me to isolate important aspects when analyzing the selected texts.

In the third chapter, *Cultural Analysis of the Novel the Museum of Abandoned Secrets*, a cultural analysis of that novel is given. The story is about the individual and collective memory of the Ukrainian nation, which was written to “cure the amnesia” of the society. The subsections describe the key themes raised by the author regarding difficult issues of Ukrainian history, post-totalitarian trauma in society, etc. Then, discussions about the *Museum...* and the image of the work in the light of literary criticism were presented.

In the fourth chapter, *Analysis of the Material: Translation of Cultural Realities in Oksana Zabuzhko's Novel the Museum of Abandoned Secrets*, an analysis of the techniques of translating cultural realities in the *Museum...* is presented, divided into groups. Oksana Zabuzhko is a demanding writer, and the reader of her texts pre-determined by the author must have the appropriate knowledge. The writer has an erudite style, and her works contain many references to culture, which complicates their translation. The realities in the *Museum...* have been divided into groups. The first one includes ethnographic and mythological realities – mainly biblical allusions and quotes that carry an additional emotional charge, are matched to the events, and become a certain key to understanding the heroes' deeds. The second group includes the realities of the activities of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the relevant historical period, as well as the realities from the times of the USSR. In the third group, I analyzed anthroponyms, including the names of literary characters. The numerous, fourth group of associative realities present in the *Museum*. Include: intertextual elements, allusions to musical works, folklore, artistic objects, traditions, realities of Ukrainian folk culture and third culture; literary references – quotations or references to literary works, plots, replicas, events, or characters in those works.

In the fifth chapter, *The Cultural Analysis of Ignacy Karpowicz's Novel Sońka*, the topics raised by the author in *Sońka* are analyzed: memory, individual trauma (Sonia was molested by her father and raped by a village resident), and historical trauma (traumatic experiences of World War II), the issue of the identity of a national minority on the Belarusian-Polish borderland, who describe themselves as „tutejsi”, and the work is characterized through the prism of discussions around the texts.

In the sixth chapter, *Analysis of the Material: Cultural Elements of the Polish-Belarusian Borderland*, an analysis of the cultural elements of the Polish-Belarusian Borderland was carried out on the selected material of *Sońka*. Groups of the realities of the state and administrative system as well as public life, onomastic realities, ethnographic realities, and mythological realities were analyzed.

The *final conclusions* summarize the considerations presented in the scientific work and present a comparative characteristic of the translation techniques used in *Museum...* and *Sońka*. The analysis did not show differences in the selection of techniques depending on the language,

but some similarity in the methods of translation can be traced in the separate groups present in both texts.

Analyzing the examples, it can be noticed that in selected novels the translators used similar translation techniques: recognized equivalent, functional equivalent (or with modifications), combining barbarism and footnote, literal translation (or with slight modifications), descriptive translation, approximation, contextualization, generalization, and reduction. Some techniques were used more often than others.

Texts containing many realities show that cultural differences influence the choice of translation techniques for these elements. The analysis showed that translators more often choose techniques based on preserving foreignness and retaining “immersion” in the culture of the original in translation. In both texts, the strategy of exoticization and, where possible, the preservation of foreign elements predominates, while domestication is not clearly discernible. Most of the cultural elements have been left in the translation. Only some realities have not passed through the cultural filter at all. It is noticeable that the translators are well acquainted with the culture of the original and aware of cultural differences. It can also be noted that the losses appearing in the translated text were compensated in other parts of the work.